

10th Foundation Day of the Foundation for Restoration of National Values [FRNV]

Venue: Delhi Metro Rail Corporation Auditorium, New Delhi

Date: 6 June, 2017

Time: 11.30 am – 2.00 pm

Foundation for Restoration of National Values celebrated its 10th Foundation Day on 6th June, 2018 at DMRC Bhawan, Barakhamba Road to embark upon the journey of 10 years and address the importance of Value-based Education in today's curriculum and contemplate on what progress has been made until now and what goals has to be achieved in the future. The event started by Shloka recitation by Ms. Savitri, followed by lighting of the ceremonial lamp by the dignitaries present. **Shri Bharat Wakhlu, General Secretary, FRNV**, on behalf of Dr. E Sreedharan and the managing committee gave the welcome address citing the three critical components of our National Government – our National motto- '*Satyamev Jayate*', our National Flag- emphasizing the importance of tricolor, and our Constitution-which tells us about the duties and rights of the citizens of India. He said that these three components contain all our national values and are a mark of what is right and just and serve in the best interests of the people. The special guest, **Shri Rakesh Mehta, Former Chief Secretary, Delhi** embarked upon the importance of Universal, Indian and Family Values and these should be reinforced among the youth of today to enable them to think radically and eradicate drugs, liquor and tech addiction.

FRNV Advisory Board Member and noted Educationist, Smt. Vibha Parthasarathi contemplated on the difference in attitude of the so-called '*GenZ*' towards life as opposed to the older generation, on how they are more techno-dependant and learn largely from digital sources rather than human resources. She shed light on this generation gap and questioned as to how to establish an intellectual, meaningful, spiritual and emotional connect between the two?? She emphasized that most of the values prevalent today have been materialized and values like '*me first*' and '*get rich quick*' are gaining popularity and the voices of people of the older generation who have actually lived our precious national values are being sidelined. Then, how to restore national values then?? For doing this, she said that the baton should be handed over to the children and we should "*Let them think rather than imitate. They should be allowed to express themselves, rather than conform to something.*" They should work in teams, rather than individually. Values of inclusiveness and equal opportunity should be inculcated in them. In the end, she concluded that India being a 5000 year old civilization is unique, multilayered and multiethnic, but the beauty of a feeling of common Indianness reduces all the gaps between religions and thus, makes us as strong and beautiful society to live in.

The Guest of Honour, **Prof. P.B. Sharma, VC, Amity University** also emphasized on '*Satyamev Jayate*' as a Universal value which needs to be followed all over the world irrespective of any religion. He highlighted on the fact that how in Modern India, our values are getting lost somehow in order to prove that we are a secular society. So, the main task, he said, is to inspire the young generation to be truthful, to practice national values, work ethics and to have a sense of moral responsibility. He shed light on the so-called '*Tripod of Education*' - *Capability, Knowledge and Character* and said that in today's curriculum, the main focus is put upon the Knowledge aspect, but the Capability and Character aspects got lost in the way somehow. This particular fact was also raised by **Dr. E Sreedharan, founder of FRNV**, while answering a query from the audience and highlighted on the survey findings of the Kochi Chapter, that in the beginning of this initiative, in ~80% of the schools, there was nothing like VBE and that the standard of education was deteriorating day by day. That's why FRNV decided to collaborate with the decision and policy makers in the Government to regulate the practice of VBE in schools. Prof. P.B. Sharma appreciated these efforts of FRNV to create a vital environment in the curriculum that imparts values like honesty, care for nature, work ethics, respect to the children of today.

The **Hon' Chief Secretary, CBSE Shri Anurag Tripathi** recalled his past experiences with DMRC when he worked as a trainee and remembered the 3 important lessons that were taught to him – *Punctuality, Discipline, and Doing your work yourself only*. He emphasized on the basic national values that are being taught to us from the beginning and raised a critical question that if we know them already, then what is the need to revive them suddenly in today's world? What has gone wrong that we are forgetting these values?? He stated that the reason why violence, arrogance, greed, corruption and poverty have increased today is because of the imbalance between these values. So, to eradicate these problems from the grass root level, values should be practiced. But, it's not easily done than said. That's why, he praised the efforts made by FRNV, as, if we are able to make the young generation compassionate towards one another, then it's a huge progress made in this direction. He stated that there is need for severe practice, *yog*, meditation (*dhyana*) and contemplation (*mannan*) for generating compassion and embracing our inner beauty.

The **Hon' HRD Minister Shri Prakash Javdekar** also graced the event with his presence and emphasized on the importance of Value-based Education by saying that life is useless, if values are not imparted from the beginning. He praised FRNV for what it believes in "*Satyanasthi paro dharma*", i.e., '*There is no precept greater than truthfulness*'. He highlighted the importance of values being taught to the parents first apart from the students as most important values that can be given to a child starts at home only. He also gave many interesting examples from his own life as well showing how one's family plays a critical role in imparting values. He hinted on a partnership with FRNV and other like-minded organizations to prepare a curriculum based on Value-based education, experiential learning & life-skill education so that the young generation becomes proud citizens of India.

During the Q/A session,

- Ms. Yamini Jha from the audience asked Smt. Vibha on how we plan to collaborate the 'Sounds of Silence'. To this, Smt. Vibha replied that in India, many NGOs are doing excellent work in this area, but silently and are not able to come to the surface, so their work must be recognized and should get a voice.
- Mr. Vijay Saluja asked whether the objectives with which FRNV started have been achieved, and if something remained, what is their action plan? To this, Dr. E Sreedharan replied that ten years ago, they started with a few targets to achieve – VBE, policy reforms, electoral reforms and good governance and so far, they have set up centres in Kochi, Bengaluru, Kerala and Delhi. What is lacking right now are good volunteers to lead this message into the society and shortage of funds. But still, many cases have been taken up and their strategy is to influence decision and policy makers. They have started getting integrating VBE at primary and secondary school levels. They have tried to enroll academic staffs of various schools and have tried to restore the standards of education in schools which have, otherwise, diluted all the way. Moreover, the Government has also agreed to take necessary steps in this direction and that's why the HRD ministry has taken steps to reduce the syllabus so as to focus more on value-based education.
- Another query from the audience was about the requirement of a think tank that can analyze the problems in this direction. To this, Dr. Sreedharan replied that their plan of action involves interaction with educationists and gather other like-minded people to understand the root of the problem and conduct seminars and workshops to implement the solutions.

Also, there were a few suggestions from the audience: -

- Mr. B. B. Tewari stated that as the environment today is different, so there should be improvement in the environment conducive of national values.
- Also, Ms. Seema Bhatnagar said that there should be proper interaction with the students about what kind of a role-model they want to follow and whether it has a good or a bad influence on them.

In the end, the Souvenir based on Value-based education was released by the Chief Guest, Hon' HRD Minister and Dr. E. Sreedharan followed by the National Anthem and Vote of Thanks by Shri. S.K. Sinha.

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