In the first two chapters we have studied the changes that have taken place in the world since 1991. We saw how the process of globalisation has brought in concepts like participatory state, awareness of human rights, increasing importance of non-state actors, etc. Today, humanitarian issues like environment, perspectives about poverty and development policies and approaches towards gender have become important. This chapter looks at these issues and tries to understand how India has dealt with them.

Environment and Sustainability

What is the environment? It is everything that makes up our surroundings, the air we breathe, the water that covers most of the earth's surface, the plants and animals around us, and much more. It is the conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives. The natural environment consists of all living and non-living things occurring naturally. It would include soil, rocks, atmosphere, air, water, and climate, etc. There is also the built environment. This refers to such areas where man has transformed landscapes such as urban settings and agricultural land conversion. The natural environment is modified into a human environment.

The relationship between economic development and environmental degradation was first placed on the international agenda in 1972, at the United Nations (UN) Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm. The main purpose of the conference was to encourage and provide guidelines for the protection and improvement of human environment. In 1983 the UN set up the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission). The Report of the Commission (1987) put forward the concept of sustainable development as an alternative approach to one based on economic growth.

The UN General Assembly called for the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) as a follow up to the report of the Brundtland Commission. The goal of the summit was to understand the concept of development that would support socio-economic development and prevent the continued deterioration of the environment. It also aimed at creating a partnership between the developing and the more industrialised countries to ensure a healthy future for the planet. This summit was held at Rio in 1992.

The Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit (1992) also called the Rio Summit, the Rio Conference, or the Earth Summit sought to create international cooperation on development issues. It tried to raise public awareness on the need to integrate environment and development. In 2002 the Earth Summit was held in Johannesburg with the goal of again bringing together leaders from government, business and NGOs. Sustainable Development was recognised as the most important goal for institutions at the national, regional and international levels. In 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was again held in Rio, and is also commonly called Rio+20 or Rio Earth Summit 2012.

RIO+20
United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

The goal of environmental sustainability is to conserve natural resources and to develop alternate sources of power while reducing pollution and harm to the environment. Environmental sustainability is defined as responsible interaction with the environment to avoid depletion or degradation of natural resources and allow for long-term environmental quality. The practice of environmental sustainability helps to ensure that the needs of today's population are met without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Some of the important environmental concerns are as follows:

Climate Change : Greenhouse gas emissions are the main cause of climate change. This has resulted in extreme weather events such as droughts, wildfires, heat waves and flooding.

Pollution : Air pollution and climate change are closely linked. Greenhouse gas emissions that are warming the planet are also creating smoggy conditions in major cities that endanger public health.

Deforestation : Forests are important as they absorb CO_2 that would otherwise escape into the atmosphere and worsen global warming. Cutting down trees also threatens animals and humans who rely on healthy forests to sustain themselves.

Water Scarcity : As the population increases and climate change causes more droughts, water scarcity is becoming more of an issue. Access to clean, safe drinking water is an important problem faced by the population today.

Loss of Biodiversity : Loss of biodiversity threatens food security and population health. Climate change is also a major contributor to biodiversity.

Pollution

Deforestation

Do this.

What can you do to protect the environment?

* Climate Change : _____
* Pollution : _____
* Deforestation : _____
* Water scarcity : _____
* Protect Biodiversity : _____

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change is the nodal agency in the administrative structure of the Central Government for the planning, promotion, co-ordination and overseeing the implementation

of India's environmental and forestry policies and programmes. The primary concerns of the Ministry are implementation of policies and programmes relating to conservation of the country's natural resources including its lakes and rivers, its biodiversity, forests and wildlife, ensuring the welfare of animals, and the prevention and abatement of pollution. While implementing these policies and programmes, the Ministry is guided by the principle of sustainable development and enhancement of human well-being.

Solar panels - Non-Conventional Energy Source

Poverty and Development

What is poverty? How is it related to Development? What are the various perspectives and approaches that would help us to understand the relationship between the two? These are some of the issues that this section deals with.

The traditional perception of poverty would focus on the lack of food, water, shelter, clothing, sanitation, etc. There is also a monetary based consideration of what is poverty. Poverty is therefore a state of an individual, family or society where people are unable to provide for their basic necessities of life. It focuses on the earnings of an individual that would help him to live a relatively comfortable life. These are material aspects of life. A State is expected to ensure that the people are provided for the necessary material goods for their survival.

There is an alternate view of poverty. This focuses on both the material and non-material aspects of life. Here the focus is on human wellbeing through sustainable societies in social, economic and political terms. Here the emphasis is on values, community ties and availability of common resources. Such a view would focus on participatory nature of decision making, ensuring that the marginalised community is able to participate in public policy and promote economic and political decentralisation.

