Sixth Udai Pareek Memorial Lecture by Padma Bhushan Dr. M.B. Athreya

“Daunting 21st Century Challenges Before India”

January 22, 2018
On January 22nd, 2018 National HRD Network Jaipur Chapter & Udai Pareek HRD Research Foundation in association with HCM RIPA Jaipur organized the Sixth Udai Pareek Memorial lecture in fond memory of late Professor Udai Pareek, former professor of IIM Ahmedabad and fondly remembered as “The Father of HRD” in India.

The session witnessed the gracious presence of Padmabhushan Dr. M.B. Athreya, Padma Bhushan Prof. V.S. Vyas (former Director, IIM Ahmedabad & colleague of Prof. Pareek), Mr. Inderjeet Khanna (former CS, GoR), who worked with Prof. Pareek very closely, Prof. S.D. Gupta (Chairman, IIHMR University) & Ms. Gurjot Kaur, Director-General, HCM RIPA.
The evening commenced with lamp lighting by the dignitaries. Dr. Nidhi Vashishth, the compere for the session welcomed and introduced the session to the guests present. She emphasized that the session aimed at paying a tribute and recapture valuable contributions of Prof. Udai Pareek and expressed her deepest regards by reciting a poem as a tribute to the legendary Professor.

Chairperson Smt. Gurjot Kaur, Director-General, HCM RIPA delivered the welcome address. At the outset she extended a warm welcome to all present. She shared that it was a proud moment for HCM RIPA to have organized the sixth UPML in association with NHRDN. In this regard she thanked Prof Ashok Bapna for having made the sixth UPML possible and his continued association. She further extended her heartfelt gratitude to have an acclaimed
management thinker, consultant recognized as one of the founders and pioneers of Indian management movement Padma Bhushan, Dr. M.B Athreya as the Chief Guest for the session. She highlighted his contributions and close association with Prof. Pareek in the domain of HRD/OD and Institution Building. She expressed that contributions from such leading luminaries in the domain of HRD and OD highlighting Dr. Udai Pareek's invaluable contribution to the field is an asset to the future generation and society at large. Speaking on the theme, she emphasized that challenges of the 21st century are vast - wide in range, global in scale, and complex in nature. The learnings from the experiences of the eminent speakers of the session will serve as a valuable guide to young leaders in all walks of life ranging from industry to education and social development. Finally she hoped & assured the audiences that speeches of the three stalwarts present for the session will unfold not only the greatness of the management expert but also the relevance of Dr. Pareek’s work in present day scenario. Finally she concluded that coupled with the tributary speeches is the thought provoking speech of Dr. M.B Athreya on “The 21st Century Challenges before India” which takes the centre stage of the event.

Thus began the first part of the session which comprised of tributary narrations from three eminent personalities honouring and remembering Dr. Udai Pareek.
The first speaker was Mr. Inderjeet Khanna, former CS, GoR who was very closely associated with Prof Pareek. Mr. Khanna was very nostalgic about his long association with Dr. Udai Pareek and reflected on times spent together. He referred to a series of interactions with Dr. Pareek, each of which left an impeccable impression in his mind. The first was an email that Dr. Pareek had written to Mr. Khanna way back in 2008 which emphasized the human side of Prof Pareek and his regard for building a long term relationship. Mr. Khanna regarded Udai Pareek as very unpretentious & down to earth. He fondly remembered that Mr. Pareek was a keen learner so much so that in the year 1975 he along with other two working group members Prof.T.V Rao and Prof. Ravi Matthai to study about education pattern in the rural area of Rajasthan and extend their contribution. Mr. Inderjeet was appalled at Udai’s eagerness to learn and keep abreast of what was happening around him even if it was that of Rural India. Next opportune meeting that Mr. Khanna had with Prof Pareek was during his tenureship at IIM-A. During this interaction he found Prof Pareek to be a guide, a mentor who never imposed things, a leader in the true sense alongside his intellectual capabilities. The third memory which he shared was in the year 2000 when Professor Pareek decided to stay back in Jaipur after his retirement. Finally he spoke about his fourth meeting when he was associated with Geeta Mittal Foundation of skill development and the requirement was to develop a curriculum on skill development. Prof Pareek very humbly accepted to develop the curriculum and worked on the task with great zeal and enthusiasm and developed an excellent document. Finally Mr. Inderjeet Khanna extended his heart felt gratitude for having learnt lot many things from Prof Pareek and the qualities of life for which he stands tall till date.

