



**WEST BENGAL FEDERATION  
OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS  
&  
GAUDIYA MISSION**

**REPORT**  
of the Seminar on  
**“THE CHALLENGES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND  
ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS”**  
&  
Inauguration of  
**“CENTRE FOR UN & PEACE STUDIES  
AND FOUNDING OF LIBRARY”**

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**WEBFUNA**  
&  
**GAUDIYA MISSION**

# INAUGURAL CEREMONY



Inaugurating the Seminar with candle lighting (from left) Mr. Nicholas Low, British Deputy High Commissioner in Kolkata; Mr. Sitaram Sharma, Chairman of WEBFUNA; Sri Srimad Bhakti Sundar Sanyasi Goswami Maharaj, Acharya & President, Gaudiya Mission; Ms. Melinda Pavek, Consul General of the USA in Kolkata, Mr. Jugal Kishore Saraf, Honorary Consul of Chile in Kolkata and Dr. Bhabatosh Biswas, former Vice Chancellor of WBUHS



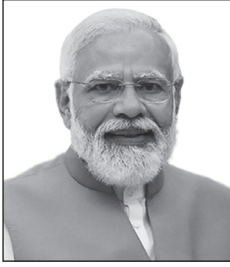
Shri Sitaram Sharma presenting 100 copies of his book “United Nations: 100 Popular Questions & Answers” for the Library



Large audience at the Auditorium

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“As we track the progress of climate mitigation, we must also track climate finance. Justice would truly be served if pressure is put on those Countries that have not lived up to their climate finance commitments.”

“It is imperative to follow a sustainable lifestyle to protect the environment. Making ‘Lifestyle for Environment’ a global mission is the need of the hour and will prove the relevance of this platform. I’m hopeful the decisions taken in this forum will save the future of our next generation.”

**NARENDRA MODI**  
*Prime Minister of India*

## **REPORT OF THE RAPPOREUR**

This Seminar on “Challenges of Climate Change and Role of the United Nations” seeks to highlight the absolute urgency that this subject has on the survival of our planet and all its constituents.

The sixth report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has been unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. While some of the changes are mercifully reversible, others are irreversible thereby landing us in a climate emergency.

Without very significant reductions in greenhouse gases it is likely that global surface temperatures will continue to raise leading to extreme weather events - particularly heat waves and heavy rains that have become more frequent and more severe over the years.

All the distinguished speakers here at the seminar came together on this platform to put forward their views, experiences, and the immediate need to deal with the issues of global warming such as depletion of polar ice caps, rapid increase in ocean water levels, ozone layer depletion in the atmosphere, rise in carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere, pollutants that play a key role in harming our planet and threatening our very existence. I appeal to all of you to spread the message of this Seminar with great zeal and passion so that we can in our own way contribute to save our planet and all its constituents for time immemorial.

“While G20 members are responsible for 75% of global greenhouse gas emission collectively, they are not likely to meet their financial commitments. The rich countries have failed in mobilizing even the promised amount of 100 billion US dollars per year to help the developing countries to meet their climate action cost” – UN Environmental Programme(UNEP)Report.

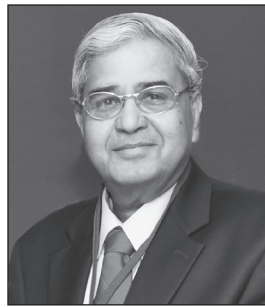
**By DR. RAHUL VARMA**  
Additional Secretary General, WEBFUNA



**Welcome Address By :**

**MR. SITARAM SHARMA**

**Chairman, West Bengal Federation of UN Associations &  
Former Deputy Secretary-General and  
Asia-Pacific Regional Director of  
World Federation of UN Associations, Geneva**



As far as climate change and role of the UN is concerned, I have no hesitation in saying that world should no more bet on the UN to fix climate change, it has failed for 30 years. But at the same time there is no alternative to international cooperation to face the challenges of climate change. The world is in a fix. The UN has not been very successful despite 26 Conferences of Parties(COP). The parties are those countries who had signed the original UN climate agreement in 1992.

However despite not having a very successful record to show so far, there is no alternative to granting a leading role to the UN to take more important responsibility as it is an international multilateral organisation which has the largest membership of the world countries, covers the most area and enjoys highest authority. The UN should play an active role coordinating the position of the member states to seek consensus on more issues and urge them to abide by the conventions.

The other major failure is on the part of Rich Nations. UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has pointed out on the eve of COP27 to be held from 6 to 8 November 2022 at Sharm-el-Sheikh in Egypt that while G20 members are responsible for 75 percent of global greenhouse gas emission collectively, are not likely to meet their financial commitments. The rich countries have failed in mobilizing even the promised amount of 100 billion US dollar per year to help the developing countries to meet their climate action cost, so the prospects of achievement of global transformation to a low carbon economy requiring an investment of at least 4 to 6 billion US dollar per year looks bleak. This issue is likely to dominate the discussion at COP27 next month.

USA, China and India are the largest emitter of the carbon dioxide of the world total. Therefore they play an irreplaceable role in the international strategy.

The scientists say only 8 (eight) years are left to avoid worst effects. IPCC climate report gives us 10 years to save the world. Is climate catastrophe really 10 (ten) years away? These “10 years to disaster” scenarios are more based on speculative computer models and less on scientifically determined facts. But latest science shows that climate change is moving much faster.

