International journal of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research

ISSN 2456–4567 (O)

Government's initiatives in social and economic development of backward people in India

Dr.Narasingha Narayan
Assistant professor
Cuttack University
Odisha
India

Abstract

UnderTIIndian Constitution, 'social security and social insurance' falls under the Concurrent List (List III, item 23). Article 41 of the Constitution (Directive Principles of State Policy) lays down that 'The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want'. Article 42 provides for securing 'just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief', and Article 43 enjoins upon the State to secure 'to all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage, conditions of work, ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities'. In this paper we evaluate the welfare scheme of government as well as development.

Introduction

These schemes cater to the organized sector of workers which constitutes only 7-8 per cent of the total workforce. This also covers the civil service which has various pensioner benefits like superannuation pension, retiring pension, disability pension etc. The main legislations conferring benefits to workers in the organized sector are: The Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948; The Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952(Separate provident fund legislations exist for workers employed in coal mines and tea plantations in the state of Assam and for seamen); The Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923; The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 and The Payment

of Gratuity Act, 1972. Civil servants of the Central and State Governments are governed by pensioner benefits. However, Central Governments employees (except armed forces) who joined service after January 2004 are governed by the New Pension System (NPS) which is based on Defined Contribution (DC), as against the Defined Benefit (DB) system which applies to earlier employees. Under the DC system, both employers and employees contribute and the corpus is invested and the returns go to the contributors as pension. In the DB system, there is no contribution and the pension is adjusted for inflation and wage hike of serving employees.

Welfare schemes for destitute

The National Social Assistance Policy (NSAP)was introduced by the Union Government from 15th August 1995, in order to implement the directive principle enshrined in Article 41 of the Constitution. The objective of NSAP is to provide social protection to poor households for the benefit of the aged, widows, and disabled and in cases of death of the breadwinner. Its components are:

- Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IG-NOAPS) (Rs.200 per month per beneficiary aged 65+and belonging to BPL family)
- Indira Gandhi National Windows Pension Scheme (IGN-WPS) (Rs.200 per month per beneficiary, aged between 40-64 years belonging to BPL family)
- Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IG-NDPS) (Rs.200 per month per beneficiary aged 16-64 years and belonging to BPL family)
- National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) (Rs.10000 to the bereaved household where the breadwinner was between 18 and 64 years and belonged to BPL)
- Annapurna (10kgs. Of food grain (wheat or rice) per month per beneficiary where the beneficiary must be a semior citizen who, though eligible for old age pension, has remained uncovered).

Schemes for the unorganized sector

In order to encourage the workers of unorganized sector to voluntarily save for their retirement and to lower the cost of operations of the New Pension System (NPS) for such subscribers, the Central Government announced a co-contributory pension scheme 'Swavalamban' in theUnion Budget 2010-11. The Government of India (GoI) will contribute a sum of Rs. 1,000 to each eligible NPS subscriber who contributes a minimum of Rs. 1,000 and maximum Rs. 12,000 per annum under the Swavalamban Scheme. The GoI contribution has been announced for 2010-11 and the next three years i.e. up to the year 2013-14. The Government has targeted to cover around 10 lakh subscribers each during the 4 years of the Scheme, totaling to around 40 lakh subscribers. The Swavalamban Scheme has been launched on 26.09.2010 and workers of unorganized sector from any part of the country can join this Scheme. The Interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has been mandated by the Government to implement the Swavalamban Scheme all over the country. Many states have also announced contributions to the pension funds. A person will be deemed to be in the unorganized sector if s/he is not a regular employee of the Central/State Government of public sector/autonomous body having employer-assisted retirement scheme and/or is not covered by any employment-linked social security scheme listed at paragraph 10.2(i) above.

