

India-People and Economy

Chapter-3 Human Development

Key Notes:

- “Development is freedom” which is often associated with modernisation, leisure, comfort and affluence
- Computerisation, industrialisation, efficient transport and communication network, large education system, advanced and modern medical facilities, safety and security of individuals, etc. are considered as the symbols of development
- For India, development is a mixed bag of opportunities as well as neglect and deprivations.
- Metropolitan centres and other developed enclaves have all the modern facilities available to a small section of its population
- Whereas, large rural areas and the slums in the urban areas that do not have basic amenities like potable water, education and health infrastructure
- The most sufferers are the Scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, landless agricultural labourers, poor farmers and slums dwellers, as well as large segment of female population
- Another inter-religious aspects of development due to which human condition are deteriorating is the environmental pollution leading to ecological crisis
- Air, soil, water and noise pollutions have not only led to the ‘tragedy of commons’ but these have also threatened the existence of our society
- Consequently, the poor are being subjected to three inter-related processes of declining capabilities; i.e.
 - social capabilities – due to displacement and weakening social ties (social capital),
 - environmental capabilities – due to pollution
 - personal capabilities – due to increasing incidence of diseases and accidents.
- All these in turn has adverse effects on their quality of life and human development

- Efforts were made to look at development critically i.e. the publication of the First Human Report by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990
- This report made amendments and changes its indicators but also ranks all the countries of the world based on the calculated scores
- According to the Human Development Report 1993, “progressive democratisation and increasing empowerment of people are seen as the minimum conditions for human development”

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

- India with a population of over 1.09 billion is ranked 127 among 172 countries of the world in terms of the Human Development Index (HDI)
- HDI value of India is 0.602 India finds showing medium human development (UNDP 2005)
- Some **factors that are very crucial in determining the nature of human development** are
 - **Lack of sensitivity** - the historical factors like colonisation, imperialism and neo-imperialism, socio-cultural factors like human rights violation, social discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender and cast
 - **Social problems** like crimes, terrorism, and war and political factors like nature of the state, forms of the government (democracy or dictatorship) level of empowerment
- Using the indicators selected by the UNDP, the Planning Commission of India also prepared the Human Development Report for India
- It used states and the Union Territories as the units of analysis
- Each state government also started preparing the state level Human Development Reports, using districts as the units of analysis
- This report discussed other indicators like economic attainment, social empowerment, social distributive justice, accessibility, hygiene and various welfare measures undertaken by the state

Indicators of Economic Attainments

- Rich resource base and access to these resources by all, particularly the poor, down trodden and the marginalised is the key to productivity, well-being and human

development

- Gross National Product (GNP) and its per capita availability are taken as measures to assess the resource base/endowment of any country
- States like Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi that have per capita income more than Rs. 4,000 (1980-81 prices) per year
- Poorer States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, etc. which have recorded per capita income less than Rs. 2,000
- States like Punjab, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra and Gujarat estimated more than Rs. 690 per capita per month while states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh, etc estimated below Rs. 520 per capita per month
- These variations are indicative of some important economic problems like poverty, unemployment and under-employment
- States of Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland have more than 30% of their population below poverty line
- Poverty is a state of deprivation
- Poverty reflects the inability of an individual to satisfy certain basic needs for a sustained, healthy and reasonably productive living
- Employment rate for educated youth is 25%
- Jobless growth and rampant unemployment are some of the important reasons for higher incidences of poverty in India

Indicators of a Healthy Life

- Life free from illness and ailment and living a reasonably long life span are indicative of a healthy life
- Availability of pre and post natal health care facilities in order to reduce infant mortality and post delivery deaths among mothers, old age health care, adequate nutrition and safety of individual are some important measures of a healthy and reasonably long life
- In India, the health indicators like decline in death rate from 25.1 per thousand in 1951 to 8.1 per thousand in 1999 and infant mortality from 148 per thousand to 70 during the same period
- It also succeeded in increasing life expectancy at birth from 37.1 years to 62.3 years for males and 36.2 to 65.3 years for females from 1951 to 1999

