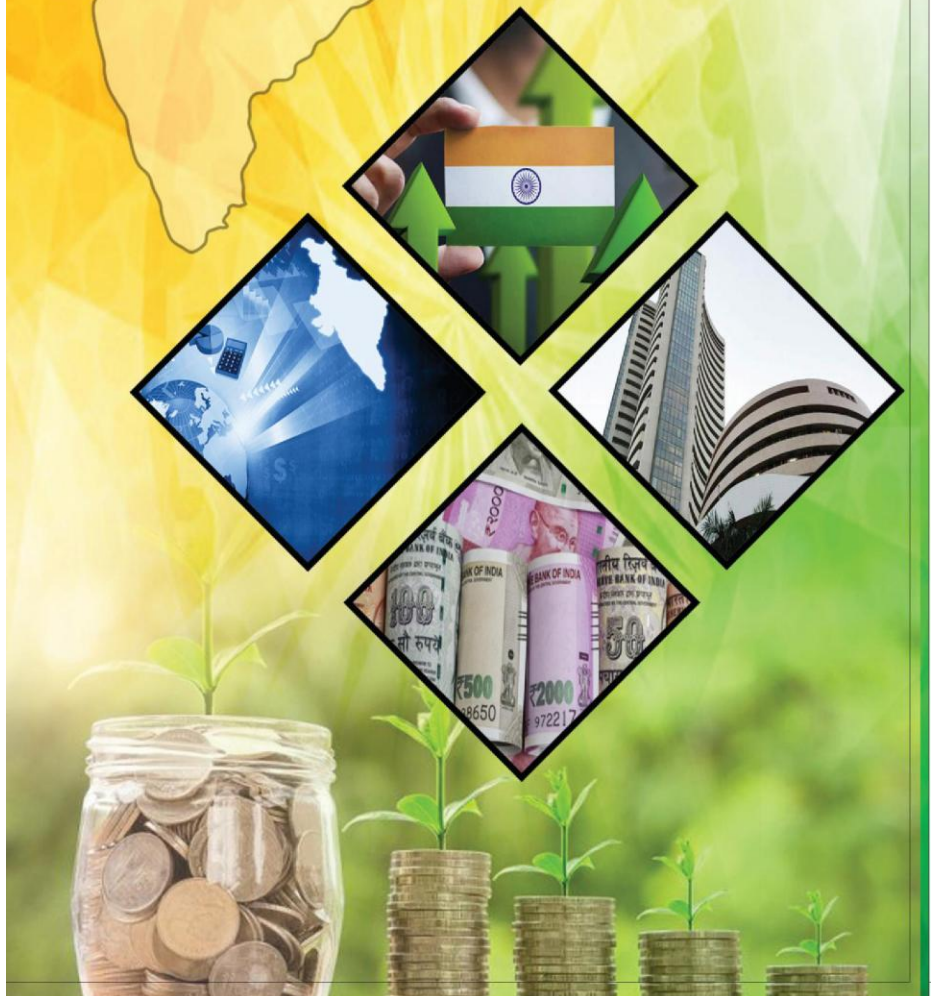


The Indian Economy :

- Problems of development and**
- People-centric solutions**

Shrinivas Khandewale

(English Translation: Mrs Keerti Marathe)



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Annapurna Pariwar**

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**The Indian economy:
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People-centric solutions**

Foreword by the publisher :



We are pleased to publish a booklet viz "The Indian Economy : Problems of development and the people-centric solutions" written by Prof. Shriniwas Khandewale, on the occasion of Founders' Day, 21st August 2021 This booklet is being published by Com. Dada Purav Research and Training Institute of Annapurna Pariwar.

Prof. Shriniwas Khandewale was a professor of Economics, in Rashtrasant Tukadoji Maharaj - Nagpur University, and headed the Department of Management Science. He is a trustee and office bearer of Com. Rambhau Ruikar Research Institute at Nagpur.

He writes articles on the latest economic developments in the daily 'Loksatta' newspaper, in the 'Chaturang' series , every fortnight.

In this booklet, Mr. Khandewale has analyzed the Indian economic systems, from the period of pre-independence era till date, with a focus on the historical importance of the developments that were taking place in this country. He has also discussed in detail about how in the post-independence period, the perspective on economic development was developed, the economic calamity in 1991 and the new

economic policies drawn on this background. He has also discussed about the current economic problems and the people-centric solutions for the same.

This booklet will prove to be very useful for the young activists working in Annapurna Pariwar, young members working at the slums, young activists working in the social transformational movements to understand the big picture about the economic problems of the country.

The economic crisis at the global level, at the national level and in Maharashtra state is going to become more and more serious. On this background, on the occasion of Founders' Day, we are publishing three booklets.

We are very much thankful to Mr Shriniwas Khandewale for acceding to our request and writing a booklet on the subject of the problems of Indian Economic Development - People centric solutions.

Dr. Medha Purao - Samant

Secretary

Annapurna Pariwar.