Persons with disabilities

The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Right and full Participation) Act 1995 (Disabilities Act), was a landmark in focusing attention on promoting and ensuring equality and full participation of persons with

disability. The Act aims to protect and promote the economic and social right of people with disabilities, and covers seven disabilities. The criteria for each category of disability embodied in the definitions are medical and not based on social perceptions of disability. It fixes the responsibilities of various governmental agencies and lays down guidelines for development of services and programmes in the areas of education, work, housing, mobility and public assistance in case of severe disability and unemployment. The National Policy on Disability (2005) recognizes that Persons with Disabilities are valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides them equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The focus of the policy is on the following :a)prevention of disabilities; b)rehabilitation-physical, economic, and educational; c)women with disabilities; d)children with disabilities; e)barrier-free environment and f)promotion of NGOs.

Women and child welfare

It is estimated that women and children constitute more than 70% of India's population. Women (including female children in the age group of 0-18 years) represent 48% of the total population, and children (male and female in the age group of 0-18) constitute 44% of the total population. Government of India constituted a separate Department of Women and Child Development (under the Ministry of Human Resource Development) in 1985 in order to provide direction for the policies and programmers of mainstreaming and advocacy. The Department was converted to a full-fledged Ministry in 2006. Another landmark was the publication of the National Perspective Plan for Women (2000) which contained some 360 recommendations. The National Commission for Women set up in 1990 functions as a statutory ombudsperson for Women reviewing the laws and policies and intervening selectively in individual cases of violation and denial of women's rights. The Government is required to place its annual reports on the table of the Parliament along with a detailed compliance report and reasons for non-acceptance of any recommendations. The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (please see section 6.4 above) was passed which provided policy directives for securing gender justice and gender equality and for mainstreaming gender considerations. A National Action Plan for Children was also adopted in 2005.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan seeks to end the multifaceted exclusions and discriminations faced by women and children and to ensure that every woman and child in the country is able to develop her full potential and share the benefits of economic growth and prosperity. It recognizes that women and children are not homogenous categories: they belong to diverse castes, classes, communities' economic groups, and are located within a range of geographic and development zones.

Major schemes run for the benefit of women and children

- **Indira Gandhi matritvasahyog yojana (IGMSY)**

A Conditional Maternity Benefit (CMB) Scheme: This is a new scheme for pregnant and lactating women and has been approved by the Government initially on pilot basis in 52 selected districts across the country.The scheme would contribute to a better enabling environment by providing cash incentives for improved health and nutrition to pregnant and lactating mothers. The Scheme will be implemented using the platform of ICDS. The Scheme envisages providing cash directly to women during pregnancy and lactation in response to individual fulfilling specific conditions. It would address short term income support objectives with long term objective of behavior and attitudinal change. The scheme attempts to partly compensate for wage loss to pregnant and lactating women both prior to and after delivery of the child. This is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

- **Rajiv Gandhi scheme for empowerment of adolescent girls or sabla**

Sabla will be implemented initially in 200 district selected across the country, using the platform of ICDS. Government of India had launched a programme called Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) in 2000 to improve the nutrition and health status of adolescent girls (aged 11 to 18), to equip them to improve and upgrade their home-based and vocational skills, and to promote their health, personal hygiene, nutrition and family welfare and management. Subsequently, another programme called the National Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG) was initiated as a pilot programme in 51 identified district to address the problem of under-nutrition among adolescent girls by providing 6 kilograms of free food grains per month per beneficiary. However, on evaluation, it was found that both the scheme had more or less similar objectives and addressed the same target groups. It was, therefore,decided to marge the two schemes into the new comprehensive scheme, called Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls or Sabla. Apart from the 200 districts where Sabla will be tried out, the old schemes of KSY and NPAG will continue as before in all other districts.

- **Swayamsiddha**

Swayamsiddha is the flagship programme of Ministry of Women & Child Development for holistic empowerment of women. The scheme was evolved from an earlier scheme, i.e. Indira Mahila Yojana (IMY). The Programme aims to mobilize women through Self Help Groups (SHGs), clusters and federations for income generation activities. The second phase of Swayamsiddha will run for 10 years from 2008. It will cover all the blocks in the country. During the first five years (11th Plan), the emphasis will be on formation of SHGs, clusters and federations; strengthening of these institutions will be addressed during the 12th Plan period.

