

# Swaminathan for adequate support to agri research

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Prof M S Swaminathan, Director, Agriculture Research Foundation, Chennai and UNESCO Chair in Eco-technology today said it would be possible to promote an "ever-green revolution" provided adequate support for research in the field of agriculture was designed for public good.

Delivering the 49th annual convocation address of Karnatak University, Dharwad, Prof Swaminathan said, at the same time, political and public action should curb the spread of "greed revolution" based on over-exploitation of land and water, devastation of forests, and pollution of the oceans and atmosphere.

The bio-village model of improving the livelihood security of the poor revolved around a human-centered approach to economic development. The poor were poor because they had no assets like land, livestock, or high value skills, he said. The approach to poverty alleviation should be on asset building and community cooperation. Fortunately, modern information technology provided an opportunity for promoting a "learning revolution", he added.

Universities could launch a knowledge system for spreading the market driven skills in the villages, he said and added that bio-village helped in both ways — to conserve natural resources and to alleviate poverty.

Poverty alleviation efforts should be redesignated as an asset building and community co-operation programmes, he added.

**ECLIPSED:** Prof Swaminathan said many aspects of the present century were being eclipsed by the ever-expanding economic and gender inequality. More than a billion of the human population existed on a per capita daily income of one US dollar, while another two billion earned hardly two US dollars per day. Most developing nations suffered from the crippling debt burden, he added.

The industrialised nations were getting richer as they enjoyed the benefits of technology and capital in industry, and technology and subsidy driven agriculture. Skin colour based apartheid was getting replaced by economic and technological apartheid, the noted scientist added.

He said, apart from poverty, damage to life supporting systems of land, water, flora, fauna, forests, bio-diversity, and atmosphere

presented the greatest threat to sustainable human health and happiness. Areas rich in genetic diversity were often affected by extensive genetic erosion, he added.

Karnatak University Vice-Chancellor A M Pathan said society was passing through an adjustment process. Higher Education Minister Basavaraja Patil Attur presented gold medals.