The climate change may affect the natural ecosystem, food safety, sustainable development and even the existence of human society. The climate change is a common challenge facing the international community but was historically caused by high per capita emission of greenhouse gases of the developed countries. The UNFCCC provided that the responsibility of developed countries is higher and these countries shall take lead in providing additional financial resources and to transfer technology to address climate change. Little progress has been made in technology transfer and providing financial resources and assistance to capacity building.

No single country or a group of countries is capable of addressing this global issue. There are 195 countries in the world, big and small, rich and poor, developed, developing and least developed. No single rule or standard can be followed. Nor equal emission cuts can be applied. In all fairness the principle of common but differential responsibility must be upheld.

Climate change and its effects are accelerating, with climate related disasters piling up, season after season. Things are getting worse. It has been a decade of exceptional global heat. It is more urgent than ever to proceed with mitigation. But reducing greenhouse gas emission to fight climate change will require drastic measures. Seas are warming and rising faster, putting more cities at risk of tidal flooding or worse.

Climate action is a task for all of us. And its concern all of us. No one can do it all alone, but we can do it together. Time is of the essence in the race against climate change. The humanity now faces its last chance to reduce global greenhouse gas emission. While many governments have pledged to reach net-zero implementation, however comprehensive policy alignment is now urgently needed. “The time for saying one thing and doing another is over” says UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.

To deliver a world that restricts global warming to 1.5°C – an internationally agreed target, systematic change is needed. Yet inspite of the evidence at hand, climate change remains the toughest and most intractable political issue, we as a society have ever faced.

Rich countries are needed to do more in terms of their climate commitments and allow developing countries the space to grow. But that is not happening. The UN has called long term finance a “key pillar” of Paris agreement and crucial to fighting the climate crisis.

The issue is, not recognizing the problem, it is resourcing the solution. Real worrying is if you look at the history of how we dealt with climate change, we have seen promises year after year and conference after conference. We have seen continuous inability to live upto those promises.

Experts agree that without big reduction in China’s emission, the world cannot win the fight against climate change. China has announced that it would aim to be carbon neutral by 2060. China is now likely the world’s largest emitter of greenhouse gases. China faces substantial challenges in mitigating its increasing contribution to global greenhouse gas emission, which will require a much higher level of effort than which may be achieved by measures already in place.

India has walked the talk on commitments to deal with climate change. PM Narendra Modi has said “our planet is not fragile. It is us. We are fragile. A lot has been said over 50 years since 1972 Stockholm Conference, but very little has been done. Now it is time for the world to walk the talk”.

Climate change is a real and undeniable threat to our entire civilization. The effects are already visible and will be catastrophic unless we act now. Through education, innovation and adherence to our climate commitments, we can make the necessary changes, also provide huge opportunities to modernize our infrastructure which will create new jobs and promote greater prosperity across the globe.



“We are in the fight of our lives, and we are losing, our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible, we are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator.”

**ANTONIO GUTERRES**  
*Secretary General, United Nations*

**Address By : MS. MELINDA PAVEK**  
**Consul General of the United States of America in Kolkata**



It is a pleasure to be here at my very first engagement with members of the West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations. In the run-up to the COP 27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt next month, I appreciate this opportunity to discuss with you the existential crisis that climate change poses and emphasize the urgency with which we need to work together to address this challenge.

As two of the world's oldest and largest democracies, the partnership between the United States and India is one of our most consequential relationships. 2022 is a momentous year for both the U.S. relationship with the nation of India and the city of Kolkata. This year, the United States and India are celebrating the 75th anniversary of our countries' diplomatic relations. 2022 also marks the 230th anniversary of Benjamin Joy being nominated by George Washington to be the first U.S. Consul to Kolkata in 1792.

We continue to engage at the bilateral, regional, and global levels to deepen our cooperation on the issues most vital to our people. These include deploying clean energy; improving the health and growing the prosperity of our peoples; bolstering our security and democracies; and upholding a free, open, rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific. Each of these priorities directly or indirectly connects to combatting the climate crisis.

The impacts of climate change are already being felt globally, and it will only get worse. The climate crisis is exacerbating other global challenges like poverty and food and water insecurity. Droughts, fires, and floods driven by climate change are displacing millions around the globe. One only has to turn on the TV or scroll social media to see images of devastation from natural disasters and extreme weather. Climate change is also giving rise to a health crisis as changing temperature, rainfall, and humidity patterns affect how infectious diseases spread. Climate change is making our oceans warmer, higher, more acidic, and less supportive of life. Therefore, this fight to keep rising global temperatures under 1.5



degrees Celsius is about the very survival of our civilization. For those who are podcast listeners, I strongly recommend one titled “How We Survive” for its excellent reporting about the task we must undertake.

So, what is the United States doing about this climate crisis? President Biden has made addressing the climate crisis a top priority. He rejoined the Paris Agreement on Day One of his presidential term and set ambitious Nationally Determined Contribution or NDC targets. The United States has committed to reducing U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to 50-52 percent below 2005 levels by 2030; reach 100 percent carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035; and achieve a net zero emissions economy by 2050. President Biden also signed historic pieces of legislation committing hundreds of billions of dollars to achieve these targets, convened major climate summits to galvanize global climate action, and helped deliver critical agreements at the COP 26 last year.

Let me highlight the Biden-Harris Administration’s key initiatives to tackle the climate crisis at home and abroad.

Last year at COP26, President Biden announced the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience, or PREPARE, in response to the climate crisis. Through PREPARE, the United States is taking a whole-of-government approach to help more than half a billion people in partner countries adapt to and manage the impacts of climate change by 2030. The President committed to work with Congress to provide \$3 billion in adaptation finance annually for PREPARE by FY2024 – the largest U.S. commitment ever made to reduce climate impacts on those most vulnerable to climate change worldwide.

