

MESSAGE

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and a very special welcome to the IDCA meeting attendees. I offer my apologies for not being with you in person, and I send my best wishes for a fruitful and inspiring time together.

I extend my thanks to Mohan Jain and his team for their devoted efforts to ensure that India Development Coalition of America (IDCA) continues to grow and to help alleviate poverty in India.

Earlier this month, on Gandhiji's birthday October 2, IDCA launched an ambitious Adopt-a-Village Campaign that offers each one of us an opportunity to make a powerful difference in the lives of the rural poor in India by joining this effort and making it a success.

As members of this group know, many nonresident Indians feel passionately about giving back to the country of their birth and ancestry. Some have created or supported important development work in rural India and, with tenacity and hard work, are making a positive difference. But the amount of work to be done is large and requires the combined efforts of each of us. India has more than 640, 000 villages in need. Opportunities to make a real difference are plentiful.

I know from firsthand experience that positive change is possible. Sehgal Foundation, which I represent, started out working with just four villages and, fifteen years later, the foundation's programs in water management, agricultural development, and good rural governance are making a difference in 460 villages in three states—Haryana, Rajasthan, and Bihar. Many other nonresident Indians have adopted villages for development, and their work is making a difference as well.

This new IDCA initiative needs support from each of us. We are all invited to step forward to adopt one or more villages and do as much as we can to contribute directly and/or indirectly to bring about development to villagers living in abject poverty.

I appeal to every nonresident Indian to remember that our successes in the United States and throughout the world have been made possible in large part because of the highly subsidized educations we were privileged to receive in India. We each have a special obligation to do what we can for the less fortunate in our native country.

If you are willing to be a part of the Adopt-a-Village Campaign, to contribute financially toward this goal, or to work in India, please contact Mohan Jain or any of the organizers of the conference. Your contribution in cash or in-kind can make a big difference in the lives of the rural poor.

Let us each get involved! Let us adopt a village.
Rural India needs our help. Let us make a difference together!

I invite you to view a 3-minute video about Sehgal Foundation's 15-year anniversary, celebrated this year: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OssoJGoxoqI>

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