The Indian Economy : Problems of development and People-centric solutions

Shriniwas Khandewale

Inevitable Economic structure

In our daily lives, we have a certain work area and based upon the same, some of our objectives in life are decided, a certain way of thinking is established. This is a common positive process. However, it has some negative aspects too. One of such aspects is that we are almost wound up in our own lives, our objectives and philosophies, we think that this set-up is self-sufficient and we don't bother even to think about anything that resides outside this, the real world that exists outside and the fact that we also have some relationship with its problems. We think that our life-style is self-sufficient. However, it is not so.

All of us are connected with this chain of economic, political, social, cultural transactions at various points but we are not aware of it. When a necklace is made, the beads at the beginning of the necklace never meet the last pendent on the same necklace. When people are dining in the posh hotels in the metropolitan cities, they do not bother to think about the efforts and hardships done by the farmers so that the wheat and rice reach their tables. The rice transplanting is done in muddy fields with one foot water level.. We think that once we pay the price at the counter, why should we bother about the earlier chain of operations?

Add to this the people in the sections of the society who live only for their own financial interests. Due to such reasons, in the same society, population groups are living in the same country, same regions but they are not aware about the hardships suffered by others. They do not feel that there is any need to do so and hence there is no desire to do so.

The value of the overall production generated by all is considered as a whole, beyond the levels of region, state and country. The government employees who worked under the British regime, and today's urban society, both have distanced themselves from the rural people. In the urban society also, there is a stratification e.g. ultra rich industrialists - businessmen - great artists; then the next tier of rich industrialists-businessmen, political persons, share agents, managers, technologists, then the middle-class people working in government offices and private sector; below this tier there is the lower middle class staying in the chawls and old houses and finally at the end there is the class of slum-residents, who are local or migrated laborers. Such a division of the society is called stratification .

In such a situation, financial (by paying money) or political (through voting) relationships are developed between people from different strata to some extent. However, we can not witness social relationships being developed between these strata. For this reason, the economists, political scientists, social scientists from our country as well as abroad have considered this in their studies , have expressed concern about this distancing and have underlined the necessity of a better integrated society.

It is clear that in the past also, there were different strata or levels in the society based upon the disparities and the more the disparity there would be more strata (poor-rich, industrialist - farmer, less educated - more educated, women-men, skilled - unskilled, those in power - those without

power) . There would be competition between these strata and the people in various strata or levels tried to prove that even though they were at a lower strata financially, they were superior by caste and sub-castes. So in the pre-independence days, the above mentioned scenario was common in the society. The entire society was burdened with such limitations and everybody thought that once the nation attained independence, all these differences would vanish.

The Feeling of Nationalism

During the last thousand years, the mughals invaded various regions in the country, they conquered the local kings and expanded the mughal kingdom. To protest against the mughals, the regional kings started cooperating with each other (to some extent). I think that this was the first expression of the nationalistic political attitude. However, the mughals liked the Indian terrains as compared to their own hilly terrains. They preferred to stay in India, even though the climate was hot, and they never went back to their own country. They used the money collected here (in the form of taxes - ransom -loot) for building forts - palaces-gardens, in cultivating the music - literature - architecture - art and artists . In a way, the money looted from the country was spent in the country.

The British came to India, with East India Company, in the seventeenth century. In fact, that company's real objective was not commerce at all. From their internal correspondence it is seen that they sensed that if the commerce was not profitable then the people of England would not have better lifestyle (employment, income, pompous living), so they captured the entire political system in India (to exploit the country and send the income to England).

Hence the freedom struggle that took place in 1857 against the British regime was definitely the first step taken

by the Indian leaders, after recognizing the real objectives of the British. The rulers of the princely states in North India e.g. Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal and in Maharashtra and their subjects participated in this freedom struggle. At that time, though their languages, religions, cults were different, all the Indians nurtured the philosophy of one nation - one people. Today's young generation must understand this .

As a result of the freedom struggle of 1857, the British government withdrew the license given to the East India Company and took over the administration of India under its control. In 1858, the declaration published by Queen Victoria proclaimed that the British government would not interfere with the religions, languages, cultures, traditions of the Indian people. At the same time, the entire nation witnessed rapid developments such as establishments of universities throughout the nation, establishment of the railway network, telegram and postal services, agricultural research and development programs etc. During 1865-70 due to the civil war in America, England could not get cotton and other agricultural products, so they selected Vidarbha as best suited region for the cultivation of cotton on a war footing. The judicial system was established in the country.

Many people argue that even though the British gave us so many developments, why did we oppose them ? The answer is that all these developments were for their own good. They said that they would agree to all our terms but we should agree to the exploitation done by the British! Hence, in 1885, when Congress was formed, and the Indian leaders started participating in the same, they were of the opinion that the British were introducing all these systems only for themselves, not for the welfare of the common people of India. So Dadabhai Nouroji, Bhavtosh Dutta,

Lokmanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and all the other leaders insisted that we would look after our own welfare, and it would be our own administration (swarajya). Lokmanya Tilak had declared that 'Swarajya is my birthright' and Gandhiji had said that once we attained independence, we would wish to create the swarajya and surajya. Under this agenda, people from all regions, religions, languages and cults gathered together and put up a fight against the British and in 1947 the nation attained independence.