In September of this year, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, released the PREPARE Action Plan that outlines key areas where the United States will work with partners to catalyze climate adaptation action. We will work with partners to strengthen climate information services and early warning systems to equip people and institutions with the information they need to make sound decisions and take effective actions. We will build capacity to mainstream adaptation into policies, programs, and budgets, and to support locally led adaptation. Finally, we will help unlock financing that is needed to support national, sub-national, and local climate adaptation actions.

Also in September, President Biden signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 that will invest \$369 billion in the modernization of the American energy system. The Act is the single largest and most ambitious U.S. investment ever to advance clean energy, cut consumer energy costs,

address the climate crisis, promote environmental justice, and strengthen energy security. Under this law, tax credits are available to companies for investments in wind, solar, geothermal, nuclear, and hydrogen energy, biofuels, methane reduction, and technology that captures carbon from fossil fuel power plants. Consumers can receive tax credits for energy-efficient home improvements, up to 30 percent of the cost of the adoption and use of solar, heat pumps, and wind energy systems through 2032. Tax credits of up to \$7,500 for the purchase of an electric vehicle are also available.

The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that this new law, in combination with other enacted policies, including the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act passed last year, will help drive economy-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 40 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. Our investments will also help reduce the cost of developing clean energy technologies worldwide, not only in the United States.

The Biden-Harris Administration has also recently announced new actions under the Federal “Buy Clean” Initiative. Under this initiative, the federal government will prioritize the purchase of lower-carbon steel, concrete, asphalt, and flat glass—materials that account for nearly half of all greenhouse gas emissions from U.S. manufacturing. Companies across the nation will be rewarded for cutting carbon pollution across their entire value chains.

In addition to domestic action, President Biden and his team are rallying the world to take the decisive action needed in this decade to tackle the climate crisis. However, I agree with Mr. Sharma that we need to do more.

In May, President Biden, Prime Minister Modi, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio met for the fourth Quad leaders’ meeting. Recognizing our growing need for transition to a net-zero economy and climate change resilience, the leaders launched the “Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package” or “Q-CHAMP” with mitigation and adaptation as its two themes. Among other activities, Q-CHAMP is working on greening the shipping industry and ports based on tangible experiences from each of the Quad countries so that the movement of goods from Kolkata to Kansas City today, and Tajpur to Tacoma tomorrow, can operate on a shared green corridor. Enhancing research and development into climate-smart agriculture innovations is another activity under Q-CHAMP that has the potential to benefit farmers in agriculture-dependent economies in our regions, where erratic weather and rainfall patterns are adversely affecting crop yields.

In June, President Biden reconvened the leaders of the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, to further galvanize action. Citing international scientific assessments that urgently underscored the narrowing window for decisive action, President Biden urged leaders to step up their climate efforts and to achieve further progress at COP 27. MEF leaders, representing 23 countries that together account for roughly 80 percent of global Gross Domestic Product and global greenhouse gas emissions, agreed to join new efforts aimed at tackling the climate crisis while advancing energy security and food security. These efforts include, among other initiatives, putting more zero-emission vehicles on the road and decarbonizing ocean-based shipping.

Changes in global supply chains are needed to support our climate change objectives. Therefore, the United States has launched the Minerals Security Partnership to make supply chains for critical minerals that provide essential inputs for clean energy technologies more diverse, sustainable, and resilient. U.S. Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Commerce Raimondo co-chaired a Supply Chain Ministerial in July to agree on a process to spend funds under the recently signed CHIPS and Science Acts to support more secure semiconductor supply chains.

In September, U.S. Trade Representative Tai and Secretary of Commerce Raimondo hosted the 13 partner economies of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity or IPEF – representing over 40 percent of the global economy – at the first official in-person Ministerial meeting in Los Angeles. Since its launch in May, IPEF countries, which include India, have engaged in intensive discussions to scope out each of the four pillars of the Framework, which are Trade, Supply Chains, Clean Economy, and Fair Economy. In the Clean Economy Pillar, the partners aim to advance cooperation on clean energy and climate-friendly technologies, mobilize investment, and promote usage of low- and zero-emissions goods and services. This work will be part of a future-oriented effort to enhance energy security and reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions. The partners seek to promote just transitions, with the active participation of all stakeholders, including the private sector, workers, and local communities.

As climate and clean energy leaders, the United States and India share a common vision to deploy clean energy at scale during this critical decade to reduce emissions and achieve climate change mitigation goals. The U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership, led by President Biden and Prime Minister Modi, supports the achievement of India's ambitious targets, including the enhanced target Prime Minister Modi announced at COP26. Working together, the United States and India seek to develop and scale-up the innovative clean technologies needed to

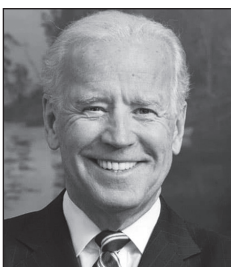
reduce greenhouse gas emissions in industry, transportation, power, and construction, today and into the future. We also aim to increase capacity to measure, manage, and adapt to the climate crisis-related impacts that we are already seeing today.

At the Ministerial dialogue of the U.S.-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership held in October in Washington, DC, U.S. Secretary of Energy Granholm and Indian Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Singh Puri committed to strengthen bilateral climate and clean energy collaboration. The ministers agreed to enhance bilateral efforts to strengthen the power grid to ensure reliable, affordable, and resilient clean energy supplies to support India's goal of achieving its climate commitments.

