



Press Note:

“Democracy existed in India since ancient times”

- Sri R.P. Sisodia, Spl. CS to Governor participated in Webinar on “History of Democracy” organised by IGNOU

Vijayawada, 3: Participating in the Webinar on “History of Democracy” organised by Indira Gandhi National Open University, in virtual mode, Sri R.P. Sisodia, Special Chief Secretary to Governor said that democracy was nothing new to India and that democracy existed in India since ancient times.

The Webinar was organised by the IGNOU to commemorate the 75th year of India’s Independence, as part of ‘Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav’ celebrations. Sri Sisodia elaborated on the basic forms of democracy like direct form of democracy, representative form of democracy like India and hybrid form of democracy as exist in a few countries.

He traced the history of democracy and governance as enunciated by the Greek philosophers like Socrates and Plato and first concept of Constitution propounded by Aristotle, which defined only the constitution of organs of the government and their functioning.

He said that these philosophers believed in what was best for people to live is good for the government as they lived in a complex society. Sri Sisodia further elaborated on the principles of democracy as advanced by modern political scientists like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke during the 17th Century after a gap of 20 centuries, wherein they propagated the theory of civil government, equality, liberty and majority rule and touched upon the theory of social

contract propounded by 18th Century philosopher Rousseau, signifying sovereignty of people. He also mentioned about John Stuart Mill, the 19th Century philosopher, who laid the foundation for liberty and women suffrage for the first time and the Utilitarianism – the greatest good of greatest number of people. He also touched upon communism and socialism which was against the concept of ownership and laid emphasis on means of production and equal distribution of resources, the 20th Century philosopher John Dewey's concept of welfare state, fairness, human rights and justice and the theory of Nobel Laureate Prof. Amartya Sen, who said that social justice should be evaluated in a matter of degree instead of binary terms.

Sri Sisodia also touched upon the practice and evolution of democracy over the ages since the ancient period till the modern day and the emergence of universal suffrage and the Post World War situation.

Sri Sisodia said that the practice of democracy is a phenomenon in the history of mankind and the germs of democracy were present in India since the ancient times.

He said that the future of democracy cannot be predicted now and cited the example of Afghanistan, which was a thriving democracy at one point of time but now even the basic rights are absent.

He said that authoritarianism and populism are on the rise around the world due to backsliding of democracy and that the emergence of trends like toxic polarisation culture, disinformation campaigns, racism, nativism should be kept in check. Sri Sisodia said in a strong and thriving democracy like India, there should not be any scope for politics based on caste, religion, money power, regionalism.

Prof. Nageswara Rao, Vice Chancellor of IGNOU, acted as the Moderator of the Webinar and Prof. Mayank Kumar, Prof. Satyam, Dr. Sushil Kumar Tiwari, Dr. Suresh Kumar Ghosh and others participated in the Webinar.