

Two days National Seminar

On

The Quest for Atmanirbhar Bharat: From the Past, Through the Present, to the Future

Scheduled on 25 to 26 September 2026

Concept Note

As the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies (IIAS), Shimla, is completing 60 years of its establishment, Bharat is aspiring to achieve the target of Viksit Bharat by the year 2047, with the philosophy of Atmanirbharata. This year is also commemorative year of sixty-years of the foundational political philosophy of Integral Humanism that sought to find Bharatiya alternative framework of governance and development. On the occasion of both these events, it is proposed to organise a National Seminar on the theme - “The Quest for Aatmanirbhar Bharat: From the Past, Through the Present to the Future” at the IIAS, Shimla.

The theme of the proposed seminar seeks to explore Bharat’s journey from the idea of Swaraj to the philosophy of Swadeshi, and from the Colonial Kaal to Aatmanirbhar Bharat @2047. The concepts of Swaraj, Swadeshi, and Aatmanirbhar Bharat are interrelated and deeply interconnected. The seminar will address this theme through broad and interdisciplinary perspectives, drawing upon diverse areas of knowledge and expertise of the scholars and practitioners.

When Deendayal Ji presented his thoughts Ekatma Manava Darshan (Integral Humanist Philosophy), bipolarity based on capitalism vs communism was the norm. The Bharatiya theory of holistic development, entitled ‘Integral Humanism’ was adopted in 1965 as a political doctrine, with a view to overcome all prevalent shortcomings of Capitalism and Communism. Then, Bharatiya Model of development as an option was not even considered as a credible thought in academic and policy discourse. Today, when communism has failed to provide an alternative to capitalism and capitalism has been facing cycle of crisis of inflation and deflation, environmental degradation and unstable international order, Deendayal Upadhyaya’s Ekatma Darshan provides a framework for sustainable and inclusive development for all with purely Bharatiya ethos. The two day seminar seeks to bring together academicians, thinkers,

practitioners, and policy makers to revisit Ekatma Manav Darshan in the post-Globalisation world and deliberate on the Dharmic model of development.

Nature and culture are two integral elements that shape the model of development. According to the Integral Humanist Approach, every nation and society has a distinctive consciousness and culture; hence any attempt to impose one size fits all approach will invariably be exploitative and unsustainable. After the three decades of American model of globalisation, this is all the more evident. The current model of globalisation is collapsing but alternative emerging in the form of state-controlled capitalism is even more uncertain and destructive. In such a uncertain world, it is worthwhile to revisit the philosophy of Akatma Manav Darshan to pursue the goal of Viksit Bharat based on Atmanirbharata. Can the wisdom of Vaudhaiva Kutumbakam provide the economic an institutional alternative to the humanity, how can we address the emerging technological challenges and what are the policy initiatives based on Ekatma Manava Darshan would provide us a guiding light in this process, these and similar set of questions need an in-depth and consistent churning while thinking the goal of Atmanirbhar and Viksit Bharat.

When Bharat is striving to realise the goal of being Viksit (developed) with the route of Atmanirbharata, it cannot be imitation of any foreign model. Whether Integral Humanist Approach can help us in achieving this goal, is the core question this seminar seeks to address. While explaining the integral philosophy Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya did not argue for returning to the old systems or rejecting everything that is based on Western idea of modernity. He gave a two fold formula. Firstly, learn from the past, understand the present and work for the future. Secondly, whatever is swadeshi (national) should be made Yuganukul (in tune with the contemporary times) and whatever is Videshi (Foreign) should be Deshanukul (transformed as per the national ethos). With this framework, Atmanirbharata is beyond economic and technological self-sufficiency, and evolving governance and development model as per the Chiti or National Spirit, so that the Virat or the manifestation of the national spirit can be achieved. The seminar can revisit this fundamental framework of Integral Humanist Philosophy and re-contextualise the same for the present challenges, to devise the strategy for the future.

The seminar will focus on the following themes:

1. Concept of Viksit Bharat through Atmanirbharata
2. Revisiting the philosophy of Ekatama Manav Darshan

3. Ekatma Manav Darshan and Present Global Scenario
4. Past Practices, Present Success stories
5. Present challenges and future trajectories
6. Viksit Bharat, Atmanirbharata and Ekatma Manav Darshan
7. Technological advancement and Viksit Bharat
8. Education, Healthcare and Population: An Integral Humanist Perspective
9. Disparities and development: Evolving a Bharatiya Solution
10. Gender Complementarity- Women-led development for Viksit Bharat
11. Intercontextuality of swaraj-swadeshi and atmanibhar Bharat.
12. Economic contextuality of the trio