Despite the substantive action we are taking at domestic, multilateral, and bilateral levels, we are behind in our efforts to do what the science tells us we need to do to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees. Which is why, this fall and beyond, we must do everything in our power to give life to the Glasgow Climate Pact. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate Change John Kerry has said we need to pursue an "Implementation Plus" approach at COP 27. What does this mean? It means delivering on existing commitments and strengthening commitments that are not strong enough, plus creating new commitments and efforts where none exist.

Availability of climate finance is critical to achieving climate goals. The United States remains strongly committed to the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion annually for climate mitigation and adaptation in developing countries. At the 77th U.N. General Assembly, President Biden said his administration is working with our Congress to deliver more than \$11 billion a year to international climate finance to help lower-income countries implement their climate goals and ensure a just energy transition.

As Special Envoy Kerry has said, "We can still win this battle, but it will require a wholesale elevation of effort by countries all around the world". Therefore, today I urge each of us to take on this challenge wholeheartedly, because the future of our planet and our civilization depends on us.



"The climate crisis is about human security, economic security, environmental security, national security, and the very life of the planet."

**JOE BIDEN**

*President of United States of America*



**Address By : MR. NICHOLAS LOW**  
**British Deputy High Commissioner in Kolkata**



Can I first start by thanking the West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations for the very warm welcome you've given me today. And, indeed, for your choice of venue. It is my first time at the Gaudiya Mission Headquarters in Kolkata. It is truly stunning.

Let me make two personal observations. The first is that climate and environment are the responsibility of us all. The success of the United Nations Framework Convention Conferences of Parties clearly fall to Governments. But they are only part of the picture. Businesses, academia and our scientific institutions, civil society and each of us as consumers have a vital role to play. We borrow the earth from our children and grandchildren. Our heavy responsibility is that the planet we bequeath is fit for purpose, an earth of blues and greens, not of yellows and browns. To achieve that we need determined action, common purpose and urgency.

The second is the understated role of religion and religious leaders. 84% of the world's population identify with a faith. All faiths teach care for creation and our planet. It is not ours to do with as we wish. Faith leaders, who have always given guidance on the pressing moral issues of the day, have a vital role. Scientists recognise that they need faith leaders: science cannot always reach hearts and minds in the way religion does; and science sometimes lacks empathy.

The United Kingdom is now into the final two weeks of its role as President of the 26th United Nations Conference on Climate Change, or COP26. It has been a near-three year journey in the thick of international climate politics and the maelstrom of wider geopolitics. I have given many speeches during that time to gatherings such as this one. And it remains an absolute privilege to do so. There is no more noble cause. There is no higher foreign policy priority. You all know this, but it sometimes needs to be repeated.

We are facing a climate crisis. The scientific evidence is absolutely clear, it's unequivocal. We know that we are running out of time to avert catastrophe. The reality is that if we do not bend the curve of global warming downwards, in this decisive decade – eight and a half years left – we will go beyond the limits of our ability to adapt. Around the world, we are already seeing

what that future could look like. And that future is absolutely terrifying. For some people across the world, it is here right now.

In the last two months, an area the size of the United Kingdom has been flooded in Pakistan. A monster monsoon bringing in its wake death, destruction and displacement of millions of people. Hurricane Fiona has caused death and misery across the Caribbean. This summer we have seen the United States experience its worst drought in over a thousand years. Europe has experienced its worst drought in 500 years. And China its worst ever drought, as record temperatures have dried up key parts of the Yangtze River. I could go on. You will all have examples as well. Not least the loss of life in Assam and other parts of the Northeast at the beginning of the monsoon.

The new UNFCCC Executive Secretary Simon Stiell has made the point that the reality of these events is a cycle of disaster, rebuild, disaster, rebuild, for millions of people around the world. We need to do better. And we also know that the increasing frequency, and ferocity, of these extreme weather events is set to worsen.

Hence our drive to implement the outcomes of the Glasgow Climate Pact. We are proud that, when the world came to Glasgow last November, the UK Presidency shepherded nearly 200 countries to forge the historic Glasgow Climate Pact. The outcome of that Pact was not an inevitability.

There was huge scepticism in the international community at the start of the UK Presidency about whether we really could make progress on the road to, and at Glasgow. All that we did was underpinned by four key principles: transparency, inclusivity, consistency of message and trust, and trust, I have to say to you, is an incredibly fragile commodity in climate negotiations. We wanted to ensure that those four principles would be the foundation on which we built an ambitious COP26 outcome. But, having spent two years talking to governments around the world, trying to craft the key elements of the Glasgow Climate Pact, we almost fell short in the final hours of COP26.

We had an opacity in those one-minute-to-midnight negotiations. As you know, China and India raised objections to key language on coal and fossil fuel subsidies. We went behind the stage to negotiate. And we succeeded in agreeing a final text that kept the goal of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 1.5°C alive. Things could have turned out very differently. Were we disappointed that, after such effort to run a transparent Presidency, the COP26 negotiating process was ending in hushed and rushed conversations? Yes, we were. But we were, and continue to be, incredibly proud of what we achieved in delivering the Glasgow Climate Pact.

