

# Honorable Governor of Gujarat Shri Acharya Devvrat Delivers Second Annual V.G. Patel Memorial Lecture

The **Honorable Governor of Gujarat Shri Acharya Devvrat** delivered the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dr. VG Patel Memorial Lecture that was virtually organized by EDII on September 6<sup>th</sup> 2020. Hon'ble Governor Shri addressed the audience on '**Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Natural Farming.**' Also present on the occasion were **Guest of Honour Prof. Anil Gupta**, Founder of Honey Bee Network, SRISTI, GIAN & National Innovation Foundation; and **Dr. Sunil Shukla**, Director General, EDII.

EDII lost its founder Padma Shri Dr. V. G. Patel on April 4<sup>th</sup> 2019. In order to commemorate Dr. Patel's great work in the field of entrepreneurship development, the Institute has started an annual lecture series. Recognized by the entrepreneurship fraternity as the 'Father of Entrepreneurship Movement,' Dr. V. G. Patel committed himself to propagating entrepreneurship. Not only did he succeed in establishing the credibility of his belief across India, but also went on to establish the National Resource Institute, EDII, in 1983.

Addressing the virtual audience on the unexplored entrepreneurial opportunities in agriculture and natural farming, **Shri Acharya Devvrat ji** Hon'ble Governor Shri of Gujarat said that close to 70 % of our population resides in villages and is dependent on agriculture and therefore, it becomes important that we take this field with the seriousness it deserves and institute measures to escalate natural farming in every way, so that the farmers move up from the level of subsistence to commercial farming. He added, "Amidst all the talks about healthy living and environment protection, a branch of farming gaining prominence is Natural Farming. The primary reason it is gaining grounds across the world is that it causes minimal damage to the environment, promises healthy produce and good health. I believe it is important to educate our farmers on Natural Farming as a strategy that could help them ensure sustainable capitalization of agriculture. Gujarat has made commendable progress in farming and agriculture, with focus on natural farming."

Governor Shri elaborated, "Today people are well aware about the implications of chemical based farming, on soil, water, environment and health, and are looking for options that do not threaten any of these aspects." Giving example of his 200 acre farm in kurukshetra, the distinguished speaker highlighted how he has been generating results, using natural farming, that are way better in every way in comparison to farmers using chemical laden inputs. Governor Shri recalled how he had sought help from Shri Subhash Kelkar on natural farming methods and had organised a 5-day training workshop for 500 farmers. He went on to talk about innovations in the domain and how indigenous inputs and cow dung and urine could be used to generate enviable results. Shri Acharya Devvrat ji concluded by saying how in the 60s during food shortage the agri scientists were right in evolving ways to enhance field produce but overuse of these chemical intensive ways had proven harmful for soil, environment and health. Thus, he added, the need was to adopt Natural Farming, which scores above organic farming and is innovative, generates better produce in terms of quality and quantity with no damage to environment, soil, water and health.

Guest of Honour, Prof. Anil Gupta enumerated how natural farming is an old age tradition but needs to be backed by extensive research for wider promotion and acceptance. Prof. Gupta suggested that there should be an all-India coordinated research project on participatory natural farming research. He stated that it is important to empower organic certification by network of organic farmers, jointly with official agencies, and all certifications can be uploaded on national website for peer scrutiny. Prof. Gupta also advocated setting up of separate agro service Centres for herbal inputs. Emphasizing on orienting children and youths towards this, he elaborated on the need to train children in both rural and urban areas, alongside natural farming fellowships for two-three years for youths willing to learn from organic farmers. Prof. Gupta highlighted the need to escalate support to organic farmers and towards innovations in the area.

**Dr. Sunil Shukla's** paid tribute to Late Dr. V.G. Patel recalling Dr. Patel's exceptional contribution to economic development of the nation through the concept of entrepreneurship. He then talked about the potential of entrepreneurship in all domains. Dr. Shukla highlighted how Governor Shri is inclined towards promoting natural farming. He stressed on the importance of bringing in entrepreneurship as a catalyst to spurring agriculture in the country. He said, "Policy measures in a bid to spur innovations in agriculture are noteworthy as it is one of the prominent employment generating sectors and urgently needs an overhaul to maximize its potential. Natural farming has these benefits and several more, which

necessitate relevant interventions.”

Dr. Shukla also announced the winners of **Dr. V. G. Patel Memorial Award for Entrepreneurship Trainer/ Educator/Mentor 2020**

### **Dr. V. G. Patel Memorial Award for Entrepreneurship Trainer/ Educator/Mentor 2020**

Dr. Patel also envisioned creating a cadre of entrepreneur trainer-motivators which he believed would impart sustainability to the entrepreneurship development movement. He was right in thinking so as today Entrepreneur Trainer-Motivators have come to play a major role in propagating entrepreneurship and sustaining its results. To pay our tribute to the late legendry, EDII has, from this year, instituted 'Dr. V. G. Patel Memorial Award for Entrepreneurship Trainer/ Educator/Mentor'. The Award consists of a citation and a cash prize of **Rs. 100,000/-** to a professional for his/her outstanding performance/contribution in Entrepreneurship Training/Education/Mentoring/Knowledge Creation, leading to setting up of enterprises. For 'Dr. V. G. Patel Memorial Award for Entrepreneurship Trainer/ Educator/Mentor' 2020. EDII received 87 entries from 84 institutions and 15 states across India. The Institute followed a three tier procedure of evaluation and selection. The winners are:



- Dr. Pradeep Kumar Mishra, Professor, Department of Chemical Engineering and Technology, IIT (BHU) and Secretary & Coordinator, Malviya Centre of Innovation Incubation and Entrepreneurship, IIT(BHU) Varanasi Dr. Mishra started his career as an entrepreneur trainer motivator in 1997. His career spanning 23 years, is replete with noteworthy interventions in the areas of innovation, incubation and entrepreneurship. Dr. Mishra is credited with establishing the first incubator in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring states. This was established at Benaras Hindu University. Out of the individuals he has trained and mentored, nearly 50 % of them have set up their enterprises.



- Dr. Farahanaz Rasool, Deputy Director Extension Trainings, Directorate of Extension, Sher-e –Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir , Srinagar. Dr. Rasool, passionate about entrepreneurship and innovations, commenced her career as an entrepreneur trainer-motivator in 2003. Despite political turmoil and grave limitations in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Rasool put up a brave front and continued imparting training and orientation to people to ensure setting up of more and more enterprises. In addition to training and mentoring potential entrepreneurs and unemployed youths, Dr. Rasool's contribution towards imparting entrepreneurial exposure to farmers is creditworthy. Dr. Rasool's contribution is laudable for, she has ensured training and new enterprise creation amidst adversities and constraints. Many Congratulations Dr.

Rasool. Keep achieving landmarks.