



**Dr. B.R. Ambedkar University Delhi**

**Shodhotsav 2025**

**“Sustainable and *Viksit* city, nation, and the world”**

**National Conference for Faculty and Researchers**

**23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025**

**Call for Abstracts**

## **Overview**

Development, *Vikas*, along with the attendant promises and discourses of progress and improvement, was a key leitmotif and justification to legitimise modern colonialism. The anticolonial struggles to achieve independence, and the postcolonial nation-states, accepted, aspired, emulated, appropriated, and critiqued the dominant ideology of development, its motives, institutional architecture, and (unequal) resource distribution. The idea of sustainability drew attention to the unviability and effects of the dominant model of development on human and non-human lives, societies, nature, and relationships. In this contested history of the idea and conceptions of development and sustainability, questions have been asked about the imagination, inclusions and exclusions, contextual meanings, adaptations, voices, cultures, and experiences.

In this context, the conference, “*Sustainable and Viksit: City, Nation and the World*”, part of Dr. BR Ambedkar University’s Annual *Shodhotsav* Festival, seeks to explore the complex and multifaceted nature of development and sustainability. It aims to understand that at this contemporary juncture, what does the idea of *Viksit Bharat* mean besides a policy direction, and how is it invested with aspirations for a better future, free from the precarity of the past. What kinds of imagination, knowledge production, actions, policies, institutional changes, and preparedness are needed by the state, civil society, universities, and citizens to address and reshape a sustainable city, nation, and the world based on ethical thinking and values of social and cultural inclusion? How do universities as sites of knowledge dissemination, preservation, and production contribute to new subjectivities and policy thinking?

This interdisciplinary conference invites scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to contribute to the discussion on how we can contribute to new subjectivities and policy thinking about

sustainable and *Viksit* Delhi, India, and the world amidst intersecting challenges and transformations at the local, regional, and global levels.

## **Themes and Topics**

We welcome papers that engage with the theme of “Sustainable and Viksit: City, nation and the world” from a variety of perspectives. Submissions may address the following themes, but may also address other areas within the overarching focus of the conference:

### **1. Reclaiming and reshaping Delhi and urban: From environment to people**

Contemporary Delhi faces an acute crisis for its existence as a sustainable urban habitation of its residents and migrants, as evident in the state of the river Yamuna, every year’s pollution crisis, sewage and solid waste management, and availability of water, education and health facilities. How do differently positioned citizens experience, live, voice and (dis)own the city, its histories, and its people, and what does this entail? What policy imaginations and shifts can address the existing poverty, hunger and emerging social and ecological landscapes of cities? Often, the city is imagined as a binary and based on the *other*, the rural and the village. How do the rural and village survive, live, reshape and are reshaped by the city, and in what ways, relationships of communities and the city be reworked?

### **2. Psyche, culture, language and literature**

In what ways do individual and collective psychic well-being relate to the idea of *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability? If individuals are not atomistic and isolated beings but embedded in social structures, institutions, and cultures, with long histories and undergoing transformations, how do we understand their psychic and other locations? In what ways do language, literature, cultural artefacts, and performances record, provide insights, and frame subjectivity in general, and with reference to the constructs of *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability, in particular?

### **3. Rights, nation, state, and citizens**

What are the emerging meanings and locations of the rights and responsibilities, belonging, nation, state, and citizens in the imaginaries and policy landscapes of *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability? How do these draw upon, intersect with and revise the past histories, and reshape the present to construct a distinct future? In what ways, old and ‘new’ political and social mobilisations and identities reconfigure the citizen-state relationships? What kinds of new architectures of governance, inter-institutional relations, public-private networks, conflicts, negotiations, and (re) settlements are emerging and required through languages and institutions of law, state, market and global actors and discourses to counter poverty, inequality, and hunger? How are well-being, work, conservation, ownership, participation, health, and education constructed as policy object(s)/(ives), provided, accessed, and delivered?

#### 4. Centre and margins

Centre and margin are material and discursive constructs, positionalities, social, spatial and disciplinary locations. Who (and by whom) has been imagined at the centre, both in spatial and social terms (e.g. north-east India and its communities, children, and farmers) in the earlier articulations of development? What are the rationalities that governed these constructions? How do those left at the margin negotiate(d) their relationship with the centre and development? How are universities and schools, with hierarchies of their public and private status and infrastructural resources, metropolitan, provincial and rural locations, English and vernacular as sites of identities and knowledge production and consumption, constituted as centre and margin, and what policy actions are warranted for their participation in the realisation of *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability? In what ways, marginality figure as a dysfunction of policy, an anomaly or a success of policy, and what does it take to reimagine and decenter the centre?

#### 5. Disciplining knowledge: past, present and future

How do the canonical knowledge systems of the different disciplines of humanities and social sciences, including management, and their displacement in the ‘new humanities’ make us aware of the trajectories, hopes and possibilities, intentions, interests, effects, rationalities, and silences, if any, of *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability? What are the new insights about contemporary technological transformations, climate change, new conditions of work and reformations of agriculture and industries, offered by these disciplines? How are the knowledge disciplines, institutions of knowledge production and their regulation, and the producers of this knowledge addressed in *Viksit Bharat* and sustainability?

#### Who can submit a paper?

- Faculty members in a higher education institution
- Early career researchers holding a PhD
- Policymakers, members of policy think tanks
- Practitioners and professionals (e.g. school teachers, health professionals), members of Non-governmental organisations working on the grassroots level

#### Submission Guidelines

We invite submissions that address the conference theme. Submissions should include:

- **Title:** A concise and informative title.
- **Abstract:** A summary of the paper or extended abstract (500 words max) highlighting the research question, methodology, key findings, and relevance to the conference theme.
- **Keywords:** Up to five keywords that describe the main topics of the paper.

- **Format:** Submissions should be in English and follow APA, MLA, or another relevant academic style.

The abstract and other information can be submitted through the following link:

<https://forms.gle/mXQMLq3uVvRxGGtD9>

### **Important Dates**

- **Abstract Submission Deadline:** Friday, 29 August 2025
- **Notification of Acceptance:** Monday, 1 September 2025
- **Last Date of Registration:** Monday, 8 September 2025
- **Conference Date:** Tuesday, 23 September 2025

### **Conference Participation**

The conference will be held in an in-person mode only at the AUD Campus in Karampura, Delhi.

### **Registration Fee**

There is no registration fee for AUD faculty and staff. The fee for participants from outside is INR 1000, inclusive of conference materials, lunch, and snacks. AUD will not bear any cost related to travel, boarding, or local transport for any participant.

### **Contact Information**

For inquiries regarding submissions, registration, or general information, please contact the conference organising committee at [snationalconference@gmail.com](mailto:snationalconference@gmail.com)