Our overall goal, right from the start, was to garner enough commitments to ensure that we were keeping alive the prospect of limiting global warming

to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels. And we achieved that goal. Prior to the Paris Agreement, scientists were telling us that the world was on course for 4 degrees of global warming by the end of the century. Post-Paris it was 3 degrees. After Glasgow, we were able to say with credibility that we had kept 1.5 alive. And whilst 1.5 degrees was our North Star, we made critical progress on adaptation, on finance, on loss and damage, on empowerment, and on so many other issues.

In fact, the Chair of the Climate Vulnerables Forum recognised the steps we had taken “on all the priorities of the most climate threatened nations”. Yes, we achieved a Pact. But frankly, the Pact is nothing but words on a page. The pulse of 1.5 will remain weak until the Pact, every element of it, is implemented in full. And we have to be frank that implementation is very challenging. First, we did all sign up to an ambitious programme of work. And second, the world has changed markedly since last November, overshadowed by the Putin regime’s brutal and illegal war in Ukraine. Countries around the world are facing perilous economic and geopolitical conditions, and threats to energy security. We are grappling with soaring inflation, rising debt, and food insecurity.

For many, climate has not been front of mind. But we do truly believe there remains cause for hope. We see climate leaders doing remarkable work. Take for example the Prime Minister of Vietnam, who is utterly relentless in driving his country’s economic transformation, based on clean energy. And we as a G7 nation, and other developed nations, are supporting that effort with Vietnam’s Just Energy Transition Partnership, which can be the gold standard for sustainable economic growth for developing countries around the world. Businesses and financial institutions are radically reimagining what it means to be a responsible, 21st century company.

Bill Gates has rightly noted that COP26 was the COP where businesses came in force. And you will have seen the founder of Patagonia, dedicating his company’s fortune to the climate cause. Now, where are we in this process? The UNFCCC has published its latest Synthesis Report. That report has made it abundantly clear that the job is very far from done. At the G20 Climate, Energy and Environment Ministers Meeting in Indonesia, our negotiators had to fight simply to restate commitments we have all previously signed up to. Inexplicably, there were debates about the unequivocal science of the IPCC reports. Some countries sought to push against language from the Glasgow Climate Pact, agreed just ten months ago, and the foundational Paris Agreement, on which that Pact is built. And there was even rowing back on the collective agreement that was reached by G20 leaders last year to lead on climate action.

So my message here and that of British Ministers and diplomats all round the world is unequivocal: the Glasgow and Paris language must be the baseline of our ambition. We cannot retreat from that. And this is a critical moment to redouble our efforts, resist backsliding, and ultimately

go further, and faster. Collectively, the world's richest countries, and the biggest emitters, have looked too many climate vulnerable countries and communities in the eyes, and promised too much action, to step back now. To do so would be a betrayal. Finance, as you have already heard, is a key ask of climate vulnerable countries and we must all, across the G7, deliver on our promises.

I want to turn now specifically to India, with whom the United Kingdom has been working hand-in-glove at the international, national, regional and local level since I arrived in Kolkata in late 2019. The 2030 Roadmap agreed between our leaders in May last year aims to transform the bilateral relationship between our great countries. Climate, and science, technology, research and innovation that will generate new techniques, procedures and inventions to combat the great global challenges of our time in climate science, health, AI and quantum computing, is at the heart of Roadmap 2020.

Working together – University of Oxford, AstraZenica and Serum Institute of India – have shown what the United Kingdom and India can do as a force for good. The vaccine that you call Covishield and that we call ChAdOx1 has gone into more arms around the world than any other vaccine. And it has saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Locally we will continue our working with Government of West Bengal, with Kolkata Municipal Corporation and with local business and industry in support of Zero Emission Vehicles and clean, green energy.

Let me end by asking you to reflect on the words of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, delivered to world leaders attending COP26. She said: “It is the hope of many that the legacy of this summit - written in the history books yet to be printed – will describe you as the leaders who did not pass up the opportunity; and that you answered the call of those future generations”.

That history is still to be written. And I hope that all of you here today, as the climate leaders that you are at home, at work and at school, will heed the late Queen's wise words. To those of you setting out on your own leadership journeys. Make them count. And whilst the United Kingdom's my formal role as COP President ends at COP27, we will be there with you, continuing to champion the cause of climate action, which is so vital.



“There is no long-term prosperity without action on climate change.”

**RISHI SUNAK**

*Prime Minister of United Kingdom*



**Address By:**  
**SRI SRIMAD BHAKTI SUNDAR SANYASI GOSWAMI MAHARAJ**  
**Acharya & President, Gaudiya Mission**



Distinguished dignitaries and eminent guests, respected sanyasi and bramhacharies of the Mission, and all other fortunate souls! It gives me immense pleasure to be here with you all at Sri Gaudiya Math here in Bagbazar.

Gaudiya Mission is a philanthropic and spiritual organisation. It was established in the year 1918, with the efforts of His Devine Grace Srimad Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad, the great visionary aspiring in preserving the cultural and spiritual heritage of India. Gaudiya Mission has around 58 branches, preaching centres and institutions in India and abroad and is untiringly striving to promote the philosophy of love, universal brotherhood and establishment of a peaceful global society. Gaudiya Mission is also engaged in academic, philanthropic, and social activities. You will be happy to know that Gaudiya Mission is in the midway celebrating the ‘150 advent commemoration of its founder Acharya Srila Bhakti Siddhant Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad’.

I am grateful to Mr Sitaram Sharma, Chairman WEBFUNA for felicitating the Centre for United Nations & Peace Studies and founding its Library corner here at the Gaudiya Math which I am sure will be of immense benefit to students and scholars alike.