The duty and responsibility of today's youth and citizens

From the overview that we have had about the feeling of nationalism and unity in people's minds, we can see that the first and foremost duty and responsibility of today's youth (whatever level of education they have) and the alert citizens is to nurture the feeling of nationalism and unity and to overcome the hurdles in this path, which may occur even due to incidents happening at the global level.

Also, it will be their duty to prove to the world, that this nation of 135 crore people is not something which can be controlled like a pawn in the game of chess. They will have to stress upon the independent way of thinking that the great leaders and freedom fighters like the Queen of Zansi, Lokmanya Tilak, Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar had nurtured and they will have to encourage all the youth and other citizens (including the women) to come forward to build a 'swarajya' which has also been mentioned in the Constitution. This is the need of the hour. Hence the people will have to strive to complete the task of bringing about unity in various factions of the society and creating a new culture for the post-independence India.

The freedom struggle, may it be against the mughals or against the British, was always taken upon with the underlying feeling of nationalism. When we study the

incidents that happened in 1885, we see the fact that the Indian National Congress was established by the British to know about the feelings and thoughts of the Indian population. However, if the question is whether in those days, the people of this country, who spoke different languages in different parts of the country, had any common feeling of integrity, then it may be difficult to provide an answer in a simple 'yes' or 'no'. The reason is that for thousands of years, the Indian population has been residing in these parts, however the feelings of nationalism in its modern sense were lacking.

In 1885, people got a forum where they could discuss their demands against the British. The British government also noted the positive aspect of this. At that time, there were different languages, different regions and different necessities, and the development status in each region was also different, but there was a common feeling in the minds of all the people, that they were being exploited and that they needed a new nation.

Now, let us look at the development process. Today, when the nation is completing 75 years of independence, if we consider the pre-independence and post-independence era, then we can see that before independence, the economists had measured the rate of growth of the national income as approximately half per cent. We can imagine how much out of this must have reached the forty crore people at the time of independence.

Hence, the standard of living in those days was such that there were no proper roads, no facilities for water supply, people stayed in old houses, there were insufficient facilities available for education, the medical facilities were insufficient. If we consider all these, then we can understand the need for development that must have been felt in 1947, when the nation became independent.

There is one more issue here, and that is about unemployment. People were unemployed and so everybody aspired for having some job to provide for the family. So at the time of independence, people wanted development in every aspect. When in 1935, the Government Of India Act, 1935 was passed and there was a hope that India may actually get independence, the people started thinking about how the nation would be after independence, its economy, its political systems, social systems, what the people would get from such systems etc. There was the background of disparity between the rich and the poor because in the British regime, they had created the rich zamindars (landlords) class on one hand while the remaining section of the society consisted of poor people. So the people started thinking that in independent India, all must be able to access the development process equally. All should get employment, food, better life style.

While such aspects were under discussion, during 1917 there was a revolution in Russia which was initiated by the workers and farmers, and the Soviet Russia was formed. This revolution was against the dynasty. It began in 1913 and in 1917 it was at its peak. The erstwhile rulers of Russia fled the country and the country was under the control of the workers -farmers. It was natural for the Indians to feel that they should also have such a nation.

Now let us briefly study the problems in our country regarding the agriculture, industry, employment, education, climate change, women empowerment and try to find out people-centric solutions for the same.



The Development Problems of the Indian Economy

Agriculture

In Indian agriculture, one of the important issues is that there is less cultivable land available as compared to the number of farmers. Majority of the farmers are marginal farmers (owning less than 1 hectre land) and small farmers (owning one to two hectares of land). Out of these, majority farmers depend upon the rains and hence they remain poor. In the metropolitan cities, those who do not have high salaried jobs either stay in the city slums or return to their villages and remain poor.

Due to this, we can see that the rural poverty is spreading to the cities too. There is much talk about agro technology and productivity, but that applies only to the medium and big farmers. During the last 75 years, we have not been able to provide any agro-education to our farmers. Their only contact with the technology is in the form of the seeds and the machines that they buy.

Indian and foreign companies earn profits from this. If today's youth and alert citizens do not want rural and urban poverty, then they have to put forth demands for stopping the exploitation of the farmers through technology and seeds,

making available facilities for higher education to the children of the farm laborers and making available health services at cheaper cost to all.

In the past, the kings used to expand their kingdom by fighting and conquering wars. So it was thought that they had the entire right on the citizens of their kingdoms. However, in today's world, the voters elect their government. So in democracy, it is thought that if some problems remain unsolved, it means that either the voters are not aware about them or that they are not so enthusiastic about solving the problems.

So the educated voters must acquire more knowledge about these problems and vote only for those political parties which are ready to solve these problems. Goutam Buddha had said 'Attah Deep Bhav' i.e. in the darkness, you become the lamp for yourself. (This means that in today's world, the youth must get proper education and participate in social activities.)

