



TAA-TERI In Memoriam Session: What Would Dr Pachauri's Priorities be for India and the World Today?

IN MEMORIAM SESSION SUMMARY

Venue: Stein Auditorium

Date: 23 February 2023

Time: 7:30 pm – 8:00 pm (IST)

Suggested Citation

World Sustainable Development Summit (2023), TAA-TERI In Memoriam Session: What Would Dr Pachauri's Priorities be for India and the World Today? Session Summary, New Delhi: The Energy and Resources Institute.

Key Reflections

- Reminiscences on an exceptional leader, extraordinary visionary, and incorrigible optimist – a rare institution in himself – were shared by the esteemed panellists who discussed and reflected on the priorities Dr Pachauri would have had for the world today.
- After his passing, two books that were released on Dr Pachauri include *Dr R K Pachauri: The Crusader Against Climate Change*, which is neither an assessment of his life and work nor a compilation of expressions of good wishes. Instead, it shows the international dimension of his work, from Norway to Mexico and from Japan to the United States, because for him the whole world was one, not divided into the North and the South or the East and the West but one large family. The other book titled *Dr R K Pachauri: The Visionary Institution Builder* celebrates the life of a legend.
- About the legacy of Dr Pachauri, he occupies a special place in the hearts of people in Guyana. He took a special interest in Guyana's unique circumstances, particularly in relation to sustainable development and forest resources.
- Dr Pachauri was an outstanding scholar and a global titan in the world of science and climate change, and he was committed to the highest standards of scientific rigour, and did outstanding work on the *Fifth Assessment Report* that led to the outcomes of the Paris Agreement.
- Human condition was at the centre of Dr Pachauri's work. He dedicated his life to advancing the development and improvement of people's conditions around the world. He would have been frustrated that the problem of energy access continues.
- It is easy to view him only as a scientific giant, but it was beautiful to know him as someone who had a great interest in cricket.

Narrative

TERI's visionary Founder-Director Dr Rajendra Kumar Pachauri's leadership, vision, and hard work had made TERI the leading voice in energy and climate change that it is today. Throughout his tenure as IPCC Chairman, Dr Pachauri helped in raising awareness and building meaningful conversations on climate change and its impacts at a global level. It was in this same vein that he instituted the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS), formerly known as the Delhi Sustainable Development Summit, in 2001 to bring together governments, global leaders, policymakers, businesses, civil society organizations, youth, and thought leaders to work towards the common goal of sustainable development and environmental conservation.

In this WSDS, panellists and experts gathered to recall Dr Pachauri's passion for environmental conservation for a greener and sustainable future. The session titled, **“In Memoriam: What Would Dr Pachauri's Priorities be for India and the World Today?”** built on his ideals, ideas, and vision to reimagine sustainable development pathways for India and the world, given the present geo-political context. Panellists expressed their views and thoughts on what would have been Dr Pachauri's priorities for India and the world today.

Dr Priyanka Kochhar, President, TERI Alumni Association recalled, “Dr Pachauri was an exceptional individual and an extraordinary visionary.”

Dr Ashni Kumar Singh, Finance Minister, Guyana, said, “Even today, he would remain firmly committed to finding lasting solutions to climate change challenges. For a person of his global scientific stature, it was beautiful also to see the human being in him. He had a great interest in cricket and the cricketing legacy of Guyana. I met him in Guyana and he wanted to visit the Bourda (officially Georgetown Cricket Club Ground) cricket ground that had been home to many classic test matches.”

Dr Vibha Dhawan, Director General, TERI remarked, “If he would have been here, we would have been more action-oriented (toward addressing climate-related risks).”

Mr Janos Pasztor, Executive Director, Carnegie Climate Governance Initiative, recalled, “Patchy was fundamentally an energy guy, and was always forward-looking and forward-thinking. In Nairobi, I remember talking to a person from Mali who was running an NGO in Senegal and he said, ‘You’re working on energy, you have to talk to Dr Pachauri because he’s the one who knows everything.’ Later, I had the opportunity to work with him both as staff at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and then a few years later, when I was assistant Secretary General for Climate working with the UN Secretary-General in New York, I was able to interact with him from both sides and it was very interesting.”

Mr Rakesh Kacker, TERI Alumni Association, said, “Dr Pachauri would make use of the changes in the energy sector in the world, especially after the Ukraine war.”

Mr Nitin Desai, Chairman, TERI, shared, “It is heartening to see a ‘willingness in the developed countries to address the issue of lifestyles’ and climate change.”

Dr Saroj Pachauri, Distinguished Scholar, Population Council, shared, “One would need to gaze into a crystal ball to see what he would be doing today. But I would see a very dynamic, vibrant, and valiant Patchy.”

Dr Ash Pachauri, Co-founder of Protect Our Planet Movement (POP Movement), said, “Dad’s vision was to mobilize 1.8 billion youth of the world through knowledge and inspired action for which he founded the POP Movement.”

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