



DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES AND DISPLACEMENT -A CASE STUDY OF INDIA

Dr. Praveen K

Assistant Professor, Head of The Department of Political Science, Sri Mahaveera College, Moodbidri, Karnataka State, India.

Introduction

The development and richness of a country is always calculated on the basis of economic development achieved by that country. It is the main criteria and the indicator for measuring the economic prosperity of the country. Industrialisation is very essential for the development for any country and people in the modern period. After 1990's in India we have given more importance to the establishment of mega industries and concluded that industrialization is the only way for achieving economic development and to raise the national income. Without industrialisation burning economic problems like unemployment, poverty cannot be solved. In India we are accepting blindly the western model of economic development. Now the time has come to discuss whether this model is suitable to our system? Before accepting any model of economic development we have to clarify certain fundamental issues. What is development? What are the ways and how to achieve this? What are the outcomes from that development? Whether the fruits of development are distributed fully and equally to all the people in the community? These questions have to be solved before going in for any type of developmental process. This paper, while providing an overview of developmental displacement in undivided South Canara and Udupi Districts, focuses the debate on displacement and resettlement in a wider socio- political contest. It argues that if this contest is neglected, efforts at minimizing displacement or improving resettlement will only be marginal, palliative and temporary.

Industrialisation is the method by which western countries have achieved development. By creating mega industrial complexes this objective can be effectively realised. Therefore, by providing land for the establishment of industries the vital interest of the country can be attained is the belief accepted by almost all the countries including India during twentieth century. Every development project requires a huge space of land, which involuntarily displaces the long lived inhabitants in downtrodden sections of the population, residing in the remote corners of the country. In recent year, one social issue has caused intense debate among academics, social activists and planners is the involuntary displacement of people from their productive assets for the establishment of industries in the name of development. A study conducted in the year 1995 stated that fifty percent of people displaced due to developmental projects were tribal's and belonging to downtrodden classes in the society.¹ Though the process of acquiring land for mining, irrigation, construction of highways and airports, mega industrial projects, creation of special economic zones is not new, the intensity of adverse effects was never comprehended in the past as it is today.² The liberalization of the economy, the growing needs of infrastructure in fast growing cities and new partnership in industrial and economic sections have threatened traditional sources of sustenance of people. Involuntary resettlement involves forced relocation of people without any prior agreement or consent of the affected people. Development projects that displace people generally give rise to several socio- political, economic, ecological and environmental problems, still displacement of people for developmental purpose was considered as the top priority.³ In the present days the sacrifice made by the people is treated as the sacrifice made to protect and achieve the vital national interest of the country.

Independent India's Nehruvian development model based on development of heavy industries found a nationalist fervour with planners and its privileged citizens. The first Prime Minister of India Pandit Nehru who adopted socialistic pattern for economic development, described "**Dams as the modern temples of India**"⁴ and justified displacement of people in the name of development. while addressing the displaced people of Hirakud dam in 1948 said "**If you are to suffer, you should suffer in the interest of the nation**"⁵ Smt. Indira Gandhi, the former Prime Minister of India in the year 1984 said "**I am most unhappy that development projects displace tribal people from their habitat, especially as project authorities do not always take care properly to rehabilitate the affected population. But sometimes there is no alternative and we have to go ahead in the larger interest**"⁶. Since independence, till today almost all top political executives and administrators held the



same view that people have to sacrifice their personal interests for the sake of the wider interest of the country. But unfortunately, till today no systematic arrangements have been made for rehabilitating the developmental displaced people. The people who lost their land for developmental activities were considered as the sacrifice made for their country.⁷ More than six crores of people in India have been already forcibly displaced from their original inhabitation in the name of developmental activities.

South Canara and Udupi districts in Karnataka state has become a hub for mega industries because of its unique facilities. Mangalore has a natural harbour where by one can develop trade relations with any part of the world, with the help of Bajpe international Airport, National highways and railways one can transport their commodities easily to any part of the world without any difficulties. All these facilities have attracted the public and private sectors to invest huge amount in big industries in these areas. These two districts consists of 12.5 lakh acres of land where nearly 45,000 acres of fertile land have been already acquired in the name of developmental activities, nearly Twelve Thousand families have been evacuated from their original habitants. Lands have been acquired to establish Mangalore Chemicals and Fertilisers, Mangalore Refinery and Petro-Chemicals, SEZ's, Suzlons, BASF, Nandikoor Thermal Power Plant, Bajpe International Airport, Konkan Railways, Software Parks and to widen the state and national highways.⁸ The industries which have come in these places have not made any serious attempt to rehabilitate displaced people properly. Except some industries, many of them have given only monetary compensation to the project affected families. This has created negative impact on the life style of the displaced people and completely ruined the normal life of the people who have lost their lands for the developmental activities.

In India we lack a strong Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation policies, we are still following the policy framed by the Britishers in the year 1895 to provide compensation to the project effected people⁹. This is mainly responsible for all the miseries faced by the displaced families in India. Through this paper an attempt is made to explain the miseries and problems faced by the displaced families especially in undivided South Canara district in India and the politics involved in the economic development of these regions. Involuntary displacement creates many socio-political and cultural problems which directly affects the life style of the effected people. By referring some standard works of scholars an attempt is made to discuss the problems of the displaced people.

