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Impact of Globalization on Human Rights in India

Economics

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ABSTRACT

India accepted new economic policy due to economic crises in 1990-91. Globalization Privatization and Liberalization are main dimensions of new economic policy. Since India has changed structural strategy, it took U-turn on the objectives of five year planning. Formation of Socialist state was one of main objectives of Indian planning. There is considerable scope for the development of poor and common man in Socialist state since government intervention is part and parcel of Socialist state to regulate economic activities. Economic status plays pivotal role in human rights. The processes of globalization have been increasing economic inequalities and new social problems in India. Public sector has had a decreasing trend due to the reducing government role in the economy. Market-oriented economy favors the capitalists and reach .The intensity of Poverty, inequality, unemployment, malnutrition, regional imbalances, terrorism, etc. have been increasing in privatization and globalization era. Environmental degradation is a worrying problem due to exploitation of natural resources in the market oriented economy. Scarcity of safety and clean water, hunger, Poverty , inequality, unemployment, malnutrition, corruption etc affect the human's quality of life and it leads some basic problem regarding human rights. With this background the paper attempts at protecting human rights, combating, cyber revolution and human rights with reference to globalization in India.

Introduction-

India has accepted new economic policy due to economic crises in 1990-91.we can observe globalization has serious implications both positive and negative in India as well as at global level. Developing countries suffering from disadvantages of globalization and other hand poor society affected by decisions taken under LPG in developing and under developing countries at significant level. In India socio-economic consequences of globalization are anti-poor and ant- marginalized , it is very difficult to protect the rights of the poor and common man. Hence it is an urgent need to strengthen the human face of globalization. The problems of globalization should be address because there is no future of poor and marginalized and there human rights. Indian policy maker should aware about the interest of poor and common man and their quality of life as well as human rights. It is a need of time to think about interest of all Indian citizens with context to education , employment, health, degradation of poverty , environmental balance, sustainable development. Without addressing the issues there is no meaning to development and democracy in India.

Globalisation and Human Rights: Exploring Linkages

Globalisation, defined in terms of free flows of goods, services, capital and financial resources across borders, is the single most important factor responsible for spreading the open societies across the world. Though this globalisation is primarily economic in nature it's technological, cultural, security and political dimensions have multifarious impact on human life. Human Rights, which are universal, inalienable and indivisible in nature, are obviously affected by this transition. Democracy is still considered the best model of ensuring rights, to individuals as well as groups, facing many dilemmas due to this process of globalisation.

The model of development anticipated in the process of globalisation is deeply rooted in the capitalist model of development. Though the concept of 'development' per say is not antithetical to human rights. But the model of development in globalisation is inherently favourable to certain classes and nations. Mere creation of wealth does not ensure right to development for every human being. Globalised model of development is weakening democratic movements and ability of democratic societies to protect human rights. On this backdrop, the linkages of globalisation with its main concerns namely, environment, terrorism and cyber revolution needs to be explored.

Environment and Human Rights

The environmental issues started acquiring significance in 1960's with the increasing awareness about the finite limits of resources such as oil and the damage done by pesticides to the countryside. This period has witnessed a brand of green activism and enactment of environment related laws in the West. The first formal recognition to the green awareness at international level was the International conference called by the UN general assembly in June 1972 at Stockholm.

The end of Cold War opened up new area for environmental negotiations. The UN conference on Environment and Development organized at Rio-de-Janeiro in June 1992 was a landmark in this direction. The conference popularly known as the Earth Summit was unprecedented in terms of attendance and the issues addressed. It was attended by 172 states and 2400 representatives of non-governmental organization (NGO's) and came out with Agenda 21 consisting of recommendations for good environmental practices1. First time the issues related to development and question of sovereignty over natural resources was debated in the conference. The term 'sustainable development was also galvanized from the conference. Due to shifts in agricultural zones, melting of polar ice caps and rising sea level, the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), popularly known as the Kyoto protocol, was opened for signature by individual nations in 1992. The special summit on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Earth Summit at Johannesburg depict the inability of developed and developing countries to reach an agreement on targets and timetables for the installation of renewable energy.

Politics of Environmental Degradation

Despite of this grave situation on the environmental front, why global community could not implement the recommendations they themselves agreed upon. The answer lies in the complex relationship of environmental degradation with the development process. This relationship brings the question of sovereign authority over the natural resources and North-South conflict in the forefront if environmental negotiations.