It is generally agreed that the ideal rate of growth in the agriculture sector i.e. food grains, irrigated crops etc. should be 4 per cent every year. However, due to the weather conditions, technical issues, global level agriculture market conditions etc. there is no guarantee that it would remain at that level. In this respect, we must be aware about one difference, that the nature and natural conditions play a major role in agricultural production and man has almost no control over these.

However, the industrial production is done inside the factories, in controlled temperature, so man can control the production conditions. If necessary, the production can be increased by working in three shifts, by increasing the number of machines or the production can be reduced too. In case of agriculture, the farmer cannot go against nature and cannot

increase or decrease the production forcibly. Thus he tries to get a better price through the markets, for whatever is produced in the fields.

If we take a note of the fact that, since independence, the farmer community on a whole has remained poor and the industrialists have become richer, then we can understand how the economic systems for both these sectors work. During the past too, as the population started increasing, the farmers tried to increase the production by increasing the irrigation systems, using new technologies. Today, in the year 2020-21, there is a possibility of big changes happening in the agriculture sector in terms of sale and commerce. In such a situation, the Central Government has passed three agriculture laws and the government thinks that due to these laws, there will be significant growth and profit for the agriculture sector. For this, the government has also proposed some changes in structures such as the market committees.

Around 15 years ago, the committee under the chairmanship of Dr Swaminathan had also submitted similar recommendations that not just the food grains but all types of agriculture produce should get the price equal to the production cost plus 50 per cent profit as the base price to the farmers. Since then, base prices were fixed by those in the power at the centre, especially for wheat and rice. As a result, the farmers in the wheat producing states, viz. Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh have increased the wheat production to a great extent and they have received the financial benefits for the same. However, in the three laws that the Central Government has passed, there is no provision for the minimum base price. Due to the pressure from the farmers, the government is giving the minimum base price for wheat and rice.

The problem now is that, as these three laws have no

provision for farmers to receive base prices, and as there is the provision that the sale of agro-produce can be held outside the Krishi Utpanna Bajar Samiti, without any constraints, the farmers have realized that in the future systems for agro-produce commerce, they are definitely going to be exploited by the national and international agro-business companies. Also, even though they would remain the owners of their farms as per the law, they would be the slaves of the big companies due to the contract farming systems.

When the farmers realized this, farmers from all over the country, especially the farmers from North India have united and they have demanded that these three laws should be withdrawn. However, as the Central Government has summarily rejected their demands, the farmers have declared to approach the parliament at Delhi. They were not allowed to enter Delhi and the major highways to Delhi were barricaded. So they have started their protests just outside the boundaries of Delhi and this has been going on for the last nine months. The government is in no mood to accept their demands and the farmers are not ready to return to their regions unless the laws are withdrawn. The farmers' organizations have not allowed any political party to interfere. So we cannot claim that the political parties are purposely instigating the farmers.

The government then said that some people were misleading the farmers and that they should tell the proper information to the farmers. Around forty organizations working for the farmers have asked the government to have a dialogue and clarify. However, the government has not done it so far. In July 2021, the government has allowed them to enter Delhi city and present their demands in a peaceful way. So during the monsoon season of the

parliament, every day a new batch of farmers arrives in Delhi and conducts protest march and returns. It is very difficult to guess what is going to happen in the future.

(In a latest development, all the three laws have been withdrawn by the government .)

What can be the people-centric role in this situation? Clearly, it will mean that the farmers should get better prices, they should not be exploited, they should have a better standard of living and all the knowledgeable citizens of the country should unite for the farmers and make all out efforts to make the farmers' protest a success. If we study the situation in this respect, then we can see that in all the four or five states in North India, people are engaged in many other occupations other than farming (engineers, actors, jobs in the army, people migrated to other countries and people engaged in other occupation in Delhi city) and they are giving all out support to the farmers' protests, by providing human resources as well as the finance. In the above four or five states, the people are taking turns to participate in these protest movement by passing resolutions in their panchayat and mahapanchayat, even the women are participating and arriving at the borders of Delhi in their tractors and when they return to their villages, some other farmers are taking their place. Perhaps this is one of the largest and longest peaceful farmers' protest in the world.

Now it is the progressive and democratic responsibility of all of us to ensure that the farmers and other citizens from other states of the country will insist for a better standard of living for the farmers. We must note one point here that besides the states in North India, in other states where there has been urbanization on a large scale, we cannot be sure that the citizens will have complete knowledge and urge to support for the farmers' problems, because the urban people

think that they cannot relate with the farmers and their problems, this is the problem of the farmers and let them solve it. However, if we give due thought to the problem and see that if the farmers take a decision not to produce any food grains for one year, then the country with 135 crores population will suffer a terrible blow. Hence, the democratic and progressive answer to this today is that all the people working in the chain of production processes (agricultural laborers, farmers, rural artisans, adivasi (tribal) people working in the forests, urban laborers) are connected to the single chain of production and if there is injustice faced by one component then the other components of the society are definitely going to face it in the near future, because the chain of repercussion effects is connected.

