

# Editor's Note

Brij Mohan

Why do wealthy countries aid poor ones (notwithstanding the fact that the aid supplied is insufficient and often ill adapted to its purpose)? ... Exactly how much they are willing to spend depends on complex and changing perceptions, which are shaped by what limited information they possess about the volume of aid and the success or failure of various strategies of development. Today, the norm is the following: a country should devote 1 % of its GDP to developmental assistance (Piketty, 2020: 1023–1024).<sup>1</sup>

Of all “twenty types of human,”<sup>2</sup> from *Homo floresiensis* to *Homo sapiens*, the latter still remains an incomplete project of human evolution. Problems and issues that we confront today as a civilization are all byproducts of human follies, ingenuity, knowledge, and ignorance that confound progress. What philosophers call *ousia*, is quintessential “social practice”—real “social development”—that thwarts oppressive forces toward the achievement of universal human dignity.

Sartre famously said: “3 o'clock in the morning is either too early or too late.” Contemporary theories of *Social Development*, its conceptions, and visions, may and may not be relevant tomorrow. Scientists, natural and social, ought to feel challenged to envision a future bereft of climatic crises, ordeals of democracy, maddening inequalities, and post-pandemic uncertainties that call for universal attention for collective survival. What happened on January 6, 2021 at the Capitol Hill in Washington, DC should serve as a reminder to all democracies about the fragility of developmental processes, inclusive of constitutional safeguards against tyranny and mayhem. The banality of assault weapons and commonplace mass murders with impunity do not belong to a civil society. Arguably,

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<sup>1</sup>Thomas Piketty. 2020. *Capital and Ideology*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University.

<sup>2</sup>John Lanchester. Twenty types of human: Among the Neanderthals. *London Review of Books*, December 17, 2020.

advanced nations need social development as much as the so-called Third World countries. Indeed, global tasks and agendas for transformation are daunting.

I am privileged to serve as an interim editor of *Social Development Issues (SDI)*. Notwithstanding formidable constraints of time, resources, and organizational complexities, we submit a few articles—all blindly peer-reviewed<sup>3</sup>—for colleagues, students, policy makers, and others who are involved in this strife for transformation.

Hopefully, volume 43 will offer some perspectives.

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