

Integral Humanism and Viksit Bharat 2047: A Civilizational Framework for Sustainable and Inclusive Development

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Abstract: As India charts its path toward becoming a developed nation by the centenary of its independence in 2047, there is an urgent need for a development model that goes beyond economic metrics and aligns with the country's civilizational ethos. This paper explores the philosophy of Integral Humanism, articulated by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, as a foundational framework for realizing the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*. Integral Humanism emphasizes the holistic development of the individual, body, mind, intellect, and soul, in harmony with society, nature, and ethical values. It calls for a synthesis of spiritual and material progress, cultural rootedness, and moral responsibility. The research analyzes how Integral Humanism aligns with and enhances contemporary national priorities, including self-reliance (*Atmanirbhar Bharat*), inclusive growth, rural revitalization, and ecological sustainability. Through case studies of major government initiatives such as Digital India, Skill India, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, and Mission LiFE, the paper illustrates the practical convergence between policy and philosophical vision. Furthermore, it draws parallels between Integral Humanism and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, mapping key principles like *Antyodaya*, *Swadeshi*, and *Dharma* onto global development priorities. The paper concludes that Integral Humanism offers a uniquely Indian, yet universally relevant, model of sustainable development, one that prioritizes human dignity, social equity, and ecological balance. By adopting this indigenous philosophical lens, India can lead the world in redefining progress as both ethical and inclusive.

Keywords: Integral Humanism, Viksit Bharat 2047, Antyodaya, Sustainable Development Goals.

1. Introduction:

India is on the cusp of a profound socio-economic transformation as it aspires to become a *Viksit Bharat*, a fully developed, self-reliant, and inclusive nation, by the centenary of its independence in 2047. This ambitious vision is not merely a technocratic or economic exercise but a holistic national aspiration encompassing social justice, economic empowerment, cultural resurgence, and ecological sustainability. While global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer valuable benchmarks, there is a growing recognition that India's developmental path must also be guided by indigenous philosophies rooted in its civilizational values. In this context, the philosophy of Integral Humanism articulated by Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya in 1965 emerges as a profound and relevant ideological foundation (Upadhyaya, 2016).

Integral Humanism offers a distinctive framework that harmonizes the individual and society, material and spiritual well-being, tradition and modernity. Unlike imported ideologies such as Western liberalism, Marxism, or capitalism, which often prioritize economic determinism or class conflict, Integral Humanism envisions development as an organic process anchored in the cultural and spiritual ethos of India. It promotes a model that balances the needs of the body, mind, intellect, and soul, aligning individual aspirations with collective welfare (Singh, 2022). Central to this philosophy is the belief that economic growth must serve human dignity, social cohesion, and environmental balance, rather than being pursued as an end.

Upadhyaya's call for *Dharma*-centric development, development that adheres to moral and ethical values, resonates deeply with contemporary India's need for a more humane and sustainable developmental paradigm. His emphasis on *Antyodaya*, or the upliftment of the last person in society, finds clear parallels in current policy efforts such as inclusive digitalization, financial inclusion, rural rejuvenation, and social welfare schemes. Furthermore, the principle of *Swadeshi* (self-reliance), a cornerstone of Integral Humanism, is echoed in the government's *Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan*, a strategic initiative to strengthen domestic capabilities in manufacturing, innovation, and governance (Kori et al., 2023).

This article explores how Integral Humanism can provide both the philosophical grounding and practical direction for the vision of *Viksit Bharat 2047*. It begins by analyzing the core tenets of Integral Humanism, including its metaphysical, ethical, and socio-political dimensions. It then discusses how these principles align with India's

contemporary development agenda and global commitments such as the SDGs. The paper also investigates the ways in which Integral Humanism has subtly shaped or could shape public policy, institutional reform, and civic participation in India's journey toward holistic development. By synthesizing indigenous wisdom with modern aspirations, the philosophy of Integral Humanism offers a compelling roadmap for achieving *Viksit Bharat* that is not only prosperous but also ethical, inclusive, and sustainable.

2. The Philosophical Foundations of Integral Humanism

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism rests on a holistic conception of the human being as comprising four dimensions: body, mind, intellect, and soul. He argued that any developmental philosophy must address all these dimensions in harmony, rather than privileging one over the others. In his view, both Western capitalism and communism are flawed because they prioritize materialism and economic determinism while ignoring the spiritual and ethical aspects of human life (Upadhyaya, 2016).