In South Canara and Udupi districts in India, majority of the displaced people belong to fishermen community, farmers, industrial and agricultural labourers and those who depend on coolie work to fullfill their daily livelihood. Forced displacement of the above from their habitat has made them to lead a miserable life today. The experience of the post independence period from projects across the country suggests that the long drawn out process of displacement has caused widespread traumatic psychological and socio-cultural consequences. These are the issues including the dismantling of production system, desecration of ancestral sacred zones, graves and temples, scattering of kinship groups, family systems, disorganization of informal social networks and it's mutual support, weakening of self management and social control, disruption of trade and market links etc., essentially, what is established in the accumulated evidence in the country suggests that except in the rarest of rare cases, forced displacement has resulted in what Michael Cerena calls a spiral of impoverishments.¹⁰ All these problems are also seen in the displaced people of South canara district.

According to the research made by Michel Cerena a well-known sociologist, development induced displacement and resettlement for the World Bank points out that being forcibly displaced from ones land and habitat carries with it the risk of becoming poorer than before displacement, since a significant portion of people displaced do not receive compensation for their lost assets. Michal cerena has indentified eight interlinked potential risks of displacement. They are landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, food insecurity, increased morbidity and mortality, loss of access to common property and social disintegration.¹¹ We can also observe all these eight problems among the project effected people in the undivided South Canara District. Forced displacement in South Canara and Udupi districts has made the displaced people to stand outside the mainstream. Many people cannot even use their earlier acquired skills at the new location. For poor people, loss of access to the common property assets that belonged to relocated communities, (Pastures, forest lands, water bodies, burial



grounds, quarries and so on) result in significant deterioration in income and livelihood patterns. Displacement in Southcanara and Udupi districts has caused a profound unraveling of existing patterns of social organization. This unraveling occurs at many levels. Scholars such as Clauad Alvares, Jean Dreeze, Manish Kumar Varma, Smithu Kothari, Hari Mohan Mathur have suggested the additional of other risks such as the loss of access to public services, loss of access to schools for children, the loss of civil rights or abuse of human rights such as loss of property without fair compensation, violence from security forces, risks of communal violence in resettlement areas. forced displacement due to developmental activities in these two districts have directly affected the socio-cultural activities of the effected people and created all the problems explained by the scholars in their studies and made them to lead a pathetic life in the place where they started their new life. Smithu Kothari states that people displaced by natural disasters or communal violence are able to return to their original habitat, but this choice is not available to those displaced people who lost their land for the creation of industries.¹² Their livelihood is adversely affected due to industrial displacement. This has become true in the case of these two districts.

Displacement in these districts has made the affected people to keep away from the mainstream. Some industries have given assurance of giving job opportunities to the affected people unfortunately this has not been materialised. They are given only clerical and other lower posts. The company justifies that the displaced people are not given higher posts because they lack required skills and qualification. Environment in this area is polluted because waste water is released to the ocean which has made the life of fishermen in coastal area worse. Coal ashes has spread on the field and get mixed with air which has made these lands unfertile and farmers are not able to use it for productive purposes. This also has destroyed the normal life of farmers and people.

Big industries which started in these two districts in the name of development have not contributed much for the development of this particular area. They have completely forgotten their social responsibility and have become a big problem to the people and society. Therefore concerned authority and governments have to study the impacts of the developmental projects on the normal life of the people before implementing any projects. The time has come to discuss the alternative developmental approaches in India. At present we need developmental activities which will not disturb the natural life of the people.

References

1. Government of India working group on development and welfare of schedule tribes during the 8th five year plan (1990-95) 1994.
2. Jean Dreeze, Meera Samsan, Sathyajith Sing (ed.) The Dam and the nation OUP, New Delhi 1997.
3. Manish Kumar Varma, Development Displacement and Resettlement, Rawat Publications, New Delhi, 2003.
4. Nehru said " dams are the temples of modern India" while inaugurating the Nagarjunasagar Dam in Andhra Pradesh.
5. Walter Fernandes, Development Displacement and Resettlement, Indian Social Institute, New Delhi, 1989.
6. Letter from Indira Gandhi to Baba Amte August 30, 1984, cited in Edward Goldsmith and Nicholas Hildyard (ed) The Social and Environmental effects of large Dams. vol. II, Page 245.
7. Sanjeev Khagram, Dams and Development, OUP, New Delhi, 2004.
8. A bird view of D.K District Statistical Information – District Statistics Officer, D.K District – 2019.
9. Micheal Cerana, Why Economic analysis is essential for resettlement, a sociologist view. World bank, 1998.
10. Micheal Cerana, Why Economic analysis is essential for resettlement, a sociologist view. World bank, 1998.
11. Micheal Cerana, Why Economic analysis is essential for resettlement, a sociologist view. World bank, 1998.
12. Smithu Kothari, Whose Nation - The Displaced as victims of Development, EPW June 15, 1996. Vol XXXI No. 24.



Bibliography

1. P. Harrison, Third World Tomorrow, Sterling Publications, New Delhi, 2003.
2. Vandana Shiva, Ecology and Politics of Survival, Saga Publications, New Delhi, 1991.
3. Jane Naderveen Pieterse, Development Theory Deconstruction/ Reconstruction, Vistar publication, New Delhi, 1995.
4. Shankar Venkateshwaran, Industrial Displacement looking beyond cash compensation, EPW, June 2nd, 2007.
5. George Josheph, John Desrochers, Development, Human Rights and Action Groups, Centre for Social Action, Bangalore, 2000.
6. Sanjeev Khagram, Dams and Development, OUP, New Delhi, 2004.
7. Micheal Cerana, Why Economic analysis is essential for resettlement, a sociologist view. World bank, 1998.
8. Smithu Kothari, Whose Nation - The Displaced as victims of Development, EPW June 15, 1996. Vol XXXI No. 24.