- **Support to training and employment programme for women** (STEP)

The programme of STEP seeks to impart training for upgradation of skills and sustainable employment for women through a variety of action-oriented projects which employ women in large numbers. The target group to be covered under the STEP programmed includes the marginalized, asset-less women and urban poor. This covers wage laborers, unpaid daily workers, female headed households, and migrant laborers, tribal and other dispossessed groups. The beneficiaries under the project will be poor or asset-less marginalized women with special focus on SC/St households, women headed households and families below the poverty line.

The Scheme covers 8 traditional sectors of employment, viz., Agriculture, Small Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, handicrafts, Khadi and Village Industries, Sericulture, Social Forestry and Waste Land Development. State governments may suggest locally appropriate sectors in addition to the above. The activities involved are: mobilizing women in viable groups, improving their skills,arranging for productive assets/ access to wage employment, creating backward and for –ward linkage, improving/arranging for support services, providing access to credit, awareness generation, gender sensitization, nutrition education, sensitization of project functionaries, etc.

- **Programme for integrated services to women in difficult circumstances**-(SWADHAR)

This is intended to help women such as destitute windows deserted by their families in religious places like Vrindavan and Kashi, women prisoners released from jail and without family support, women survivors of natural disasters who have been rendered homeless and are without any social and economicsupport, trafficked women rescued or runaway from brothels or other places or victims of sexual crimes, who are disowned by family or who do

not want to go back to their family for various reasons, women victims of terrorist violence who are without any family support, mentally challenged women who are without any support of family or relatives etc.

Assistance includes provision for food, clothing, shelter, health care counseling and legal support, social and economic rehabilitation through education, awareness generation, skill upgradation and behavioural training. The scheme also supports a Help-line for women in distress. The project is implemented through Social Welfare/Women and Child Development Department, Women's Development Corporation, Urban Local Bodies, reputed Public/Private Trust or Voluntary organizations etc. provided they have the necessary experience and expertise in the rehabilitation of such women.

Programmes for child welfare and protection

- **Integrated child development scheme (ICDS)**

It is one of the oldest child welfare programme aimed at improving the nutritional and health status of children below the age of 6 years, and pregnant and lactating mothers. It seeks to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropouts. The Scheme provides the following services through ICDS centres called Anganwadis: supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referrals and pre-school non-formal education.

- **Child line services**

The service, with a dedicated phone number 1098 is a 24 hour toll free telephone service available to all children in distress or by adults on behalf of children in distress. At present, Child Line is working in 83 cities. The basic objectives of Child Line are to: (a) respond to the emergency needs of the children in difficulty and refer him/her to such services as he/she is in need of ; (b) provide a forum for networking among Government agencies and non-Government agencies dedicated to the network of services in child care and protection; (c) sensitize hospitals, medical personnel, police municipal corporations etc. towards needs of children, (d) ensure protection of rights of the child, and (e) provide an opportunity to communities to respond to the needs of children in difficult circumstances. Childline operations are coordinated and monitored by Childline India Foundation, which is the umbrella organization, set up by the Government of India.

- **Integrated child protection scheme (ICPS)**

The scheme, which is operational from 2009-10, seeks to contribute to the improvement of the children in difficult circumstances, to reduce the vulnerabilities of children in situations that lead to their abuse, neglect, exploitation, abandonment and separation from parents. It also seeks to provide preventive, statutory care and rehabilitation services to children who are in need of care and protection and to children in conflict with law, as defined in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000. Under ICPS, such facilities may be provided by the State/UT governments themselves or by suitable NGOs who will be financially supported. ICPS also funds the governments to set up statutory bodies like Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board and State Juvenile Police Unit as provided under the JJ Act.

Castes welfare schemes for the scheduled

In accordance with Article 341 (1) of the Constitution, Government has through the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, notified those castes (now numbering 1108) which shall be deemed to be Scheduled Castes in the respective states or parts of the state. In terms of Para 3 of this Order, only those belonging to the Hindu, Buddhist and Sikh religions can be so notified as SCs.

Welfare schemes for minorities

Minorities in this context are those notified under section 2 © of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 2002 and constitute Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsees). In states where one of the minorities is in the majority (e.g. J&K, Punjab, Lakshadweep) the earmarking targets and funds will be only in respect of other minorities.