So from the above observations the conclusion is that even though we do not appreciate the fact or deny the fact that the total society is integrated still the fact remains that we are all components of the production cycle and of the national income distribution. Hence, today's urban, well educated, techno savvy young men and women must make all out efforts to ensure that the conflict created after the independence of the nation is solved in the favor of the farmers. This is the need of the hour. It is also necessary for the people-centric organizations, student organizations and national parties to propagate this in the common public.

Industry and employment

After 1947, the majority leaders in the core leadership of the nation were of the opinion that the nation needed a planned economy and if we had to remove the poverty of 150 years, then the major industries creating the national income on a large scale should be owned by the central and state government. Accordingly, from 1952, the implementation of 5-year plans commenced and it was

continued till 1991, i.e. till accepting the New Economic Policies based on the market mechanisms.

Of course, the leaders and the Indian National Congress party desired to generate an economy based on the socialist principles, while having planned development, planned employment generation and planned poverty-removal. However, during the period from 1952 to 1991 also, those political parties which did not agree with the socialist principles, did not want the planning and wanted the capitalist systems based on the market mechanisms, opposed the government's policies. Also, even in the Congress party, there was a group of businessmen-industrialists and their leaders which was opposing the government's policies secretly. As there was continuous opposition to the importance of public sector undertakings, creation of employment, removal of poverty, the entire process of development was not implemented smoothly. However, the development process was going on and the people could visualize the future development.

It is evident that at the time of independence, as India was struggling with poverty, the nation did not have sufficient foreign exchange to import foreign goods and pay their price in foreign currencies. Hence leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Ambedkar, Subhashchandra Bose and others were of the opinion that Indian economy should become self-sufficient and to achieve this target, maximum production should be done indigenously and the nation should become self-sufficient. The word self-sufficient means that we should use our full capabilities to produce the goods in our country and we should import only those items for which we did not have technology, capital or other facilities. But due to this America and the developed countries in Europe were dismayed about India. As the huge market of India was not

available, they continued to criticize the industrial policies of India. In 1969, as there were serious problems with the private banking sector, the decision of nationalization of banks was implemented as a result of demands from the bank employee unions and the political will of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the erstwhile Prime Minister of India. Today, in 2021, once again the central government is in the process of privatization of the public sector banks and public sector industries.

While the planning for industrial development and employment was going on, the central government had formed the Central Planning Commission and at the state level, there were State Planning Commissions, through which a system was created to create and increase employment and production at the grass root level and targets and processes were created for the same. In this, naturally the importance of government decisions was significant and the importance of private industries was less. For opposing this, the private sector kept on protesting against the government policies wherever possible.

In 1965, we had India-Pakistan war, in 1972 there was a severe drought, in 1977 the congress led government lost the power and the Janata Party led government came in power. In 1984 Indira Gandhi was assassinated, which was followed by great political upheavals, in 1989 Soviet Russia was no more and during all these the economic situation in the country took a back seat. There was no control on the imports so the need for foreign exchange went on increasing beyond control. For this it was necessary to increase the exports to earn income in foreign currencies, but this was not done. As a result, the income from the exports was less as compared to the expenditure done for the imports and the foreign exchange gap was created. Due to this, it became necessary to avail loans in foreign currencies and when the

International Monetary Fund was approached for the loan, they stipulated the main conditions that India should liberalize the import and export, the taxes on them should be reduced, the taxes levied on the income of the rich should be reduced, the private industries should be encouraged, there should be restrictions on the public sector undertakings and the rupee should be devalued.

As the Government of India did not have a choice, all these conditions were accepted. Due to this, the importance of public sector undertakings in India and the socialism-oriented economy and the proper control of the government became nil. Till that time, there was a planning about how much employment would be created at the central and state level from each scheme, but this planning was also abandoned. Hence, the economic changes that were brought about in 1991 are called as the New Economic Policy.

There was a new scenario where anybody with private capital would be allowed to increase production in any field, would be able to use any type of technology, would be able to export as much as possible and whatever was needed would be imported. It was said that the need for the foreign exchange would be fulfilled by giving free access to the foreign capital.

During 1991 to 2021, there have been great advances in the field of technology. However, as this technology is not going to increase the employment, the development was called as jobless growth. Since 1991, the government did not have any measure to ensure that the youth in the ever increasing population would be promised employment.

In 2021 too, the government is engaged in the process of privatization of the public sector undertakings by sale of capital through sale of shares. Due to this, the unemployment in India is more as compared to other countries and it may

be a matter of concern whether the situation is shifting from bad to worse every day.

In the current unemployment and the lower rate of development, the effect of Corona pandemic is definitely important, however it is clear that the current government has not been able to bring out any effective measures to curtail the recession going on since 2016. Hence there are no clear indications for the government as well as for the common public, about how the development will be and what would be the nature of employment in the future.