The failure of the international community to set the direction for the course of action lies in the politics of North versus South. 75 per cent of the total emissions are due to the industrialised North. They do not want to lose their monopoly over the non-renewable energy sources, thus, in a way, over the process of development. That is the reason why developed countries like the US are not ready to accept any binding commitments on controlling emissions, such as the Kyoto Protocol. The oil, coal and auto companies have also lobbied hard to challenge the findings and statistics on Global Warming. On the other hand, the right to development is critical for the developing South. Hence, the policy questions of controlling emissions, development assistance, technology transfer and Clean Development Mechanism are crucial. This North-South controversy left operational details on controlling climate change unresolved. The issues like raising funds for coping with climate change and deciding the danger level of CO2 concentration have become very important.

The tragedy is science and scientists have no place while making policy on climate change and the issue of equity is never addressed in these negotiations.

The most important reason is the inability of developed and developing countries to reach an agreement on targets and timetables for the installation of renewable energy. The US, the largest user of global resources and cause of environmental damage, opposed the targets as unrealistic and arbitrary. In the mega summits, the world leaders display their commitment to trade related interests than environmental sustainability.

These summits also failed to address key global challenges like constructing a global, legally binding framework for corporate accountability and shielding international environmental agreements from World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules. On the contrary, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation subordinates every enforceable agreement to the WTO provisions. These consistent failures show the sign of lack of will power on the part of powerful and lack of power to push environmental concerns on the part of willing countries.

This global scenario necessitates the analysis of environmental related problems, the political and economic interests involved in blocking the implementation of good environmental practices and its impact on larger security of India and South Asia. Before that, it is necessary to establish linkages between environment and human security. Democratic countries face dilemma here that if they ensure economic growth, environmental protection is not ensured. In turn, it also negates right to livelihood to many humans. Unless environmental issues are linked to right to development and livelihood, it cannot be addressed in the real sense.

Preventing Terrorism or Protecting Human Rights

In a modern democratic state the idea of human rights, defining the fundamental moral limits of individual and collective behaviour, is interwoven with the legal framework. The recent upsurge of terrorist activities by non-state, transnational actors for achieving political ends has initiated a new debate about the primacy of human rights and the role of security forces. Here the questions of striking a balance between new methods to fight against terrorism and protecting human rights has become delicate. The issues are:

1 Whether the legal system should be strengthened with special laws against terrorist activities?
2. If special laws are made then what are the safeguards to ensure that these laws are not misused?
3. How to make the security forces accountable in their anti-terrorists operations?

Regarding the Ansal Plaza incident a section of society believes that what the police did is right. According to this perspective national security is of prime importance, and we cannot pamper terrorists in the name of Human Rights, which they do not follow. Hence, to prevent terrorism the legal measures should be strengthened and security forces provided with necessary safeguards. The intervention by the National Human Rights Commission in anti-terrorist operations is criticized on the grounds that the human rights of citizens are more important than those of the terrorists. This kind of intervention is seen as demoralising for the police forces. On the other hand it is also seen as morale boosting for the terrorists. The media and human rights organisations are seen as agents of the terrorists.

It is beyond doubt that terrorism is an act negating civilized life, and the implementation of measures to prevent and deter terrorism are essential and urgent. The media and human rights organisations should act responsibly, instead of going out for publicity. But the root causes of terrorism should not be missed. Terrorism is not only a law and order and security related problem. Most terrorists are born out of poor governance and atrocities by the security forces. If only terrorism is addressed with stringent security measures, this will aggravate the problem instead of controlling it.

Combating Terrorism – Problems and Strategies

The following suggestions can be considered as a way out for democratic societies in this difficult situation:

1. Firm legal measures should go hand in hand with addressing the root causes of terrorism such as misgovernance, inequalities, politicisation of security, and related issues. These legal measures should be clear and specific with adequate safeguards. A provision for periodical reviews is also necessary for such laws.
2. Terrorism being a civil and not military problem, the role of armed forces should be minimal. Special Forces, trained physically and mentally to deal with terrorists, are a better option for anti-terrorist operations. The security forces, especially police forces, should be made accountable for their actions. Severe but departmental prosecution can be considered for any misuse of legal powers by police personnel. This will make the police forces more accountable without the fear of demoralizing them.
3. The media should evolve a code of conduct about reporting terrorist strikes. The print media in India has decided incidentally not to mention the specific community concerned in cases of communal violence. In their competition for broadcasting sensational news they should not glorify the acts of terror or create fear in the people.

Terrorism is here to stay for decades, which is a harsh reality. Democratic societies, like India, would confront with severe dilemmas in their fight against terrorism. As this fight is designed to protect fundamental democratic values, the protection of human rights must be seen as an integral part of the war against terrorism, and not as an obstacle to it.