Professor S.D. Gupta, the next speaker for the session considered it an honour to talk about Prof Udai Pareek and his contributions. Describing Udai Pareek was difficult for him but he remembered his meeting with Prof Pareek in 1986 soon after the establishment of IIHMR in 1984. Prof
Gupta fondly recollected that being from a medical background, he had no idea about the concept of “management”. It was Prof Pareek who introduced the concept of management, leadership, organization culture to him. Prof Udai Pareek laid the foundations of the Esteemed Institute by creating a sustainable organization culture and strong value system. Prof Gupta travelled a lot with Prof Pareek and in the process he found him to be humorous as well. He expressed his profound happiness to have received guidance under Dr. Pareek and become the Director of the IIHMR which has earned a global repute today. More than his scholarly attributes, Prof Pareek’s broad world view and open mind, human values and openness to new ideas, his quest for knowledge and learning amazed Mr. Gupta. He referred to the book titled “HRD Instruments for Human Resources” written by Prof Pareek as one of the widely consulted books written in the area so far. Lastly he expressed that he shall cherish each and every moment spent with Dr. Pareek and counts it as a blessing both in his personal and professional lives.

The next eminent speaker for the session Padma Bhushan Prof V.S. Vyas thanked the organizers for organizing the event. He then expressed his profound happiness to deliver the tributary lecture as he remembered Prof Pareek as a very dear friend. He remembered Prof Pareek as a kind and loving person alongside his being a great scholar, researcher, teacher popularly known as “The lion of HRD”. From the days of IIM-A and post retirement both the luminaries spent quality time together and Prof Pareek extended his helping hand at all times. Prof Vyas regarded Prof Pareek as a distinguished name in the domain not only because of his intellectual capabilities but also other qualities of him which the youngsters present should make a note and learn from. First quality of Prof Pareek was his hardworking nature, he very
constructively used every single moment. Next was his keen sense of commitment towards a task. Third was his acute sense of observation. The theories that were developed by Prof Pareek were a result of his observant nature. In this regard, he very fondly remembered that once Prof Pareek mentioned that one of the greatest weaknesses of our society lies in the concept of “jugali”. Which he further described that when a buffalo is satiated, it starts chewing again and again the same thing. Lastly he said that Prof Pareek stood for what he believed in. He not only believed in organ donation but he actually donated his body for medical experiments after death. It certainly reminded Prof Vyas the true sense of commitment, sacrifice and conviction that Prof Pareek will be known for in the years to come. He will remain an inspiration for one and all who came in touch with him and also for the generations to come.

Dr. Ashok Bapna, advisor NHRDN and convenor for the session extended a hearty welcome to the dignitaries present. He shared that Prof Pareek was the founder of the National Human Resource Development Network (NHRDN), which he established in 1986 and subsequently Jaipur Chapter in 1991 and Udai Pareek HRD Research Foundation in 1993 with a view to undertake research in the field of Human Resource Development & related areas. Prof Pareek was closely associated with all the three organizations till the end. He regarded Dr. Pareek as a great human being, deeply concerned with the well being of society to an extent that he donated his body after his death to SMS Medical College Jaipur for the purpose of experimentation. Next Dr. Bapna, said that memorial lectures were meant to recapture the valuable contributions made by such outstanding personalities during their life time and inspire the youth and present generation to seek certain lessons whether it is Bhagwat Singh Mehta Memorial Lecture or Padma Shri M.L Mehta Memorial Lecture or Padma Bhushan Anil Bordia Memorial Lecture. He emphasized that they have not only been very successful bureaucrats but their contributions for the well being of the society are distinct and has made visible impact. It is this part of their
lives which we need to capture for our future pursuits. Speaking of Prof Pareek, he added that the latter was an academician, well known nationally and internationally. His work had great practical relevance and eventually gave rise to the building of HRD movement in India. Prof Pareek passed away on 21st March 2010 at the age of 85 years and NHRDN Jaipur decided to commemorate his memory through these memorial lectures and the series started in 2011. He mentioned that this period had seen some very distinguished scholars like Padma Shri Dr. Pritam Singh, Padma Shri Prof. Goverdhan Mehta, Padma Vibushan Prof. R.A. Mashelkar and Padma Vibhushan Prof. K. Kasturirangan. These lectures have been organized in joint collaboration with leading academic institutions namely Manipal University, IIMR University, Jaipuria Institute, Malviya National Institute of Technology (MNIT) Jaipur & the present day collaboration with HCM RIPA for which he thanked Director General HCM RIPA, Madam Gurjot Kaur. Prof Bapna was happy to share that the gathering witnessed huge participation from young trainees from RAS & Accounts services who shall surely benefit a great deal from the lecture.

