

Inaugural Address - International Seminar

SAFETY AND HEALTH CULTURE THROUGH TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Muni Lal

RESPECTED Dr. Syed M. Ahmed keynote speaker from Florida International University, U.S.A., Prof. B.P. Singh, Chairman, Dr. A.K. Singh, Secretary General and particularly my intimate guardian Prof. P.N. Singh, former Minister of Finance, Govt. of Bihar, friends and participants. Let me at the very outset convey my heartfelt of best wishes and greetings to everyone of you for a prosperous, peaceful and plentiful happy new year.

I express my gratitude to the organizers to place me in this chair to inaugurate the International Seminar on Safety and Health Culture through Training & Development. In fact, I am extremely pleased with the fact that this conference would take me into the orbit, where various luminaries known in different fields of excellence such as Academicians of High orders both national as well as international, the practicing Chief Executives, Systems Managers of various Industries and leaders of various Groups of interests, interacting and exchanging notes of ideas, opinions, experiences, etc.

The present seminar is on 'Safety and Health Culture through Training and Development'. The undeniable relevance of this Seminar calls for extraordinary attention for various reasons.

Firstly let me express my apprehensions about the fluidity of the title. If one reads the title of this Seminar particularly in the light of it being International Seminar, the questions strike to my mind are multifold.

- (a) Are we talking of safety and Health culture in poor populous and developing countries like India and other third world nations or the same issues being addressed in advanced countries like U.S.A., Europe and other middle income group countries like Middle East, Asean etc.
 - (b) The above said various categories of nations have different types of problems. They are different in nutritional standards, child mortality rate, accidents rate per thousand both Industrial and Non-industrial and reasons thereof, the existence of different tiers and Health Care Systems, their cost and quality, old age care. State responsibility in sharing the financial resources and burdens, social security legislation, including environment protective legislations, the per capita availability of Health and Safety needs in the shape of public infrastructure like potable water, availability of Doctors per every thousand of persons. Existence and non-existence primary health care centers, the availability of life saving drugs per capita, etc. The entire plethora of health related statistics would come into picture for normal population in every country in different tones depending upon their capabilities and commitments. And here I am not speaking about the issues related with deviants like drug addicts, alcoholics, sex workers, etc.
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Again when we touch upon 'Safety' issue the above mentioned various category of countries face different levels of realities in developing countries 'Hunger Pangs' drive the persons most of the time to cross the 'Laxman Rekha' of safety of their body and mind. The number of persons physically handicapped in my own state i.e. Bihar may be explained by the extent mate of the premiere of Punjab and Haryana due to higher wages and hence, explain the on going migration of agriculture labourers from backward states of world into the advanced state of eastern part of the country. So as the suitable condition of the Construction workers, Brass workers, workers in Glass Industry, workers in fireworks and explosive industries and workers in Shivakasi above the highly Hazardous chemical gas taking toll and many employees in their families by reducing their life spans.

Till now what I described is a very microcosmic scattered, impressionistic visuals as anybody can gather as in Kafkaian novelistic style and not a fearsome details of reality as we read from newspapers, periodicals, books nor from experiences of experts.

It is well said that 'Health is Wealth' and so thereby Health Culture should be a culture oriented for wealth i.e. Human Wealth & Human Resources Wealth. The Neo Freudian Carl Jung calls safety of life as 'Primordial Need', the mother of all needs. But why such primordial needs are also pushed to wall in illiterate poor and weaker sections of the developing country? This is the query, which I could not resolve myself and I leave this to this brilliant body to settle ripples in my mind.

All the above may dismal but I am an optimist to the core. And hope is very dear to my heart. When I started with differentiating developing countries position vis-a-vis the non-developed, the issue under microscope was development. And I hope and believe that the development is 'near appropriate solution' for some novelistic ailings as mentioned previously. But development as a concept has to be defined and understood property in right perspective. Development is not conterminous culturally with align nations culture, nor it is 'Opening Doors' like flood gates for even unforeseeable forces of capital, markets, finances even in key establishment, etc.

Development can be defined positively as a resilient and vibrant economy, giving due honour to factors of production squarely with directing forces of production for socio-cultural upkeep and reformation in which every individual should feel and participate to achieve the best of his capabilities without hindrance and support by the society. This is what I could gather from various writings of the then Noble laureate Gunnar Myrdel, Prof. Keneth Gabriel, Prof. Samir Amin, Prof. Gunder frank today from the works of present day Noble Laureates Prof. Amartya Sen.

In short the major components of development apart from the traditional thinking are the following:

- (a) Technological revolution
- (b) Motivated and technically competent labour force
- (c) Motivated, liberal and humanistic entrepreneurial class
- (d) Proper Govt. policies along with the implementation of the same with vigour and commitment Boray.
- (e) Committed bureaucracy.
- (f) Cogent and confident leadership (political leadership).

Now let us see what is training? Training is one of the dimension of Human skills upgradation which has been discussed at length vigorously by Adam Smith in his magnum 'Wealth of Nations'

to improve the productivity and at present the uploaded proven experiments by famous behavioral Prof. Miller and prominent environmentalist Eugene S. Prof. Leon Kamini in shaping, routinizing and upgrading skills through psychological and mental inputs.

In fact every one of us is under going training every day, but if the training is structured, planned and executed properly, the results of it would be consummately rewarding. Had there existed proper training to face any unforeseen calamity the major accidents like Bhopal gas tragedy, Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster, Chasnala mines accidents could have been averted and thereby the precious lives of many would have been saved without 'Days of Mourning'.

As Minister of Labour, it is one of my observations that the training and educating the employees in the field of safe operation of equipments and correct handling with close cooperation of safety team and workers goes a long way in avoiding accidents. It requires planning, coordination, testing, dry runs, etc.

I don't want to be any more lengthy. Imperatively since the topic is vast and my colleagues present here, being precious visitors, I thought I can put forth some of my views for further discussion by which I wish to gather more from your wisdom for our Govt. Finally, I wish the conference a grand success with once again I wish every one of you a very happy new year.