There is an indication that as per the New Economic Policy of 1991, the entire industrial development would be in the private sector and the employment would also be generated by the private sector. If we study this scenario in detail, we can see that there is no guarantee that the private sector development would be as per the needs of the society, it would be profit-oriented. Also, there is no guarantee that such development would create employment opportunities as needed by the society. That sector would create only those employment opportunities which would fetch profit for that sector. For the government, the only sector which would create employment is using the labor for the infrastructure sector viz. building highways, ports, airports, residential buildings and factories. There is no system in this for creating skills, increasing the skills and providing life-long employment for the workmen. Due to this, when we look for the industrial policy and the employment policy of the government, we find that government does not have any such policy.

In those nations, where the population is not huge and therefore the number of workers is also not huge, the problem of unemployment is not a major issue. However, in a gigantic country like India, if the private sector is not entrusted with

the responsibility of industrialization and creation of employment, then the question arises as to what would be the fate of workers' employment? Therefore, all the citizens should always insist, during our discussions, our demands and during the voting for the elections that the country should have sufficient industrialization and enough opportunities for employment. (otherwise, that society would become irresponsible and would never be a welfare society, on the contrary it would become a society without any values and the violence would increase.) All of us have to ensure that this does not happen.

It is really a problem today as to how to make today's youth think about the problem of employment in a people-centric way. Those who are highly educated can get employment. However, for an engineer who gets Rs. 25-30 thousand salary in Mumbai, it is becoming difficult to get a job in Nagpur, Aurangabad or any other regional centre even with a salary of Rs.15-20 thousand. The reason for this is that there has been concentration of industries in all the states in the major metropolitan cities and as the private sector has been given full liberty, the central government and the state governments have no control over the decentralization of industry. So we are facing the challenges of how development would happen in the regional and rural centers, how the industrialization process would be initiated and how the youth would get the employment.

Under these circumstances, the youth, the alert citizens and the social organizations must create a pressure on the government that the government may go ahead with any type of changes, but it is the need of the hour to have the decentralization of industrialization and employment opportunities to create a ray of hope for the marginally developed and undeveloped regions.

Education and climate change

The modern society is called an organized and responsible society. In such a society, it is necessary to ensure that every member of the society must get some education and such education should encourage the person to search for new solutions and new products which would finally benefit the society and its progress. However, if we study the pattern of education pyramid then it is evident that the apex level institutions are very good (world class institutions), however if we study the education centers at the metropolitan, regional, district, taluka level and village level institutions, then the facilities for education are progressively diminished. Even today, when we see the status of the education at the rural level on various TV channels, then we can see that there are no proper buildings, no teachers, no education facilities. If this is the status of education after 75 years of independence then all of us have to answer the questions about what were the people-centric changes that we brought about in this journey during the last 75 years and why were the opportunities for development not made available at the doorstep of the common man?

To answer this question, we cannot present the rhetoric about the great history and traditions of our nation. If we do this, then we are really not truthful even to ourselves.

In the month of August, at the Tokyo Olympics, the women athletes from India won a lot of medals. However, these women were from very meager backgrounds. Some of them were working as farm laborers. Hence today we have a paradox wherein the education systems do not spend to generate better sportsmen, but when the same rural boys and girls win the medals, they are showered with gold and money.

So, unless we make available schools which will provide

facilities to learn languages, science, technology and practical training, adequate number of teachers, adequate facility for physical training, and provide enough funds to these schools, we cannot say that we are providing the right to enjoy freedom of education for everybody in independent India. Many researchers ask the question that while we provide education to the bright students in the government institutions such as I.I.T. and AIMIS (All India Management Institutes) at marginal fees structure, how many of these remain in India and how many go abroad to pursue their careers? It is a well known fact that the main objective for these young boys and girls is to find jobs abroad and settle there. Taking efforts for the betterment of our society is not on their agenda. As a result, the young men and women who are going to remain in India do not have sufficient opportunities of education and those who had these opportunities leave the country. It is the government's responsibility to stop this contradiction and it is the responsibility of all of us to insist for the same.

The issue of the climate change is also connected to education. The practical meaning of climate change is that the machines and cars which are used for the industrial development, for the urban mechanisms, electricity is generated by using coal, all these create smoke and heat (the mineral coal and oil are called as energy sources in the ground.) As the hot air is lighter it moves upward and gets accumulated in the sky/space and due to this the process of formation of clouds is hampered due to the heat. As a result , the regular cycle of rain is disturbed and there is drought. If the clouds that are formed are big enough to cool this hot air, then suddenly huge clouds are formed and there are torrential rains like a cloud- burst . There are effects of these on the sea, there are incidents of land slides and due to the floods the soil is eroded and the agriculture sector faces

calamities.

We have witnessed this scenario in July-August 2021. In the foreign countries, the heat accumulated at the south and north poles causes the ice to melt and both the south and the north poles are no longer covered with ice. The ice there is getting melted and the rivers in those parts of the world are constantly getting flooded with the melted ice. Due to this the regions near the south pole and north pole which were having cold climate are now having warmer climates and the effects of this are felt all over the world. This is the real calamity.