Poverty in India: Urban India

Poverty in India: Migration

The approach to the concept of development is usually looked at through a set of social and political values. The purpose of development is to ensure welfare of the people. For example, development can be associated with economic growth. One perspective about economic growth can focus on the predominant role of the State in

promoting economic growth. Another view can focus on the role of the free market economy in promoting development. The former would be classified as 'socialist' while the latter as 'capitalist'. Both these are traditional approaches to development.

The alternate, non-traditional view about development focuses on both material and non-material aspects of poverty. It stresses on political participation from the grassroot level, ensuring that all sections of the community are represented in the decision-making process. It seeks to balance human activity with nature, thus promoting the concept of sustainable development.

The approaches to development until the 1990s were mainly traditional in nature. Their main concern was tackling material aspects of poverty. Thus, the role of the State was targeted to increasing economic prosperity through industrialisation or focus on agriculture so as to generate employment opportunities and increase the per capita income of the people. It is only in the 1990s that the alternative view of development has become acceptable. Consequently, the focus to day is development based on equity, participation, empowerment, sustainability, etc.

Do you know?

Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000, the member states of the United Nations adopted United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Declaration committed the nations to fulfil international development goals by the year 2015. These goals are termed as the millennium development goals. Three important goals in the list are, eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring sustainable development and attaining global partnership for development. On the lines of these goals Sustainable Development goals also called as Global Goals came into effect in 2016. Poverty eradication continues to be the primary objective in the Global goals.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations considers poverty as a denial of choices and opportunities and a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society, not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or a clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's

Find out and discuss.

In 2015 the United Nations adopted the '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'. It provides a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet for now and into the future. The Agenda mentions 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for action by all countries - development and developing - in a global partnership.

Find out the details of each of these goals and discuss them in the classroom.

Sustainable Development Goals

Find details see : https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/

living, nor having access to credit. It also means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities.

It means susceptibility to violence and it often implies living on marginal and fragile environments, not having access to clean water and sanitation. The ECOSOC also argues that poverty needs to be addressed through the full involvement of governments and all other development actors in society. This has to be done as per national and local circumstances based on the actual assessments of the needs of the poor. Democratisation and enhanced protection of human rights as key components of good governance are necessary to eradicate poverty.

Poverty and Development in India

Indian national policy has always associated political freedom with economic freedom. It meant the freedom to follow our own policies without compromise on national sovereignty.

Indian vision of the process of development in India had three aspects:

(i) **Modernisation of the Economy :** Modernisation of Indian economy meant industrialisation. Industrialisation would provide employment and increase productivity. The stress was on large scale industrialisation and factory production rather than small scale industries. This would provide employment to the growing labour force. During the Nehru years the focus was on industrialisation and not on agriculture

Images of Economic Modernisation in India

production. Land reform and irrigation were looked at as the means to achieve agricultural growth.

(ii) **Self-reliance :** Self-reliance was associated with India's freedom movement. One of the aspects of self-reliance was 'import substitution' strategy. The focus was to develop indigenous industry. India did take foreign aid from other countries, but the aid was utilised mainly in the public sector industry.

(iii) **Socialist pattern of society with equity and social justice :** India adopted the approach of Planning for development. The Planning Commission was created that was expected to prepare Five Year Plans for the development of the country. Importance was given to the Public Sector industry and not the Private Sector. The Indian concept of socialism was based on the promotion of the welfare state and employment generation. This was the approach to tackle the problem of poverty in India.

Some changes did take place in the 1960s and 1970s. The 1960s saw a focus on agriculture. This was the period of the Green Revolution in India.

India faced an economic crisis in the late 1980s. Indian public sector was not performing well. The various public expenditure programmes for social welfare and removal of poverty were becoming wasteful. The Panchayati Raj Amendments to the Indian Constitution tried to bring in decentralisation of decision-making. But they were not very successful. India was forced to take loan from the International Monetary Fund to overcome the financial problems.

India has always recognised the link between economic growth and the quality of life of the people. It also recognises the need to combine economic growth with the objective social justice. 'Growth with Social Justice and Equity' has been India's policy towards poverty and development. The Indian government initiated several programmes that sought to help the poor and promote holistic development.

India's development strategy has evolved over the years. It has reflected the growing strength of the economy and developments in the world economy. In the early stages of development planning, government had played a dominant role through the public sector in all important industries. This strategy changed in the 1980s. Some changes were made in the 1980s to address the shortcomings in the development strategy. After 1991 a wide-ranging programme of economic reforms was initiated. The earlier framework of socialist pattern of development was given up. India introduced the policies of economic liberalisation and privatisation of the public sector. These reforms were pursued by successive governments since 1991 and have enjoyed a broad base of support. These reforms brought in changes in the Indian economy. Indian economic and industrial growth rate increased and India became a stable economic power.