Today we are discussing on “Challenges of Climate Change and Role of the United Nations”. We learn from Vedas that the world is as created by the Lord is the body of Lord Vishnu. SrimadBhagbatam signifies the world as-‘harer-sariram’. In vaish- navite practice, every morning we bow down to respect this universal nature as it is the Virat Form of Lord Vishnu.

All jiva-souls came to this world to satisfy their independent enjoyment hankers. Man being the intelligent-most creation of the Lord can spread his power over all other species and creation. But, it is grief that, his this power

has increased his greediness. Man, to fulfill his greed, harms the nature by imbalance-exploitation. All technologies and developments are misused and massively used creating imbalance. Environmental changes are the only effect of these imbalances. It is this harmful activities to the beautiful creation of Lord, in turn has returned to man as a threat of destruction and death. This is a punishment the deluding potency of Lord gives us, to teach Man that only respect and loving service to Lord and His creations is the real motive of Man but not self-enjoyment. Srimadbhagbatam says-

***kham vāyum agnim salilam mahiṁ ca  
jyotiṁṣi sattvāni diśo drumādīn  
sarit-samudrāmś ca hareḥ śarīram  
yat kim ca bhūtam praṇamed anyāḥ***

***Bhagbat (11/2/41)***

It says one should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead be it the Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun, all living beings, trees, plants, the rivers and oceans. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, one should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord's body. It is because everything is under the control of the Supreme Lord, Hari, and is considered to be His body. He is the original source and master of everything, and therefore nothing should be seen as different from Him. Only sincere respect to the Lord and His created nature can help Man to Love and be perfectly satisfied. Hence nature can be saved.

Our Mission following the tenets of Srīman Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, aims to teach the mankind to learn the way to love The Lord, the nature and the living being around this universe. Only and only Love in pure form or can be said as selfless love to Lord and to all can bring peace to this world and it will balance all environmental turmoil. Some 500 years ago Srīman Mahāprabhu proved us that this pure devotional love is possible and the process is very scientific and easily acceptable to one and all. Our Mission is engaged to show the path of this selfless Love. Without devotion love is but lust for sensual enjoyment only.

All the distinguished speakers here come together on this platform have expressed their views, experiences, and the immediate need to deal with the issues of global warming. Hare Krishna!



**Address By : Dr. BHABATOSH BISWAS**  
**Former Vice-Chancellor of WBUHS**



As physicians, we are really worried about the way ‘Climate Change’ is impacting the entire world. What we have seen and faced in the last three years had brought life to a standstill and threw our life into turmoil. This was the handy work of a small virus named Corona. We have all faced the wrath of this little microbe. We have to realize that Climate Change has triggered its spread. The horrors of this pandemic brought out our humane side where by humanity cared for one another and united to fight a common foe. We need to display a similar united front to combat Climate Change and with the blessings of Bhagaban sitting up and our Swamiji Sannyasi Maharaj, a great spiritual leader leading us and with their grace we will be able to survive in this universe for at least couple of centuries.

The implications of Climate Change in the near future will cause greater food shortage and water scarcity which will threaten our very existence. All this will also impact human health and we will see newer and more virulent diseases which will try to kill us. We have to hold our hands together otherwise it will be impossible to survive this great world.

What I would like to reiterate in this gathering is for all of us to participate in whatever small manner to contribute to save our environment. With this positive activity we may not be able to arrest Climate Change but we will at least be able to slow it down and in that way the hazards to our biological world would also reduce. My humble prayer to each of you is to come together and help humanity and all species at this planet survive this man-made disaster and make this planet a paradise for all species for time immemorial.



“Japan will work on advancing decarbonization and enhancing resilience, seeing clearly the varying realities of Asian countries, while realizing their sustainable economic growth.”

**FUMIO KISHIDA**  
*Prime Minister of Japan*

## **VOTE OF THANKS**

**By RAJEEV MAHESHWARI**  
**Secretary General, WEBFUNA**



Mrs. Melinda Pavek, Consul General, United States of America, Mr. Nicholas Low, British Deputy High Commissioner, Mr. Sitaram Sharma, Chairman, WEBFUNA, Dr. Bhabatosh Biswas, former Vice-Chancellor of WBUHS, Sri Srimad Bhakti Sundar Sanyasi Goswami Maharaj, Acharya & President, Gaudiya Mission, Members of WEBFUNA & distinguished guests. Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of WEBFUNA, I thank the Gaudiya Mission for associating with us to set up the Center for UN and Peace Studies as well as its library. This initiative will go a long way in disseminating knowledge and information about United Nations and its various agencies. A symbolic start has been made today with the handing over of his book by our Chairman Mr. Sitaram Sharma to Acharyaji.

The world is really not doing enough to rein in primarily fossil fuel production to the level that needed to hold catastrophic levels of global warming in turn leading to significant climate change. Climate change actually has to be reacted to by each and every person on this earth is caught to go to the last man standing. Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi along with the United Nation's Secretary General Antonio Guterres has recently launched a global initiative to combat climate change and make it a people across the world write down to the last man. I am thankful to all of you distinguished speakers on the stage for having delivered your valuable comments in our Seminar "The Challenges of Climate Change and Role of the United Nations".

I also convey my thanks to all dignitaries, members of the consular corps, guests, school students and fellow members for attending this programme with warm enthusiasm. I am very thankful to the media for being here present today to cover the programme. I am also very thankful to the Gaudiya Mission again for allowing us to use this beautiful auditorium for our programme and we look forward the more co-operation in the future. I now propose a hearty vote of thanks to everybody specially the distinguished speakers on the stage and request you all to carry the message of the Seminar with acclamation. Thank you very much for coming here today and I would request everybody to take some Prasad on your way out.