He extended his gratitude to Mr. Narendra Sisodia, former Secretary Defence, GoI for his keen interest in building an active discussion group on current issues and invited members of All India Services to the Sixth UPML. He further thanked the partnership with Fortis, IIMR, HCM RIPA for coordinating the sixth UPML. He acknowledged valuable contributions of Mr. Prateem Tamboli (President, NHRDN, Jaipur Chapter & Zonal Directors, Fortis Hospitals), Dr. Prabhat Pankaj (Vice-President, NHRDN Jaipur & Director, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Jaipur) & Mr. Hem Bhargava (Treasurer, NHRDN-J & General Manager, Corporate (Academic), IIMR University) and Prof. Rakesh Singhal (HCM RIPA) for their valuable contributions and thanks to Dr. Nidhi for compering & Dr. Anuja for acting as a Rapporteur.

Further, he mentioned that Dr. Athreya will be delivering the 6th UPML on the theme, “The Daunting 21st Century Challenges Before India”. In this light, Prof Bapna stated that lately the Indian economy has thrown some challenges specially in the light of the falling growth rate from about 7.1% to 6.5% in 2017-18. Some leading Economists including our
former PM Dr. Manmohan Singh are of the opinion that our economic reform policies such as Demonetization & GST are responsible for the present slowdown of the economy. Rural distress, rising unemployment, growing social discontent all around, continuing border conflicts with our neighbours have disturbed peace and tranquillity of our great nation. Scholars of different fields are trying to diagnose the nature and causes of the problems, afflicting Indian society today from their own different perspectives. But however the root cause appears of the present disturbance is poor governance. He added that as India marches ahead in military, economic, political, diplomatic, social spheres, the core issue of management comes at the forefront. He expressed his profound happiness to have Padma Bhushan Dr. M.B Athreya as the speaker for the session with vast practical experience in the management field and would show us the right path of tackling the multifaceted problems facing Indian society today. The session has been divided into two parts. First part captured the valuable contributions of late Prof Udai Pareek. He added that initially the theme suggested by Dr. Athreya was “The Behavioral Dharma of Dr. Udai Pareek” but he requested him to reflect challenges to Indian Economy & how his rich knowledge of management over these years can address such challenges which he very kindly agreed.

The first part witnessed the contributions from eminent dignitaries who were closely associated with Prof. Pareek. He recollected that Prof Vyas, former Director of IIM-A along with Prof Pareek took the Institute to newer heights of excellence both in the national and international arena. Speaking about Mr. Inderjeet Khanna, Prof Bapna said that he came across an article written by Mr. Khanna on “The Importance of Values in Civil Service” in a book on “Essays in memory of Udai Pareek” edited by Prof T.V.Rao. From there he learnt that Mr. Khanna had an association with Prof. Udai for thirty years. Thus Mr. Bapna was eager to invite him for the lecture and Prof Khanna agreed. He then spoke about padma Bhushan Prof V.S Vyas’s association with Prof Pareek of over 40 years. Prof Vyas as Director of IIM-A & Prof Pareek as Professor worked very closely with each other & IIM-A at that time was one of the leading business schools both nationally and internationally. Prof Vyas in his article on “Managing Institution of Excellence: Reflections on my years as
Director of IIM-A” in the same book had shared his concerns about excellence in educational institutions. Finally he said that Prof Pareek was associated with Prof S.D Gupta ever since the inception of the IIHMR University. Today the University stands tall on the principles, values and ethos for which Prof Pareek was highly instrumental.