Integral Humanism rejects the reductionist logic of GDP-driven growth and advocates for development that nurtures the inner and outer life of individuals within an ethical framework. According to Upadhyaya, economic prosperity is not an end but a means to attain the higher goal of self-realization and social harmony (Singh, 2022). He insisted that development must be in tune with nature, culture, and moral values, offering a synthesis of tradition and modernity, individual liberty and social responsibility.

At the heart of Integral Humanism lies the ancient Indian framework of the *purusharthas*, *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (desire), and *moksha* (liberation). These four aims of life represent a balanced approach to human aspiration, where *dharma* acts as the guiding principle for the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, ultimately leading to liberation (Kori et al., 2023). Upadhyaya emphasized that true development is the harmonious pursuit of all four, rooted in ethical living and societal wellbeing. Thus, Integral Humanism offers a culturally grounded yet universally relevant paradigm that goes beyond material metrics and places human dignity, morality, and sustainability at the centre of progress.

3. Integral Humanism and Antyodaya

A cornerstone of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism is *Antyodaya*, the upliftment of the last person in society. This principle asserts that the moral legitimacy of any development model depends on its ability to serve the most vulnerable. Rooted in Gandhian ethics and consonant with *Sarvodaya* (welfare of all), *Antyodaya* aligns closely with Sustainable Development Goals such as SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), but it transcends global development indicators by emphasizing human dignity, ethical empowerment, and spiritual well-being (Upadhyaya, 2016).

Rather than viewing the marginalized as passive recipients of welfare, Upadhyaya envisioned them as active agents of change. His model promoted *swavalamban* (self-reliance) through a decentralized, community-centric economy that addressed local needs. This vision finds echoes in modern Indian policy frameworks such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (financial inclusion), Startup India, and Stand-Up India, which aim to democratize access to financial and entrepreneurial ecosystems (NITI Aayog, 2020).

Antyodaya also advocates distributive justice, not via redistributive charity, but through structural transformation. It critiques both exploitative capitalist hierarchies and overly centralized socialist planning for failing to address inequality at its roots. For Upadhyaya, a just economic order must be grounded in *dharma*, where every individual has equitable access to food, water, education, healthcare, and employment (Singh, 2022). Development, in this sense, becomes a moral obligation to restore balance and uphold the inherent dignity of all individuals. By integrating economic justice with moral philosophy, *Antyodaya* serves as a powerful counter-narrative to materialist growth models, offering an inclusive framework for sustainable nation-building in the spirit of *Viksit Bharat* 2047.

4. Viksit Bharat 2047: Aspirations and Strategic Framework

India's 100th year of independence in 2047 is not merely a symbolic milestone; it is envisioned as the culmination of a transformative journey toward becoming a fully developed, equitable, and self-reliant nation. The national vision of *Viksit Bharat* 2047, articulated by the Government of India, encapsulates this aspiration through a comprehensive roadmap encompassing inclusive economic growth, technological innovation, world-class

infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and robust human capital development (NITI Aayog, 2023). However, what distinguishes this vision is its rootedness in India's civilizational values and indigenous philosophical traditions. One such foundational philosophy is Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's *Integral Humanism*, which offers a coherent moral and cultural framework for this developmental vision.

At the heart of *Viksit Bharat 2047* is the principle of *Atmanirbhar Bharat* or self-reliant India, a call to reduce dependency on foreign resources and encourage local innovation, entrepreneurship, and capacity-building. While influenced by global development benchmarks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, the vision reframes these within the cultural and ethical contours of Indian society. This harmonization is evident in the convergence between *Viksit Bharat* and Integral Humanism, both of which emphasize people-centric development, moral responsibility, ecological balance, and cultural rootedness (Upadhyaya, 2014; Das, 2023).

Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism rests on the holistic development of individuals, body, mind, intellect, and soul, in harmony with society and nature. In this vision, development is not an abstract economic target, but a moral pursuit aimed at ensuring dignity and justice for all. *Viksit Bharat* resonates with this ethos by shifting from mere GDP growth to human-centric policies that prioritize well-being, equity, and empowerment.

India's developmental roadmap towards *Viksit Bharat 2047* draws inspiration from Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism, which emphasizes holistic well-being, dignity, decentralization, and harmony between tradition and modernity. Several flagship government schemes reflect these ideals in practice, aiming to uplift the last person in the queue through a synthesis of economic empowerment, ethical governance, and social justice.

