

GREENTECH COMMUNICATION

By. Shashidhar .S. Kapur

To begin with ,the concepts of "Green" and "Sustainable" need a little sharp focus and finetuning .In general parlance green is thought to be something which is in sync with nature and sustainable is that which doesn't cause damage in long term. Now whatever science does in some ways changes natural state ; so, going by that view no technology can be green . The sharpfocus is that by being in line with nature ,it is not intended that there will be no change - what is meant is that there ought not be any **irreversible** change. Likewise , to finetune the term "sustainable" , long term should represent a lifetime . Thus in broad terms sustainable green technology is that which doesn't cause irreversible damage in a lifetime. Further sharpfocusing and finetuning requires that any new technology is to be looked into seriously on the basis of its impact at the highest level and its effect on the most vulnerable. To sum, any green technology worth being excited about ought to offer quantum growth in a lifetime and should not cause irreversible damage to the nature or result in death of the poorest in a lifetime.

Since independence India has made significant progress in developing technologies. However, in their use and dissemination it has lagged . One of the major reasons of this inability to have a successful lab to land programme is poor communication strategy. The emphasis has been on mass communication , using conventional techniques. It has been more of a transmission - a one way communication of sorts; mainstream mass media was somewhat of a saving grace in that it took up the task of dissemination suo moto at times. However, communicating about technology was primarily in the realm of public service.

In the past two decades or so with the onset of global media (esp. broadcast media) in India , things have gone from bad to worse, as far as communicating green and innovative or traditional technologies is concerned. On the one hand , mainstream media has specialised sections for market savvy hi-tech (viz. gadgets, gizmos) , the space for innovative green technologies or the traditional ones has almost been wiped out. The public service broadcaster and some journals do try to chip in a bit but despite their reach they've not been effective .A major reason for it has been the manner of communication -which hasn't been engaging enough. Often , it is thought that technology will speak for itself- it is not so; if at all , it is too little, too slow. Only that technology gets communicated which is in the

hands of global capital .Consequently , there is technological divide with serious socio-political consequences. Lack of awareness causes inefficient growth and insufficient development. With the exponential increase in the inflow of global technology the chasm only widens.

Communication about green technology is too important an issue to be left in the hands of government alone. All sections - individuals , government , civil society et al - have to be involved and engaged. Accordingly, multiple strategies have to be designed to communicate with multiple layers.

In line with this there is a need for matching bodies - Public service ,social service and independent.

Even within the technological community, poor networking has resulted in a tardy rate of development. Thankfully, now there exists an option of Information technology which can go a long way in improving the networking scenario. Its USP is that it is interactive; it enables the concerned players in this field to exchange opinions, case studies, experiences, good practices and resources and to ensure that the knowledge created is effectively shared and used .Furthermore , use of Information and communication technology (ICT) can make dissemination much easier and consequently the use of green technology will increase.

Tech spiritualists have a role to play in that they must ensure that proven cutting edge technology is transferred to the poorest in the shortest time possible (as against the opposite presently) ; at the same time they have to ensure that the poorest do not become guinea pigs , or dumping grounds for untested and defunct technologies esp. of the mass variety. Spiritual technologists, on the other hand have to ensure that the time tested , nature friendly efficient technologies do not get wiped out. The best way is to implement them personally and act as a role model; simultaneously, they need to facilitate the use of proven green technologies by adopting them personally.

As the Corporate communications come with new innovative ways of mass communicating such as SMS / MMS, internet , virtual social media etc.; independent media must communicate efficiently using public service films , community radio / TV etc. ; and alternate effective media of the masses such as Street Theatre, *Padyatra* should be persisted .

The mainstream market led communication streams will continue to be dominated by the exclusivist cutting edge technology. However, if the innovative , non-conventional as also traditional avenues too are not controlled by the green technology , the resulting tech disparity can become explosive.

It has to be understood that there are various shades of green and different phases of long term . As an ideal we've taken long term to mean a lifetime but does that mean that we should wait for a life span before imbibing any technology. The point is that the ideal time period is applicable to only those technologies which have the potential to impact the entire mankind. As for the rest, the principle has to be applied proportionately - that is ,varying gestation periods.

The trends for future point at the convergence of media which is likely to be used by the sunrise tech; being capital intensive with continual redundancy as its basis, there is an inherent conflict with sustainable , innovative , and traditional technologies. So , the latter will have to focus on alternate , non- conventional as also traditional avenues of communication with content that will coalesce in divergent media. (same content in different media presented differently)

Care has to be taken to communicate engagingly, even entertainingly. It has to be communication "with " the people rather than to the people. Mass media as well as media of the masses could be used. Niche & specialised media too ought to be accessed to communicate. Moreover ,it is important to do science communication /popularisation with tech communication. Glocalising means adapting global technology and communicating it in the local idiom. (viz. using local dialects). Both celebrities and spiritual leaders could be roped in to promote the use of green technology.

It has to be understood that communication is a great change agent from within. There is a need for bridging the communication gap between people and technologists /government. New communication strategies incorporating concepts such as communication competence, communication effectiveness, communication intelligence need to be designed

From now on, enhanced productivity needs to be matched with efficiency; every polluting action with effort for conservation and the only growth should be green growth. Yet activists must not be allowed to sabotage existing /critical technologies till they come up with demonstrable viable alternatives.

If you do not adopt any new technology , you'll remain an animal ;if you jump at everything instantly you'll be a slave ; you need be neither - be a human instead by choosing green technologies. Live better than before while not repeating the past mistakes. As long as you leave the earth the way you found it, its. O.K.

India can be a model leader in tech spirituality; alternately it will continue to have exclusivist quantum growth sans inclusive incremental sustainable development.