

Chapter 10

Comparative Development Experiences of India and Its Neighbours

Q. 1 What do you understand by the term development? Would all sections of society benefit from such a definition of development?

Answer:

The term development conveys the ideas of improvement, progress, wellbeing and aspiration for a better life. Through the notion of development, a society articulates how to constitute its vision for society as a whole.

The idea of development benefits all section of society as it shows the basic need of approach. It provides food, shelter, clothing and similar basic needs to the section of people who are devoid of these basic needs.

However, Development has also been criticized for its narrower sense, like achieving pre-set targets or completing projects like dams, factories etc. rather than the developments that uphold society. In the process some sections may have benefited while others may have had to suffer loss of their homes or lands without compensatory gains.

Q. 2 Discuss some of the social and ecological costs of the kind of development which has been pursued in most countries.

Answer:

Though development raised the level and quality of life, yet it is criticized for the social and ecological cost that had be bear by some section of society.

The model of development has also had high social costs:

a. Large number of people have been displaced from their homes and localities due to construction of big dams, industrial activity etc.

- b. Loss of livelihood and increased impoverishment.
- c. Rural communities are displaced from their traditional occupation.
- d. Traditional skill acquired over period are lost.

Example: Narmada Bachao Andolan, against Sardar Sarovar Dam the supporters of this project claims that it will generate electricity, help irrigate areas and provide drinking water. But the opponents of the dam claimed that almost 1 million people have displaced, they have lost their lands.

Ecological Costs:

- a. Development requires energy and which is major cause of environmental degradation.
- b. Consumption of fossil fuels to meet the demands of energy also deplete the natural resources.
- c. The development of industries and motor vehicles in huge numbers have contributed to high level of pollution and significantly to global warming that has caused melting of icebergs and hence increase in level of sea water.
- d. Development has led to deforestation; whose aftermath is green house of effect.

Example: when south and south east countries were hit of tsunami, it was observed that destruction of mangroves along the shoreline was the reason for greater extent of damaged caused.

Q. 3 What are some of the new claims for rights which the process of development has generated?

Answer:

The new claims for rights which the process of development has generated are as follows:

- a. The protection of people and providing adequate compensation to the people who lose their livelihood in the process of development.
- b. The right of the people, that they must be consulted about the decision that affect their lives.
- c. The right to provide alternate livelihood.
- d. Rights of local communities and tribals to use natural resources.

Q. 4 What would be the advantages of democracy over other forms of government for ensuring that decisions regarding development are made to promote the common good?

Answer:

The advantages of democracy over other forms of government for ensuring that decisions regarding development are made to promote the common good are as follows:

- a. A democratic government must ensure that the decisions regarding development are taken in keeping common interest of people in mind, i.e. respecting rights of all. While the same might not be the situation in case of military or dictatorship nation.
- b. In democratic nations the right of people to participate in decision making is emphasized.
- c. Conflicts over resources are resolved through debates in democracy while in a non-democratic nation these might be imposed forcibly by higher authorities.
- d. Democracy allows every citizen to participate in deciding their future and nation's priorities.

Q. 5 In your view, how successful have popular struggles been in making the state responsive to the social and environmental costs of development? Discuss with examples.

Answer:

There were several struggles and movements held in past against the severe effect of development.

Example:

Narmada Bachao Andolan against Sardar Sarovar dam construction. At times, the movement stooped the government from raising the height of the dam. This project caused around 1 million of people to displace the region and their livelihood. A great land of forest was submerged. The activists like Medha Patekar claimed for adequate compensation for the people.

Chipko Movement against deforestation was a successful movement against deforestation in Uttarakhand. The people of the region hugged the trees and stopped the contractors from cutting down the trees. Thus, it created the awareness all over the country, to save the trees.