# United Nations Climate Conference (COP27)

## Final Agreement

The final agreement was struck as leaders concluded talks at the two-week-long United Nations Climate Conference (COP27). In negotiations that went down to the wire over the weekend, countries reached a historic decision to establish and operationalize a loss and damage fund, particularly for nations most vulnerable to the climate crisis. While many details remain to be negotiated, the fund is expected to see developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of the climate crisis supported for losses arising from droughts, floods, rising seas and other disasters that are attributed to climate change. While the negotiated text recognized the need for financial support from a variety of sources, no decisions have been made on who should pay into the fund, where this money will come from and which countries will benefit. The issue has been one of the most contentious on the negotiating table.

Adapting to the climate crisis — which could require everything from building sea walls to creating drought-resistant crops — could cost developing countries anywhere from US\$160-US\$340 billion annually by 2030. That number could swell to as much as US\$565 billion by 2050 if climate change accelerates, found UN Environment Programme’s (UNEP’s) 2022 Adaptation Gap Report.

“This COP has taken an important step towards justice”, said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Sunday. While many praised the creation of the fund, many also worried not enough was done at COP27, held in the Egyptian resort town of Sharm El-Sheikh, to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) responsible for the climate crisis. Here is a closer look at the other key takeaways from the conference and what they could mean for the future of climate negotiations.

### **Countries failed to decisively move away from fossil fuels**

Countries repeated the “phase-down-of-coal” phrase featured in last year’s agreement at COP26 in Glasgow. While the final text does promote renewables, it also highlights “low emission” energy, which critics say refers to natural gas - still a source of GHG emissions.

## **There were continued concerns about rising emissions**

The key result of the climate COPs is the final agreement, which is deliberated by delegates from almost 200 countries. This is usually the focus of intense negotiations, and this year was no exception, with talks lasting until Sunday morning. The final agreement did mention “the urgent need for deep, rapid and sustained reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions” to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement. Yet there were concerns that no real progress was made on raising ambition or cutting fossil fuel emissions since COP26. That was considered bad news for a rapidly warming world.

The Emissions Gap Report 2022, released by UNEP just before COP27, painted a bleak picture, finding that without rapid societal transformation, there is no credible pathway to a 1.5°C future. For each fraction of a degree that temperatures rise, storms, droughts and other extreme weather events become more severe.

## **Climate finance was front and centre**

Climate finance was, as expected, a key part of COP27. The final agreement highlights that “US\$4 to \$6 trillion a year needs to be invested in renewable energy until 2030 – including investments in technology and infrastructure – to allow us to reach net-zero emissions by 2050”.

## **States are turning more to technology**

Two UN Bodies, the Technology Executive Committee and Climate Technology Centre and Network – announced plans to accelerate the deployment of “transformative” technologies to counter the climate crisis. The UN Secretary-General unveiled a US\$ 3.1 billion plan to ensure everyone on the planet is protected by early warning systems in the next five years.

## **Methane emissions are in the crosshairs**

UNEP announced the launch of a new satellite-based system designed to detect methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas. Experts have long said that massive amounts of the gas routinely escape from oil and gas installations around the world. Colourless and odourless, methane is responsible for more than 25 per cent of the global warming the Earth is experiencing today. UNEP will use the satellite detection to notify governments and companies of methane leaks, helping them to take action.

## **Donors offered support for adaptation**

An array of states, regional governments and development agencies pledged US\$230 million to the Adaptation Fund to help vulnerable communities around the world adapt to climate change. Governments also made incremental progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation, a pivotal part of the Paris Agreement designed to help countries contend with the fallout from the climate crisis. Those discussions are expected to conclude at COP28 next year in the United Arab Emirates.

## **Reviving damaged ecosystems featured prominently**

The Global Peatlands Assessment was launched by UNEP in Sharm el-Sheikh. The first comprehensive global assessment of peatlands in almost 15 years, the report highlights the importance of peatlands to both biodiversity and sequestering carbon. It found that the world loses 500,000 hectares of peatlands a year, while already drained and degraded peatlands contribute around 4 per cent of annual global human-induced greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Young people were in the spotlight**

A pavilion at COP27 was devoted to children and youth for the first time, underlining that younger generations will suffer the most from the climate crisis. The conference also featured the first youth-led climate forum, which included several senior policy makers. In the closing agreement, delegates urged countries to appoint young people to the negotiating teams for future climate talks.

## **Leaders were pressed to do more**

Hanging over COP27 was the spectre that despite decades of meetings and landmark accords, like the Paris Agreement, the world was still not doing enough to slow the climate crisis. UNEP's Emissions Gap Report 2022 found that policies currently in place point to a 2.8°C temperature rise by the end of the century, a number that could lead to catastrophic consequences for the planet. Full implementation of the latest pledges to reduce greenhouse gases could slow this increase to 1.8-2.1°C, but the report does not find a credible pathway for the 1.5°C target. For many in Egypt, that data underscored the need to ramp up climate action.

“As the world looks to step up efforts to cut greenhouse gas emissions – efforts that are still not anywhere strong enough – it must also dramatically up its game to adapt to climate change”, said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP.



