SDGs must for human well being, says experts

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must be high on priority of the international community to achieve human wellbeing, social equity and reducing environmental risk, experts said here Thursday.

A group of experts, including scientists and members from social organizations, held discussions on a roadmap to SDGs on the lines of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that come to an end in 2015.

Organized by the Asia-Europe Environment Forum (AEEF), the seminar "Sustainable Development Assessment: Towards Measurable Goals" took into account Asian and European perspective to address issues under SDGs.

"SDGs is the overarching goal of the United Nations and to achieve that goal we need forums to bring experts and institutions to add value to our knowledge on sustainable development," said Suminta Shrestha, Director, Focal Point for Sustainable Development, UNEP.

He said the SDGs are necessary for human wellbeing, social equity and reducing environmental risk.

Nicholas Hanley, Director General, Environment in the European Commission, highlighted the need of SDGs and said they will be universal actions to address social, economic and environment issues while MDGs are actions to be taken by developing countries for social issues.

"The main aim of the seminar was to initiate the PostRio discussions (Earth Summit held in June on SDGs and their indicators under the Asia-Europe Environment Forum (AEEF)). The programme will empower countries' leadership towards a bottom-up approach consultation process," said Thierry Schwartz, AEEF director for intellectual exchange.

Members from the Asian countries expressed their apprehensions about the SDGs and emphasized that their right to development and poverty alleviation should be the core of any documents.

"It is important to hold discussions on SDGs to ensure that reservations and concerns of developing countries like India are heard. We have to ensure that sustainable goals should not hamper our growth and development," said Ritu Mathur from The Energy Research Institute (TERI).

The Rio+20 conference in Brazil in June this year saw countries arriving at a consensus on SDGs to address the issues of sustainable development and environment conservation.

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