- Ayushman Bharat – Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) is a pioneering public health initiative that provides cashless health insurance coverage of up to ₹5 lakhs per family per year to over 500 million economically vulnerable individuals. It transforms healthcare access in India, operationalizing the Integral Humanist principle that health is a fundamental right, not a commodity or privilege. By ensuring equitable healthcare, it promotes both social justice and the holistic well-being of body, mind, and spirit, which is central to Upadhyaya's vision of a healthy, moral society.
- Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) aspires to achieve "Housing for All" by providing affordable housing to the urban and rural poor. Shelter is not merely a physical need but a foundation of human dignity and spiritual growth. PMAY aligns with the dharmic duty of ensuring basic needs for all, particularly the most vulnerable. Upadhyaya emphasized that true development begins with addressing the needs of the *antayodaya*, the last person in the line, making this scheme a living example of his compassionate approach to governance.
- Skill India Mission (Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana – PMKVY) focuses on vocational training, upskilling, and entrepreneurship. By fostering employment and promoting self-reliance (*swavalamban*), it reinforces the Integral Humanist belief in the dignity of labour and localized economic development. Skill development becomes a pathway not only to income generation but also to personal fulfillment and social contribution, rooted in one's cultural and regional context.
- Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan, launched during the COVID-19 crisis, seeks to promote indigenous manufacturing, resilient supply chains, and local entrepreneurship. It echoes the *Swadeshi* spirit that Upadhyaya regarded as essential to sustainable economic self-reliance. Beyond material independence, the mission aims to build psychological and moral strength among citizens, ensuring national dignity without forsaking cultural rootedness or ethical responsibility.
- Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to supply piped water to every rural household, reflects Upadhyaya's concern for ecological balance and the ethical stewardship of natural resources. Water is treated as a shared, life-sustaining asset that must be equitably distributed, particularly to rural communities historically deprived of such basic services. This aligns with Integral Humanism's emphasis on environmental harmony and rural revitalization.
- PM Gati Shakti, an integrated infrastructure initiative, exemplifies the Integral Humanist vision of decentralized planning and efficient resource use. By harmonizing transport, logistics, and connectivity projects through a unified digital platform, it reduces regional disparities and promotes equitable growth. This infrastructure-led approach supports holistic development by improving accessibility and enhancing ease of living, especially for the underserved, while maintaining regional balance.

- Digital India, another transformative initiative, seeks to democratize access to technology, information, and governance. It empowers citizens by ensuring digital infrastructure, literacy, and services even in remote areas. For Upadhyaya, intellectual and moral empowerment were key to nation-building. Digital India supports this by enabling informed citizenship, participatory democracy, and transparency, thereby reinforcing the ethical and intellectual dimensions of Integral Humanism.
- Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the nationwide sanitation campaign, extends beyond hygiene to affirm human dignity, especially for women and marginalized groups. The construction of millions of toilets and the promotion of cleanliness reflect a dharmic and moral awakening within society. Integral Humanism sees physical cleanliness as an external reflection of internal moral discipline and collective responsibility.
- Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, which promotes the survival, education, and empowerment of the girl child, embodies Upadhyaya's commitment to justice and the moral obligation to protect the most vulnerable. This scheme addresses gender imbalance and inequality by placing the dignity of the girl child at the centre of development. It not only challenges structural injustices but also fosters a cultural ethos where women are seen as equal bearers of moral, social, and intellectual potential.

These initiatives are not isolated interventions but part of a coherent developmental strategy where material well-being is intertwined with moral and cultural progress. For instance, *Viksit Bharat* rejects the Western linear model of development that equates modernization with urbanization and consumerism. Instead, it draws from Integral Humanism to propose a *Dharmic* developmental model, one that harmonizes economic goals with ethical responsibilities and spiritual fulfilment (Singh, 2022).

Furthermore, *Viksit Bharat 2047* envisions governance that is transparent, responsive, and participatory, principles that resonate with Upadhyaya's stress on *gram swaraj* and community-based decision-making. In this vision, citizens are not merely passive recipients of state largesse but active contributors to national progress. Development, in this framework, is not imposed top-down but evolves organically from local contexts and indigenous capacities.

Crucially, environmental sustainability is also being foregrounded in the *Viksit Bharat* agenda. Initiatives such as Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment), solar energy expansion, and afforestation programs are aligned with Integral Humanism's emphasis on harmony between human needs and ecological balance.

In sum, *Viksit Bharat 2047* is not merely an economic or technological roadmap; it is a vision of civilizational resurgence. Grounded in the moral, spiritual, and cultural principles of Integral Humanism, it seeks to craft a model of development that is uniquely Indian in orientation yet globally relevant in impact. The synthesis of tradition and modernity, material growth and moral responsibility, state policy and community initiative, renders this vision both aspirational and achievable. It is through such an integrative, value-centric approach that India may truly realize its dream of becoming a developed nation by 2047, one where progress is measured not only by wealth but by the well-being and dignity of every citizen.