These reforms also changed the role played by the State. Now the development strategy was to encourage the private sector to increase production, create jobs and raise income levels in society. India has a strong and vibrant private sector, including large, middle sized and small enterprises. Encouragement of the private sector does not mean that the State has no role to play in development. Today, the State, along with the civil society (NGOs and Voluntary Organisations) continues to play an important role in the area of social development, especially in rural areas. This includes providing basic services such as health care, education, safe drinking water etc. to the majority of the population, especially in rural areas.

The estimates from the 2018 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) released today by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) indicate that despite

Find out?

Here are some Poverty Alleviation Programmes in India. Find out information about them and discuss it in the classroom. Find out other such programmes that are in existence in India.

The poverty alleviation programmes in India have been designed for both rural areas and urban areas. Most of the programmes are designed to target the rural poverty as prevalence of poverty is high in rural areas.

Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) is the revised version of the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY). It was started in1999. The main aim of this programme was development infrastructure like roads to connect the village to different areas and other social, educational (schools) and infrastructure like hospitals in the rural areas.

Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) was first introduced in 1978-79. The main objective of IRDP is to create sustainable opportunities for self-employment in the rural sector.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awaas Yojana was started in 1985. This scheme aimed at creating housing for everyone.

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) was launched in 2005. It provides 100 days assured employment every year to every rural household.

Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana was started in 2014. According to this yojana, each Member of Parliament will take the responsibility of developing three villages by 2019. The idea is to make India's villages to be fully developed with physical and institutional infrastructure.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna was started in 2015. It aimed at providing skill training to youth.

difficulties and prevalent gaps, India has made decent progress in reducing multidimensional poverty. According to the report, the incidence of multidimensional poverty has almost halved between 2005-06 and 2015-16, climbing down to 27.5 percent from 54.7 percent. However, pockets of poverty are found across India, but multidimensional poverty is particularly acute.

Gender issues

Poverty and Women

There are interlinkages among various issues and concerns. One of the most important linkage is between poverty, underdevelopment and women. Majority of women in different parts of the world are poor owing to cultural norms and values, gendered division of assets and property, and unequal power equations between men and women. Women and girls bear an unequal burden of unpaid domestic responsibilities and are overrepresented in informal jobs.

The world witnessed rise of feminist movements in early 19th century. Since then, social, political and economic rights of women were constantly asserted. They broadly talked about gender equality- equal rights, social equality, political equality, gender justice etc. Later in the 1970s, women empowerment came to be accepted as an important concept and philosophy.

What is Empowerment?

Empowerment is a process by which oppressed persons gain control over their own lives. It helps them to get basic necessities of life. This process gives the person strength, self-confidence, increases self-esteem and provides courage to fight against injustice. The process of empowerment has social, economic, psychological and political dimensions.

Do you know?

Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as behaviour, norms, roles and relationships between women and men. Gender issues focus on women and on the relationship between men and women, their roles, access to and control over resources, division of labour, difficulties and needs etc.

In global politics, gender issues started gaining importance since the 1980s. This led to the development of a gender perspective to look at world politics. It includes gender analysis which means analysis of masculine and feminine identities is considered as important.

Gender approach is based on the assumption that men and women understand the world in a different manner. It believes that this understanding is a product of social or historical experiences. Gender approach recognises the contribution of women which was previously neglected. Invisible contributions of various sections of women such as domestic workers, migrant labourers, wives of diplomat's etc. are taken into consideration. Along with this, it started paying attention to the problems faced by women across the world.

Gender inequality is pervasive, with women lacking access to decent employment and facing gender wage gaps. All around the world women and girls are routinely denied access to education and healthcare; they are under-represented in economic and political decision-making. They suffer from violence and discrimination.

The United Nations 'Decade for Women' began in the year 1975. The aim of this program was the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for women across the globe. The program also tried to link women's issues

with developmental issues. They focussed on many inequalities that women face in education, health care, work places, landholding and human rights.

Status of Women in India

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality as a fundamental right to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. Despite this, women continue to face discrimination. Some of the important gender related issues in the Indian context are as follows:

(i) **Economic inequality :** The major problem that India faces is a high level of male-female wage gap. Similarly, the participation of women in the labour market is also as low as 28.2% compared to the men which is 78.8%.

(ii) **Trafficking and exploitation :** A 2013 UN Office on Drug and Crime report highlighted that women from India were trafficked for forced marriage. They are often "exploited, denied basic rights, duplicated as maids and eventually abandoned."