## Conference of Parties 27

### **Four Big Takeaways from Sharm El-Sheikh**

The 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), held at Sharm El-Sheikh in Egypt, began with low expectations. But defying all presumptions, it has achieved four key outcomes that will have far-reaching implications for energy transition and international climate collaboration.

- It got developed countries to agree on something they had refused for three decades – pay the climate disasters in developing countries. Wealthy countries have always stalled any deal on Loss and Damage (L&D) because it exposes them to liability for their historic contribution to the climate crisis. They did that in Sharm El-Sheikh as well. Ultimately, under tremendous pressure from developing countries, they agreed to a new funding window for L&D, but with many caveats attached to the fund. For instance, the fund will only support countries most vulnerable to climate change (which might not include India), and funding will not only come from developed countries but from a “mosaic” of sources, which could include emerging economies and wealthy countries from the global south. Nevertheless, with the L&D deal, the framework for international climate collaboration is complete – mitigation to avert disaster, adaptation to minimize damage and L&D to compensate for losses. Of the three, it is cheapest to mitigate and most expensive to pay for L&D. This should motivate big polluters to cut emissions rather than be liable to pay billions for floods, droughts and cyclones.

- COP27 also negotiated something that no UN climate conference had done before: phasing out fossil fuels, the essential element to limit global warming. And it is to the credit of India that this discussion took place. Last year at Glasgow, while nations agreed to phase down coal power to limit global warming, they kept silent on oil and gas due to pressure from big oil- and gas-dependent economies. This time, India pointed out the need to phase down use of fossil fuels and got the support of nearly so countries, including the US, and EU nations. Unfortunately, the oil and gas phase-down was excluded from the final decision due to opposition from Saudi Arabia and Russia. Nevertheless, Sharm El-Sheikh has set in motion the process to phase out all fossil fuels, and it is a matter of time before this is accepted at a future COP.



● Just transition-Implementing a people-centric transition to phase down fossil fuels-emerged as a crucial pivot to reduce emissions from fossil fuel-dependent developing countries. Mid-way through COP27, a \$20 billion deal was struck between Indonesia and G7 countries at the G20 meeting in Bali to phase down coal use in Indonesia. Called Just Energy Transition Partnership (JET-P), South Africa and G7 signed a similar deal worth \$8.5 billion last year. A JET-P agreement was also offered to India, which it rightly postponed for future negotiations. Taking a cue from JET-P, at COP27, parties have agreed to negotiate a possible future agreement to scale up support for just transition in other developing countries. Most likely, the future financial deal between the developed and developing countries would be through just transition partnerships.

● COP27 has further diluted the traditional classification of developed and developing countries, as outlined in the 1992 convention. The question of who should pay for L&D brought focus on China, the largest current emitter and second-largest historical emitter of greenhouse gases. The fact that China is putting billions into the Belt and Road Initiative but prefers to be called a developing country at the UNFCCC was questioned by many countries, developed and developing. The same applies to nations like Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Singapore. It is clear that from now on, countries like China will find it challenging to avoid greater responsibility for the climate crisis. There will also be pressure on India to contribute more, as it is traditionally bracketed with China at the UNFCCC. Overall, COP27 has changed the nature of international negotiations. It is crucial for the government of India to recognise these shifts and revisit its negotiating strategy to advance the nation's development and climate agenda together.

**Mr. Chandra Bhushan**

CEO, International Forum for Environment,  
Sustainability and Technology



“Nations cannot go weak and wobbly on climate change targets.”

**BORIS JOHNSON**

*Former Prime Minister of United Kingdom*

## **About WEBFUNA**

- The West Bengal Federation of United Nations Associations (WEBFUNA) is affiliated to the Indian Federation of United Nations Associations (IFUNA) which, in turn, is a member of the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA), Geneva. WEBFUNA since its foundation, 42 years ago in 1980, has been actively engaged in disseminating information and knowledge about the aims and objectives of the United Nations.
- The WORLD FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS which is an international non-governmental organisation which devotes itself entirely to the support of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and to the promotion of public awareness and understanding of the activities of the United Nations and its agencies.
- WFUNA enjoys consultative status (category 1) with the UN Economic and Social Council, and has consultative and working relations with UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, ILO, WMO, and other parts of the United Nations system.
- The range of interests of WFUNA and the United Nations Associations includes disarmament, development and human rights, as well as other crucial problems challenging the international community.

## **About Gaudiya Mission**

Gaudiya Math and Mission, the philanthropic and spiritual organisation, was established in the year 1918, with the efforts of Srimad Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad (1874-1937), the great visionary aspiring in preserving cultural and spiritual heritage of India. Later, the organisation was registered in the year 1940, under the Societies Registration Act 1860, and was named as Gaudiya Mission, has around 40 branches in India and abroad. Gaudiya Mission is relentlessly striving to promote the philosophy of equity, universal brotherhood and establishment of a peaceful global society. Gaudiya Mission is also engaged in academic, philanthropic and social activities. Its major academic activities include, running of educational centres and libraries, holding of seminars and conferences, publication of books and magazines as well as preservation of old manuscripts in Sanskrit and Bengali.

The Mission, as a part of its philanthropic and social activities, runs leprosy Clinic-cum-rehabilitation Centres, old age homes and charitable dispensaries, and hospitals at various places. It also holds medical camps, provides free food to the poor, undertakes free distribution of cloths among them and extends a helping hand to the victims of natural calamities and accidents. Gaudiya Mission is celebrating the '150 advent commemoration of Srila Bhakti Siddhant Saraswati Goswami Thakur.









## **WEST BENGAL FEDERATION OF UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATIONS**

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