- It has also done reasonably well in bringing down birth rate from 40.8 to 26.1 during the same years
- India has recorded declining female sex ratio
- Except Kerela, the child sex ratio has declined in all the states and it is the most alarming in the developed state of Haryana and Punjab where it is below 800 female children per thousand male children

Indicators of Social Empowerment

- “Development is freedom”. Freedom from hunger, poverty, servitude, bondage, ignorance, illiteracy and any other forms of domination is the key to human development
- Freedom in real sense of the term is possible only with the empowerment and participation of the people in the exercise of their capabilities and choices in the society
- Access to knowledge about the society and environment are fundamental to freedom
- The percentage of literates in India reveals some interesting features:
 - Overall literacy in India is approximately 65.4% (2001) while female literacy is 54.16%
 - Total literacy as well as female literacy is higher than the national average in most of the states from south India.
 - There are wide regional disparities in literacy rate across the states of India. There is a state like Bihar which has very low (47.53%) literacy and there are states like Kerala and Mizoram which have literacy rates of 90.92 and 88.49% respectively
- Apart from the spatial variations, percentage of literates in the rural areas and the marginalised sections of our society such as females, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, agricultural labourers, etc. is very low

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX

- Compare to other countries India shows medium human development index
- Kerala with the composite index value of 0.638 is placed at the top rank followed by Punjab (0.537), Tamil Nadu (0.531) Maharashtra (0.523) and Haryana (0.509). As expected, states like Bihar (0.367), Assam (0.386), Uttar Pradesh (0.388), Madhya

Pradesh (0.394) and Orissa (0.404) are at the bottom among the 15 major states in India

- Kerala records the highest value in the HDI largely due to its high literacy rate (90.92%) in 2001
- States like Bihar(60.32%), Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Assam and Uttar Pradesh have very low literacy
- States showing higher total literacy rates have less gaps between the male and female literacy rates. For Kerala, it is 6.34% while it is 26.75 % in Bihar and 25.95% in Madhya Pradesh
- The levels of economic development too play significant impacts on HDI. Economically developed states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Punjab and Haryana have higher value of HDI as compared to states like Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, etc

Population, Environment and Development

- Human development is a complex concept used in social sciences
- It is complex because for ages it was thought that development is a substantive concept and once it is achieved it will address all the socio-cultural and environmental ills of the society
- Development has brought significant improvement in the quality of life,increased regional disparities, social inequalities, discriminations, deprivations, displacement of people, abuse of human rights and undermining human values and environmental degradation
- The UNDP in its Human Development Report 1993, tried to amend some of the implicit biases and prejudices which were entrenched in the concept of development
- People's participation and their security were the major issues in the Human Development Report of 1993
- Human development report (1993) identified major areas of concern. These are-
 - It also emphasised on progressive democratisation and increasing empowerment of people as minimum conditions for human development
 - The report recognised greater constructive role of 'Civil Societies' in bringing about peace and human development.
- The civil society should work for building up opinion for reduction in the military

expenditure, de-mobilisation of armed forces, transition from defence to production of basic goods and services and particularly disarmament and reduction in the nuclear warheads by the developed countries.

Views expressed by the Neo-Malthusians, environmentalists and radical ecologists are

- They believe that for a happy and peaceful social life proper balance between population and resources is a necessary condition
- According to these thinkers, the gap between the resource population has widened after 18th century
- Development has only contributed in increasing the multiple uses of the limited resources of the world while there has been enormous increase in the demand for these resources
- Scholar like Sir Robert Malthus was the first one to voice his concern about the growing scarcity of resources as compared to the human population
- The prime cause of conflicts as well as the apparent contradictions between population-resource and development is not the availability of resources that is as important as their social distribution
- According to Mahatma Gandhi, austerity for individual, trusteeship of social wealth and non-violence are the key to attain higher goals in the life of an individual as well as that of a nation