

Editorial

RELIGION, ECONOMICS, AND DEVELOPMENT

As clouds are thickening on the horizons of economic boom and uncertainties galore, many are panicking: as far as the skyrocketing expenses go, individuals are worried about meeting both ends together; business corporations are worried about the ways and means of keeping up the trend of upward growth and huge profit margins; the nations are worried about maintaining the economic-bubble stable, even if other nations are on the verge of an economic collapse. Indeed, the signs of the times do not seem to be really promising. As more loss is on the anvil, the immediate future looks quite bleak, especially as far as the regional and global economies and developmental regimes are concerned.

As *Journal of Dharma* launches this issue on “Religion, Economics, and Development,” our contributors make an earnest attempt to look into some of the issues involved in economic development, especially in its relation to religion. Although religion apparently remains aloof from the mundane affairs, its nature as a catalyst to enhance human welfare and the common good indicates that it has a vital role to play, especially in the trying times that people across the globe are passing through due to the predicted economic doom. Religion’s ability to inspire and motivate its votaries, with nobler thoughts and righteous actions, must instil hope in the lives of all.

We are in need of realizing that material development alone would not suffice; our investment shall not be restricted to the mundane realms; life, in fact, is more than economics and commerce, although they do have a key role to play in enabling us to lead a decent human life. Being and becoming human and leading a personally and socially enhancing life, basically presuppose that human beings – individually and collectively – open themselves up to others – not to amass others’ riches, but to give and share with a sense of cooperation and common good.

In order to bring hope to the millions who have lost their hope amidst the evolving economic and developmental crisis, religions need to resurrect their own vital spiritual resources and enable the believers to strike a proper balance between self-oriented developmental thrusts and other-oriented holistic welfare orientations.

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