5. Integral Humanism and the SDGs: A Moral Convergence

The Sustainable Development Goals offer a universal agenda to combat poverty, reduce inequality, and address climate and environmental crises. However, the effectiveness of this framework depends significantly on its cultural resonance and contextual adaptation. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism provides a philosophical foundation for localizing these global objectives within the Indian ethos. His vision emphasizes not only material upliftment but also ethical responsibility, social harmony, and spiritual well-being, core values aligning closely with the spirit of the SDGs.

Integral Humanism's convergence with the SDGs is visible in its moral priorities and practical implications. For instance, SDG 1 and 10, targeting poverty and inequality, find resonance in *Antyodaya*, the principle of uplifting the most marginalized (Upadhyaya, 1965). Similarly, SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) aligns with Upadhyaya's vision of holistic wellness, encompassing physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. SDG 4 (Quality Education) reflects the emphasis on ethical and value-based education, while SDG 5 (Gender Equality) connects with the dharmic ideal of dignity and equal opportunity.

Table.1: Mapping the Sustainable Development Goals with the Principles of Integral Humanism

SDG Goal	Corresponding Principle in Integral Humanism
SDG 1 & 10 – Poverty & Inequality	Antyodaya – Last person first
SDG 3 – Health	Holistic well-being of body, mind, soul
SDG 4 – Education	Ethical and spiritual learning
SDG 5 – Gender Equality	Dignity and equal opportunity rooted in dharma
SDG 6 – Water & Sanitation	Self-reliance, environmental harmony
SDG 8 – Decent Work	Localized economy, dignity of labour
SDG 12 – Sustainable Consumption	Ethical restraint and community-centered lifestyle
SDG 13 – Climate Action	Harmonious coexistence with nature

This mapping affirms that Integral Humanism is not a cultural overlay but a transformative lens to reimagine sustainable development in India, not as a technocratic fix, but as a value-laden societal renewal.

6. Challenges and the Way Forward

While Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's Integral Humanism presents a holistic and morally grounded development paradigm, its practical application encounters significant challenges. First, policy translation remains complex; turning philosophical principles into measurable governance outcomes demands innovative, context-sensitive frameworks. Second, cultural misinterpretation can dilute its essence, Integral Humanism is often mistakenly equated with religious nationalism, overshadowing its universal and inclusive humanist foundation rooted in dharma.

Third, economic pressures from global capital, market consumerism, and urban-centric development often contradict the self-reliant, ethical economy envisioned by Upadhyaya. Fourth, educational gaps persist, especially in value-based and civic education, weakening the foundation needed to cultivate morally responsible, community-oriented citizens.

To move forward, India must invest in institutional reform, promoting policies that integrate ethical dimensions into economic and social planning. There is a need for civic engagement that fosters democratic participation rooted in cultural values. Moreover, intellectual clarity is essential; think tanks, universities, and policymakers must critically engage with Indic thought, drawing on its depth while adapting to contemporary realities. Integral Humanism, if interpreted and implemented wisely, can guide India toward a truly sustainable and inclusive path, aligning national development with human dignity, social justice, and ecological harmony.

7. Conclusion

Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya's philosophy of Integral Humanism offers not only a visionary but also a deeply rooted framework for India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047. It speaks to the heart of Indian civilization, emphasizing balance between individual and society, tradition and modernity, material progress and spiritual well-being. This vision aligns powerfully with the idea of Viksit Bharat, which transcends economic and technological parameters to envision a just, inclusive, and morally upright society.

Viksit Bharat 2047 is not merely a roadmap of infrastructure, GDP growth, or digital transformation; it is fundamentally a civilizational mission. It calls for a nation that promotes human dignity, honors its diverse cultural legacy, ensures ecological harmony, and enables the full realization of everyone's potential. Integral Humanism provides the philosophical scaffolding for such a transformation, grounded in Dharma, Swadeshi, Antyodaya, and the synthesis of spiritual and material values.

As India integrates global frameworks like the Sustainable Development Goals with indigenous ideals, the model of development it presents can be both globally relevant and culturally resonant. Development need not be a mimicry of Western models; it can be uniquely Indian and universally humane. The task ahead lies in aligning



governance, education, economy, and civil society with this ethical vision. India's success in doing so will not only shape its national destiny but will also offer a guiding light to a world in search of sustainable and ethical alternatives to materialist paradigms. As Upadhyaya emphasized, the goal is not to simply become a powerful nation, but a righteous one. That vision, rooted in Integral Humanism, offers the moral compass for building Viksit Bharat 2047, a developed India that is prosperous, compassionate, and true to its soul.

8. References

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