Speaking about his own experiences of Prof Pareek, Prof Bapna recollected that he never had the opportunity to study the valuable contributions of Prof Pareek until 6th March 2007 when Prof Pareek telephoned & expressed his desire to meet him at his residence. To which Prof Bapna requested for a meeting at his office which was very graciously accepted by Prof Pareek. Prof Bapna was surprised to have been offered the Presidentship of NHRDN Jaipur Chapter, which the latter declined due to the obvious reason that he neither had a management background nor he would be comfortable to take over the prestigious assignment which was headed by Prof Pareek himself. Prof Bapna remembered that Prof Pareek’s great capacity of persuasion and unique style to seek acceptance made it difficult for him to say “No” to him. This gesture he treasures till today and considers it as the most valuable experience of his life. Dr. Ashok Bapna as the President of NHRDN, Jaipur Chapter for a decade, decided to share Prof. Pareek’s valuable contributions through these memorial lectures, especially to the younger generation.

Lastly he concluded that Dr. Athreya’s speech shall throw light on the ways and means by which India can march forward to become an innovative nation in the field of management, that alone would make it a strong nation and fulfil the dream of our PM for “New India by 2022”. Thus the subject chosen for the Memorial Lecture is most opportune & befitting one. He welcomed all on this occasion.
The next key attraction of the session was the very inspiring speech of Chief Guest Shri Mritunjay B Athreya, founder & pioneer of Indian Management Movement on the topic “Daunting 21st Century Challenges before India”. At the outset, he expressed his gratitude for having been requested to deliver the sixth UPML, a tribute to one of the most fascinating thought leaders of India.

He dated back his association with Dr. Udai Pareek to 1971 when a Committee was set up to restructure the Indian Airlines with a T&D program under the then Civil Aviation Minister Karan Singh. He spoke of the time when Indian Airlines was all set for a restructuring. Merging of eight organizations to one was geometrically a more complex task and thus a Committee was set of which Mr. Athreya was a member along with Prof Udai Pareek. Both of them together took trainings for the staff comprising of angry pilots and others. Further Dr Athreya was associated with Prof Pareek in SBI first Staff College at Hyderabad and the second at Gurgaon.
Initially Dr. Athreya wanted to speak on a topic that portrayed Prof Pareek as a Karmyogi, Satwik and a Dharmatma. However later on discussions with other members, the topic chosen for the UPML was that of “Daunting 21st Century Challenges before India”. He summarised his lecture under three heads. Firstly he raised the context of the daunting challenges faced by the World at large followed by the Indian Outlook for the 21st century and finally the actionable points to combat the challenges.

At the introduction, Dr. Athreya said that the world in the 21st Century reminds him of the tussle between globalization and nationalism going on for the last 4-5 years. He mentioned the Liberalisation, Privatisation & Globalisation (LPG) reform constructed by the Government of India PV Narasimha Rao & Dr. Manmohan Singh which began in 1991. Undoubtedly globalisation seemed to bring positive results for India with exports and imports rising and the GDP soaring high but the discomforts were also many. To name a few, was the rise of China, cheaper imports, unemployment in parts of US and Europe. Further he highlighted that election of Trump resulted primarily due to the vote of the unemployed and now the president is living upto his promise by isolating US from rest of the world.

Secondly, the fear of a third world war which is not impossible looking into present day situation. Reflecting back, Dr Athreya remembered that in his speeches, he very confidently referred to the 21st Century as that of the Asian Century more so as the Indian Century but today the situation is different with alignments of Japan, India, Australia & US on one side and China building its relationship with Pakistan and other countries on the other side.
The third most pressing issue before India, he said is the rapid advancement of information technology particularly in the form of Artificial Intelligence. Mr. Athreya mentioned that knowledgeable people of the Industry such as Stephen Hawkins, Bill Gates and Elon Musk have expressed their fear that at one point AI enabled machines shall turn hostile to human interfaces. Regulatory agencies, government, technology boards worldwide do not have enough knowledge to regulate this industry and a global debate on the topic is sought next. He further added that driver less cars and planes are interesting developments but the long term damage cannot be ignored resulting in massive job loss.