(iii) **Literacy rate :** The literacy rate of women in India is low as compared to men. As per the Census Report 2011, the male literacy rate is 82.14%, whereas female literacy rate is 65.46%.

(iv) **Political representation :** The low percentage of women in Parliament and State Assemblies has been one of the problems since independence.

> **Find out?**
>
> Find out the number of women representatives in the 17th Lok Sabha.

In India, within the framework of a democratic polity, laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was established in 1953 to carry out welfare activities for the general welfare of family, women and children.

The initial approach to women's issues in India can be described as a 'welfare approach'. The focus was on community development through Mahila Mandals, protection of women against injurious work, provide maternity and child care benefits, etc. In the 1960s the emphasis was on education as a welfare strategy. Health programmes concentrated on maternity and child services, health education and nutrition and family planning.

In the 1970s the approach towards women's issues shifted from 'welfare' to 'development'. The 1970s was the 'United Nations' Decade for Women. The Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India titled 'Towards Equality' talked of rights and status of women in the context of changing social and economic conditions in India. The 1980s saw a further change in the approach towards women in India. Now the focus was on health, education and employment.

The 1990s saw a shift from 'development' to 'empowerment'. The government wanted to ensure that the benefits of development do not bypass women and therefore their participation in planning and implementation was necessary. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

Women Empowerment in India

The socio-cultural landscape for women is a complex mixture of the old and the new. Industrialisation, globalisation, urbanisation, and modernisation have led to major changes in the lifestyle of women. On the one hand, liberalisation has provided better opportunities for women in terms of education, jobs, and decision-making power. On the other hand, increased violence, wage differences and discrimination continue. Change in social norms and mindsets can be brought through institutional initiatives. This involves the family, community, religious and educational institutions. It can initiate, strengthen, and implement economic and social policies for gender equality.

The Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India, came into existence as a separate Ministry in 2006. Earlier since 1985 it was a Department under the Ministry of Human Resources Development. The Ministry was constituted with the prime intention of addressing gaps in State action for women and children and to create gender equitable and child-centred legislation, policies and programmes. The Ministry aims at achieving empowerment of women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination.

The Ministry has prepared the National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001) and the Draft of the National Policy for Women (2016) that seeks to articulate a vision for empowerment of women. Various important legislations are passed by the Indian legislature in recent years. These include the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; the Sexual Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Prohibition, Prevention and Redressal) Act, 2013; Muslim Women (Protection of Right on Marriage) Act, 2019.

Find out and discuss.
Read the National Policy for Women (2016) and discuss its salient features in the classroom.

In this chapter we focussed on three humanitarian issues that have become important since the 1990s. These issues are global in nature because they deal with situations that can arise anywhere in the world. We also saw the role played by the Indian State to tackle the problems in these issue areas. In the next chapter we will study the role of the State in matters of ensuring peace, stability and development in the country.

Exercise

Q.1 (A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements.

(1) The initial approach to women's issues in India can be described as '........................ approach'.
(welfare, developmental, empowerment, educational)

(2) In 1972, UN Conference on human environment was held in ....
(Rio de Janeiro, Paris, Stockholm, New York)

(B) Identify the incorrect pair in every set, correct it and rewrite.

1. (i) 1960's - Welfare approach to womens issues.
   (ii) 1970's - Development approach to womens issues
   (iii) 1990's - Educational approach to womens issues

2. (i) Lack of food, water etc. - Traditional perception of poverty
   (ii) Emphasis on material and non-material aspects of life - Non-traditional perception of poverty
   (iii) Pre dominant role of the state in promoting economic growth - Capitalist approach

(C) Find the odd word in the given set.

(1) National policy for empowerment of women, protection of women from domestic violence act, Muslim women (protection of right on marriage) Act, the sexual harassment at workplace (prohibition prevention and readressal) Act.

(2) Climate change, waste management, water scarity, deforestation.

Q.2 State whether the following statement are true or false with reason.

(1) Planning Commission was created to promote agriculture in India.

(2) National Commision for women was set up to protect rights for women in India.

Q.3 Explain the co-relation between the following.

(1) Women Empowerment and Sustainable Development

(2) Poverty and Development

Q.4 Answer the following questions in 80 to 100 words.

(1) Explain the traditional and non-traditional perception of poverty.

(2) From 1960's to 21 century what efforts has India taken to achieve development?

Q.5 Answer the following question in detail with help of given points.

Explain conditions of women in India.
(a) Economic inequality (b) trafficking and exploitation (c) Literary rate (d) Political representation

Activity

(1) Find out percentage of handicapped voters in 17th Lok Sabha suggest measures to increase their percentage.

(2) Find out information on international agreements on environmental balance.

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