

## Apex NGO body hits hard at gold-diggers among volunteers

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**T**HE voluntary sector in India has been completely sidelined by successive governments, with the sector itself being dominated by unscrupulous elements whose sole intention is to earn money. This was the consensus that emerged from the state consultation on 'National Policy on Voluntary Sector' in Ahmedabad on Tuesday.

The event was organised by Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDI), Ahmedabad, an organisation working in entrepreneurship education, and Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), New Delhi, the apex body of Indian NGOs, comprising 237 organisations and 19 networks.

It may be recalled here that the national policy approved on May 17, 2007, aims to establish environment by enacting liberal-

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central laws for registration of voluntary organisations, development of partnership between the government and the voluntary sector, and strengthen the sector by encouraging independent philanthropic institutions to provide financial assistance to deserving Voluntary Organisations (VOs). PK Ghosh, former Additional

Chief Secretary, Gujarat, while noting the issues with the policy document, said, "With this partnership clause, the voluntary sector is bound to lose its freedom, which is a dangerous proposition for a democratic country."

Lalit Kumar, Joint Advisor Planning Commission, Government of India, acknowledged the

fact that mushrooming of voluntary organisations indicate the failure of the government machinery. He said, "Taking cue from the Mody Committee's 6th report on Social Capital, the time has come to establish a separate ministry for the voluntary sector. This, along with a National Policy on Accreditation, will help in en-

suring self-regulation and accountability of the voluntary sector." Moving to the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) wings of various companies, RK Sama Project Director of Water and Sanitation Management Organisation (WASMO), Gandhinagar, said, "There is hardly any company which is not created a genuine CSR. It is just a ploy to save taxes."

Similar concerns were expressed by Harshith Jagawat, Di-

rector, Sadgun Water and Development Foundation, Dahod.

He said, corrupt organisations still get all the projects as the body is divided between them and the government officials.

Giving an example, he said, "Nearly 40 to 50 new trusts are being registered every day at the Dahod Charitable Trust office. If even a fraction was doing some worthwhile work, Dahod would not have remained the most backward district in Gujarat."