

From our Chief Executive



Lt. General Arjun Ray, PVSM, VSM (Retd)

Localism is a Pre-condition for Globalism

Dear Parents,

The idea of a world citizen is not new. As far back as the 5th century, the maverick Greek philosopher, Diogenes, had claimed, “*I am a citizen of the world.*” Ironically, the notion of world citizenship has taken globalization to place it on centre stage in school education. Many schools consider that world citizenship may erode a child’s patriotism and indigenous culture. The truth is just the opposite. The quantum physics of globalism states that, to be a world citizen you have to be a good national citizen first!

In the age of globalization and Internet, it is to say the obvious that future citizens must become world citizens. In an interconnected world where ideas, cash, people and technology are moving freely across traditional borders, future work stations are already becoming heterogeneous and culturally diverse. Moreover, no one knows where one will land up in life – what country, what vocation, what people. Everything is going to be fluid. At the end of the day we shall belong to where we are. If I am in Alaska I am an Alaskan; if I am in Bangalore I am a Bangalorean.

There are three kinds of citizens. The first is a good person. He is internalized and value-driven. He says and does the right things. He prays but for his soul, he meditates only for his peace and salvation. He leads a good and clean life far removed from the madding crowd. He keeps his house clean but throws the litter on the street outside. Next in the ladder is a good citizen. He exercises his responsibilities as a citizen and espouses social values, but he is culture-specific and community oriented. He will reach out but only to his flock. And right on the top of the pyramid is the good person. He is a world citizen.

A world citizen is proud of his cultural heritage but is happy to live together with other people in a diverse world. The good of one country is fulfilled through a wider loyalty to mankind. World citizens are driven by universal values like brotherhood of man, human rights, democracy and freedom. They believe in the universality of sharing knowledge and are motivated by the desire to influence global decisions. No single country can solve the problems the world faces – problems like poverty, environmental degradation, terrorism and other social and economic inequalities. The long term answer lies in a global approach. There is a universal moral order that binds all of us together. No one individual or nation on its own can achieve it.

Schools must, therefore, sensitize their students to the nuances of Indianness, the rich cultural heritage and the values systems like love, peace and non-violence, non-dogmatism, truth, righteous conduct, and an individual's choice in selecting his or her own path to salvation. Good Indian values are, therefore, also good global values.

The challenge in becoming a world-citizen is that you have to first understand your own culture. Localism is thus a pre-requisite for becoming a world citizen and a globally responsible leader.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arjun Ray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

**Lieutenant General Arjun Ray, PVSM, VSM (Retd.)
Chief Executive**