The other most alarming 21st century challenge before the World is that of Climate Change. In 1992, Paris had development a very good agreement in this regard. It is remarkable that many states and companies in US are continuing their commitment towards climate change. India, China and EU are doing things beyond their commitment. If 10-15 years ago terrorism seemed to be the most dominating challenge, reference to the global reaction to 1991, 9/11, 2001 Bombay issue which however seems controllable in the present day but it is climate change which is a more serious problem today.

The next part of Prof Athreya’s speech took the Indian Outlook for the 21st Century. He stated that India has finally taken off as the growing economy and organizations such as World Bank, IMF have certified that India is the fastest growing largest economy of the world. India has an established democratic model and is being looked upon very respectfully by Nations for successfully running the democratic model even with a large population and a great deal of illiteracy. He remarked that the election commission of India has been invited by other countries to act as an advisory to them. Nevertheless, Mr. Athreya pointed out research and development, technology development, trade wars and military threats, remain the areas of slow growth. He stated that the technology gap is widening very fast and we need to traverse that extra mile to cover it. Next was the free trade period ranging from 1972-2000 which did not witness India’s participation at all. But on the contrary countries such as Taiwan, South Korea, Malaysia, the Asian Tigers and to an extent China have capitalized during this period. Some of the doors are now
being closed to India and also automation technologies are replacing labour competitiveness which was India’s strength. Talking about the military threats he spoke about the Shimla agreement bringing peace on Kashmir, but on the eastern side Arunachal and China threatening not only in India but through the Indian Ocean also trying to dominate the China-Pakistan Corridor, the Jawahar Port.

Continuing with his speech, Prof Athreya mentioned that along with others discussed above, the most significant challenges that the country faces today especially the youth to whom the country belongs is that of climate change. Climate change is a serious problem because it does not have an immediate impact such as an heart attack but happens over a gradual period like a slow tuberculosis or cancer. He elaborated that there has been eight cyclones in India since the year 2000. The latest of it was the Ockhi Cyclone which hit very hard on Kerela & Tamil Nadu & several fishermen who went missing in the cyclone. He added that every new one will be more and more difficult. He spoke about “cyclone refugees” who are the ones to migrate due to climate change impact. It is projected that 20 million people from Bangladesh are slated to be victim of the same. It is not quite unlikely that river Ganga disappears just as river Saraswati unless we take care. Ever since 2000-2014, India has witnessed fourteen most hottest years in the World history. Rising temperature is slated to impact agriculture, natural calamities such as draught. Cities with high rise buildings and rising vehicles are posing a serious threat. At this juncture, Prof Athreya commented that we need to pre-empt the problems, strategise for climate risk prevention and manage the risk.

Second alarming challenge before India is that of unemployment & inequality. He said that India is a nation with high unemployment, under employment and seasonal employment along with rising inequalities. He said that the difference between the highest paid in the Industry and the lowest paid in rural India is widening each day. This inequality has led to Maoist movement, the Dalit movement, and the recent challenges in Gujarat spreading to Maharashtra. He added that democracy is about economic policies, social welfare policies but not being replaced by caste & others of the like. There is a threat and it needs to be dealt with on
priority. He added that inequality cannot be eliminated but can be reduced. He mentioned about the book titled “Capital In The 21st Century” by Thomas Piketty clearly brings out the global comparison of growth. It said that high growth is desirable but where there is high growth, there has been high inequality. Still people desire high growth because everybody is better off. But this calls for social welfare policies to reduce the inequality. He also mentioned that accident of birth and place should not determine education and income but social policies should compensate for the same.

Another factor highlighted in by Prof Athreya was that growth has to be more from domestic consumptions rather than exports. We need to focus on growing consumption and the purchasing power. The entire population should be consumers of various goods & services. Only then we grow as a nation. Talking of the demographic dividend, Prof Athreya said India has a young population but this benefit is available for only next 15-20 years. This generation will gradually grow old and if not employed it shall become a bitter angry generation.
Third major challenge he spoke about is the Chinese Hegemony. China regarded India as the only biggest threat between them and world domination and the dream of becoming the largest economy. They have shown heavy expenditures in military, R&D and latest technology weapons. The Chinese are all set to dominate the natural resources around the world comprising of land, minerals etc.