Due to melting of ice the sea water level has increased by three to four feet and this water enters the fields in hundreds of villages on the coast and destroys those villages. The crops, orchards and animals - all are destroyed. Every day we watch such news on the television channels. If the heat accumulated in the air travels over the forests then it causes forest fires and in Europe and America, thousands of kilometers of forests are destroyed by the fire. The entire eco-system - crops, animals, trees are destroyed. Thus even though every day we talk about the climate change as a rhetoric still we have not really understood the meaning of this. Also, we are not ready to accept that this is happening due to the industrialization , due to creating electricity from coal, due to use of oil and diesel in the cars and factories. **Because, for us, more motor cars, more factories, more use of the electricity are looked upon as symbols for development.**

Out of the total heat generated by the industrial sector, maximum portion is created by the developed industrialized countries. This means that, mainly the developed countries have made the other countries - African, Arab, Asian - suffer from the toxic effects of the climate change. It is the prime

responsibility of the developed countries to minimize these and to work for minimizing the increase in the temperature of earth.

However, these nations are not ready to accept this responsibility. They are also not ready to comply with the conditions of any international treaty, if any such treaty is signed. Because in those countries the higher standard of living is depending upon the number of cars, use of electricity, air conditioners and the number of factories. So today we perhaps are having the attitude that even though there is the danger of such calamities, we are not going to work for reducing the climate change.

In the United Nations and other forums, the scientists, philosophers, writers and other responsible citizens are expressing the concern and we, the Indian citizens are a part of this. No country can say that we cannot do anything because the developed countries are not offering enough cooperation, and India also has not taken this stand. So the next question is, while development is necessary, its benefits should reach the common people but we should be able to avoid its disastrous effects. It is a fact that there are many NGOs in India which are working for reducing the ill effects of the climate change. Also, special studies about the climate change are being carried out in many engineering colleges and institutions. In India, there is a welcome change that efforts are being made that cars should run on electricity and not on diesel and petrol which would result in less pollution.

However, these are only a few examples. We have to educate the children right from their primary and secondary education about reducing the pollution and reducing the use of mineral energy sources for the production chain. We have to make them curious about the entire process, make

the industrialists aware about the problem and try our best to ensure Indian population's participation in reducing the temperature of the earth, because the existence and future of the human race depends upon it.

Development and empowerment of women

After the nation became independent, it was expected that the future of all sections of the society should be better. Many a times, we do not explain some of the issues clearly, and take them for granted. We took it for granted that the women empowerment and development would happen automatically, once the overall development was brought about. However, in any society nothing happens automatically. Conscious efforts have to be put in for the same, laws have to be passed, administrative systems have to be created and most importantly, the mindset and attitude of the society has to be changed. Till the time the society does not accept new thoughts and philosophies, nothing can be achieved just by passing the laws and the expected social changes are nowhere to be seen. The development and empowerment of women is one such very important social development issue.

Traditionally, it is our mindset that the women should look after the household matters, that is their duty and they should not have any more aspirations and the society also should not expect anything else. Hence, there is always opposition for new thoughts, by the family and by society. The development of women is not at all a straight forward process but it is a very complicated economic, social and cultural process. The history shows that when Savitribai Phule attended school, she was criticized a lot. There are many examples recorded in the history about few selected women receiving encouragement and protection from their families, however the main issue is about the common

women, who are 50 per cent of any society. So there is the big question that why such an important part of the society should be illiterate, un-skilled and depending entirely upon the family.

In other countries, the work done by a woman in the home is also evaluated in monetary terms and they are given financial compensation for the same. However, if even today we have to have plays written on this subject such as 'Aai karte tari kay' ('what work does the mother do?') to present the problems of the women then it is evident that we have really not achieved much as far as development of women is considered. Even today the central government has the slogan and program for 'beti badhao, beti padhao (make efforts for the development of girls, give education opportunities to girls) which talks a lot about the actual situation in the country !

In short, while considering the issue of development of women, it should not be on the scale of gender - men and women - at the family level, education level , employment level and for shouldering different responsibilities. We can see that just by having economic development, the social, educational and cultural development of women will not follow automatically. If we study the situation in Europe and America, we can see that in those countries, women have benefitted more in terms of education and economic levels, however we cannot see their participation in the social, political and cultural developments to the same levels. Here, we do not want to say that whatever is happening in India is incomplete or wrong and whatever is happening in the other countries is very good. However, the issue is whether we are putting in all out efforts as per the situation in India, for the development of women.

In this respect, we can say that the expected and

necessary level of changes for the women has not been reached yet and till it happens, it will be difficult for us to say that the independence that we got 75 years ago is a real treasure for us.

All of us have to ask ourselves the question that do we really feel proud about the excellent performance of the girl students in the SSC examinations , the university examinations and the brilliant performance of the women athletes at Tokyo, in August 2021? Because the real and important question is whether we make available adequate facilities at the family level and at the institution level to the women and whether we ensure that they would get psychological satisfaction along with the success. The woman who won the silver medal at the Tokyo Olympics did not get any proper arrangements for nutritious food, training and she herself is working as a farm laborer in her own village. If this is the truth then her success is mainly due to her own grit and the contribution of the society is minimal.