Cyber Revolution and Human Rights

Social: The social impact of the Information and Communication Revolution is intricate and most difficult to perceive. Social values, structures, and relations are changing. Fukuyama has tried to capture the social impact of the Information Age in the following words. "A society built around information tends to produce more of the two things people value most in a modern democracy: freedom and equality. Freedom of choices has exploded, whether of cable channels, low cost shopping outlets, or friends met on the Internet. Hierarchies of all sorts, whether political or corporate, come under pressure and begin to crumble. Large, rigid bureaucracies, which sought to control everything in their domain through rules, regulations, and coercion, have been undermined by the shift toward a knowledge-based economy, which serves to "empower" individuals by giving them access to information" **2**. It is true that societies are becoming more conscious about their political and social rights due to the availability of information and knowledge which has become their greatest asset. Consequently, the importance of monetary capital has declined in the society. But information is not evenly and consistently available to citizens in the developing world. The negative impact of this development is that the value of labour has been significantly declining. Information networks have become a source of propaganda for the developed world, especially the US. Megaservers that control the Internet web are located in the U.S. and big giants in software and hardware production like Microsoft and Intel, International Business Machine (IBM) and Dell are from the U.S. This is why the Internet is seen as an expression of U.S. nationalism and cultural invasion by the rest of the world. Thus, on the one hand the Information Revolution is increasing the existing disparities within and among countries while providing new opportunities in a competitive atmosphere. Societies with flexible structures and quality human resources can take advantage of this new environment.

Economic: The economic impact of the Information and Communication Revolution is most intense and visible. Economics are being transformed from being production based to knowledge based. The concept of capital is transformed from economy to knowledge centric. The knowledge-based economy provides immense employment opportunities in terms of consultancy services, connectivity solutions, applications development and implementation of citizen services through e-governance. The

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National Association of Software and Services Companies (Nasscom) said the e-governance market in India grew by 18 per cent in 2002, touching Rs 1,400 crores in the course of becoming the fastest growing vertical segment in the domestic information technology market**3**. Till 1994 the concept of electronic commerce did not exist. In 1997, about $26 billion in commercial traffic could be attributed to electronic transactions. A recent study of electronic commerce by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) determined that this figure could rise to $1 trillion—a 4,000%-plus increase in volume by 2003**4**.

Political: The impact of the information revolution on national sovereignty and resulting political change is more subtle and complex compare to its economic consequences. All the core concepts of Political Science and International Relations such as identity, sovereignty, development, cooperation, security and regulation are acquiring a new context in the Information Age. This is the first time that national sovereignty has been called into question so vehemently. Though national sovereignty has been challenged by each new communication media, both the constitutional and operational aspects of sovereignty have been eroded by the Information and Communication Revolution. This has significantly minimised the ability of governments to exercise effective control within their territories. The emergence of powerful and numerous non-state actors like terrorist organizations and multinational corporations and their easy access to technology has worsened the situation. This transformation necessitates the evolution of a new regulation strategy for states. As Ravinatha Aryasinha explained, "the Internet's impact on politics has been particularly significant. It has increased the scope of democratic expressions by its ability to segment and target audiences through networking, thereby challenging the monopoly of governments to control what their people see and how their respective countries are projected to the rest of the world. It is also shaping new relations among citizens, between citizens and their respective states and among states themselves, posing new challenges to broader aspects of national interests, which in turn can exacerbate intra-state and inter-state tensions**5** ".

On the other hand, the information explosion has paved the wave of political awareness and activism in the world. Informed citizens put tremendous pressure on governmental structures to fulfill their expectations. On a positive note however this development had led to more democratization of the political systems. This political impact of Information Technology at the international level is summarized by David Gompert in the following words: "Information technology is enriching, integrating, and expanding the world's democratic core, promising improved security for much of the planet. It has played a role in the three great political developments of the late twentieth century: the metamorphosis of Japan and Germany, the demise of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of previously underdeveloped regions. In the old nomenclature, it has helped revitalize the First World, liberate the Second, and uplift the Third".6

Cyber revolution is undoubted a source of empowerment for many but is also a threat to many individual rights in terms of development, livelihood and denial of information and access to vital government resources, as cyber space is accessible to privileged few. Democratic countries cannot remain aloof from cyber revolution still they cannot provide it to everybody.

Conclusion

Globalisation as process of development is not for everyone. It has created new divides within and across the nations. These divides are at environmental, developmental, digital and at the level of violence also. Democratic societies have to face these challenges and enlarge the democratic discourse so that globalisation gets more humanitarian face and it does not become only a force of access wealth but also distributive wealth. For the purpose the democratic state has to fundamentally transformed itself make new levels of partnerships with new non-state actors. Honorable Supreme Courts Justice Dipak Misra has pointed out the need for fine balance in the approach to understand human rights and their protection in the country[7].

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