Having very articulately summed up the challenges before India today, he spoke about the responses needed as well. He explained that the challenge for industry, agriculture, government all together is to put India at a 10% plus economic growth for a decade. Only then will India be able to engage the youth population and build a base. Next is to move onto becoming a greener economy. He is of the opinion that we should negotiate hard for global equipments, technology, green funds in support of a greener economy. He also pointed out that we in India do have one of the largest programs in solar energy, wind energy, renewable, commitment to electric vehicles by 2030 but lot more emphasis needs to be given to the issues raised. The state of health and education in India is of a serious concern. The health survey 2015-16 linked to the national health policy highlighted that the health ministry of which Prof Athreya is a member is periodically monitoring progress on the rural and urban health mission. It states that 38% of Indian children are malnourished; they suffer a brain damage at the early age of five. He remarked that human development is much bigger a task than human resource development. Millions of people living in the rural and the slums of India need to be made competent, functioning, healthy, literate human beings first. Hence we need to invest more on human development. Talking of education, he expressed his disappointment on Pratham’s Report that stated that 30 % of children do not know the capital of the country, cannot add few numbers, cannot read a paragraph in English but all can operate the cell phone.

Finally he talked about the Chinese mantra of keeping peace, maintaining a low profile, no conflict during the period 1950-2000. And now upon development they have become aggressive. India too should follow the same path for the next twenty years and meanwhile focus on the development of the country and its people. Finally the two most basic
and important welfare measures are that of Universal Basic Income and Universal Health Insurance.

He concluded that it is high time we prove to ourselves and the world that even under a liberal democracy, we can also make economic and technological progress and the military progress will come automatically. Lastly he said the three entities namely government, businesses and NGO’s and the citizens of the country should their bit to combat the challenges. Government should encourage human development, introduce growth and welfare policies. Businesses should foster aggressive entrepreneurship, sustainability and CSR. NGO’s should work together with govt, businesses and people to mitigate the issues. Media should play an important role in raising an awareness regarding the crucial issues amongst the masses and also highlight the success examples. Last but not the least citizens of the country should have an initiative for self development, raise competence and productivity to match the Chinese.
The vote of thanks was delivered by Prof. Prabhat Pankaj. Prof. Pankaj said that even though he didn’t have the privilege of meeting Dr. Pareek it did not take him long to realize the fire of his work, writings and thinking. He quoted the renowned stalwart of the HR World, Prof T.V.Rao’ that great Gurus like Dr. Pareek have spent their entire lifetime professing certain things by self example, and living in certain ways that spread desirable values for the good of the present and future societies. That was a big take away. Prof. Pankaj further quoted a simple yet very powerful formula from Prof Pareek’s article on Motivational paradigm for development, that

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\text{Development} = (\text{Achievement Motivation} \times \text{Extension Motivation}) - \text{Dependent Motivation}
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He added that it was not just a theory for Udai Pareek but he believed and strongly followed that leaders must rise above greed, selflessness to create larger goals that benefit larger groups & societies. Prof. Pankaj very rightly quoted James Allen and said “A man literally is what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts.” He expressed that it is only our ability to bridge the gap between thoughts and deeds, between what we say and what we do, between micro selfish goals and cosmic larger good, that the doors of equitable, sustainable and progressive future can be opened.

Prof. Pankaj thanked the Chief Speaker Prof M.B Athreya for beautifully enumerating the challenges that India is faced with today. He said that the brilliant lecture by Dr Athreya has given us much to think about and rare insights into a subject that he more than any other Indian is qualified to speak on with authority. He said that Prof Athreya’s speech has been very powerful, thought provoking, futuristic and thoroughly engaging. It raised our social consciousness towards our country and the little changes that we can bring about in our own ways.

He thanked the organizers of the event for making this event happen and other dignitaries present, for making the sixth UPML a great success.