If the women do not get proper help from the government and their intelligence, skills and expertise is not continuously tested, then they can not prove their mettle in various fields. In this , they would suffer at the personal level and the society would also lose an intelligent, skilled worker. Even during this, we should not make a general declaration about equality for men and women because it would be wrong to expect that whatever a man does the woman should be able to do. There are many fields related to skilled work where women can work better as compared to men and they are actually doing so.

We must make efforts to ensure that in their lives women should not be denied opportunities for education and for acquiring various skills. For these, there should be

institutional arrangements that they should be given additional facilities, support on family level and support from the society.

A few days ago, a workers organization had requested me to write on the subject of 'Pension for everybody'. Generally we think that pension for all means pension for the men, because even today the man is considered as the head of the family and if the woman herself is not engaged in job or business then she has a secondary status in the family. However, if we consider what a woman does in the home then we can understand that she is not just the mother of her children, she is their first nurse, doctor, language teacher. These services cannot be bought from any shop. Only a woman can give this. When the children are grown she plans for her daughter's marriage and helps them to establish their own homes. However, if in future she has to depend upon other for her own needs, then such a society must be considered to be of a very low quality culturally. Our grandmothers and great grandmothers may not have attended schools, however one cannot say that they were uncultured. In fact, the 'sanskar' or cultural values are passed down from generation to generation. Hence, we should be able to create a society where the women's education from childhood, nutrition, skills, employment and pension would be taken care of. If this happens only then it will mean that the nation is truly independent and the women also have become independent.

Today's capitalism in India

As mentioned earlier, before 1947, for around 150 to 200 years, there was British regime in India. There was regional capitalism with the support of the British regime. When the constitution was formed, there was the concept that in India, the main centers in the economy should be

under the control of the government or public sector and the tasks that could not be done by the government should be given to the private sector. Such a mixed economy was created from the ideologies of Mr Nehru. However, it was not going to be created instantly but was intended as a long term objective, because immediately after attaining independence, the country did not have enough money, administrative systems, technology to create such a system. It was supposed to be a slow process.

The main and important reason was that it would not be possible to suddenly remove the poverty in the nation of the last 150 years and there would be no guarantee that this task would be done by the private sector. Hence, it was planned that the main responsibility should be with the government and the secondary responsibility should be with the private sector. The private sector of course did not agree with this and the private industrialists wanted full freedom. Hence when we consider the conflict between these two, we have to consider the situation right from those days. As mentioned earlier, till 1991, the country had the five year plans and the poverty alleviation programs were implemented through these. However, in 1991, the government had to accept a secondary role after accepting the new economic policy and the private sector became prominent at the global level.

During this process, to ensure that the freedom given to the private sector should be fully utilized, the government had to implement measures such as offering legal protection to the industrialists, reducing the taxes, removing administrative restrictions. The income tax, tax on the income of the companies, wealth tax had to be reduced. During all this, importance was given only to the rate of increase in production, however the major issue about who was getting

the national income generated out of this was neglected. Did the poor receive any portion of the national income ? How much did the middle class receive? and how much did the industrialist - businessmen receive - these points were neglected.

The ruling parties in the government were changed and they were not strong enough to do anything about this. Due to this, the disparity between distribution of the national income went on increasing. As the laws themselves supported such a distribution, we can say that such a disparity is legal. However, Mr Thomas Piketty, an economist, has studied the income and tax structures of various countries and has pointed out that the disparity in India is much more as compared to other countries. This means that after 1991, the rich became richer, the middle class people benefitted to some extent due to the education, however the majority of the population residing in the rural and urban areas remained poor.

One of the principles of Economy is that, even though the industries churn out goods and services, if we do not provide enough money to the majority of the population in terms of pay then that society cannot buy the good produced by the industries and as a result there is recession. In India, due to the economic policies accepted by the current government at the centre (Demonetization (Notabandi) , Goods and services tax, free access to foreign and indigenous capital) the unemployment of the workers has increased and as a result, the demand for the goods produced by the industry has gone down. Since 2016, i.e. since this government came into power, there has been continuous recession. The effects of the Corona pandemic and the disturbed production chain have resulted into closing down of majority of the micro-small-medium industries, the

agriculture sector has perished, there have been droughts and great floods due to the climate change and if we consider all these then we can get a true picture of today's economy.

The government had declared that there has been improvement in the production processes in India, in the quarter ended June 2021, however, as per the figures published by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, in July 2021 itself 31 lakhs jobs were lost. Also, as the rich are not to be taxed more, as a source of income, and the poor have lost their ability to pay any more taxes, the central government has started selling the capital in the public sector undertakings, on a very large scale, and for the same the government's portion of investment in the defense factories, public sector banks, Life Insurance Corporation, railways etc. is being withdrawn.

During the entire period of Corona, the big industrialists had only one complaint, that there was no demand for their goods from the lower strata of the society. However, the government insisted that it would make available loans from the banks to the common man, but no cash support would be given to the common public.



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