Considering the complexity of the programme and its wide reach, wherever possible, Ministries/Departments concerned will earmark 15 percent of the physical targets and financial outlays for minorities. These will be distributed between States/UTs on the basic of the proportion of Below Poverty Line (BPL) population of minorities in a particular State/Union Territory to the total BPL population of minorities in the country, subject to the following- i.For schemes applicable exclusively to rural areas, only the ratio relevant to the BPL minority population in rural areas would be considered. (ii) For schemes applicable exclusively to urban areas, only the ratio relevant to the BPL minority population of urban areas would be considered. (iii) For others, where such differentiation is not possible, the total would be considered.

Prevention & control of communal riots

In the areas, which have been identified as communally sensitive and riot prone, district and police officials of the highest known efficiency, impartiality and secular record must be posted. In such areas and even elsewhere, the prevention of communal tension should be one of the primary duties of the district magistrate and superintendent of police. Their performances in this regard should be an important factor in determining their promotion prospects. Prosecution for communal offences: Severe action should be taken against all those who incite communal tension or take part in violence. Special court or courts specifically earmarked to try communal offences should be set up so that offenders are brought to book speedily. Rehabilitation of victims of communal riots: Victims of communal riots should be given immediate relief and provided prompt and adequate financial assistance for their rehabilitation.

Natural vs. Planned development

Natural development is distinct from development by government initiatives and planning. Natural development is the spontaneous and unconscious process of development that normally occurs. Planned development is the result of deliberate conscious initiatives by the government to speed development through special programs and policies. Natural development is an unconscious process, since it results from the behavior of countless individuals acting on their own—rather than conscious intention of the community. It is also unconscious in the sense that society achieves the results without being fully conscious of how it did so.

The natural development of democracy in Europe over the past few centuries can be contrasted with the conscious effort to introduce democratic forms of government in former colonial nations after World War II. Planned development is also largely unconscious: the goals may be conscious, but the most effective means for achieving them may remain poorly understood. Planned development can become fully conscious only when the process of development itself is fully understood. While in planned development the government is the initiator in the natural

version it is private individuals or groups that are responsible for the initiative. Whoever initiates, the principles and policies are the same and success is assured only when the conditions and right principles are followed.

India's green revolution

The Green Revolution in India is a good example of a planned development initiative that brings out all the essential features of the development process. Until 1960 agriculture in India did not differ markedly from what it had been during the colonial period beginning 200 years ago. Green Revolution is usually described as the introduction of hybrid varieties of wheat and rice, but the adoption of hybrids alone is not sufficient to explain the phenomenal achievements of the Green Revolution. Success was made possible by a comprehensive and well-coordinated program involving multiple changes in the way society managed the production of food.

Prior to the Green Revolution, Indian agriculture was largely based on subsistence-level farming, which did not generate sufficient production to meet the country's food requirements. In the past, this led to periodic food shortages and famines, which were managed by huge imports from abroad. The Green Revolution was an attempt to break out of this condition and increase food production to make the country self-sufficient.

The Indian government realized that it needed to do many things to win the cooperation of Indian farmers to make the green revolution successful. First, the government had to convince farmers to accept the hybrid varieties that would lead to increased yields. Then, they had to assure farmers that increased production would not drive down prices as bumper harvests had done in the past. The government had to ensure a supply of quality seeds, fertilizers, and provide adequate storage space. It also had to train a network of extension agents to train farmers to cultivate their fields with new methods.

The government accomplished all this by setting up many new organizations. It set up the Food Corporation to buy food grains from surplus production areas and distribute it in areas with shortages. It constituted an Agricultural Pricing Commission to ensure a minimum floor price to farmers so that there was no disincentive for increased production. Seed and fertilizer corporations were formed to ensure supply of good quality seeds and timely supply of fertilizers, etc. Agricultural scientists were motivated to do their work better by the offer of better pay scales and greater infrastructural facilities.

On top of all this the government established 100,000 demonstration plots across the country to prove to the farmers that the hybrid varieties were indeed more productive.

The Green Revolution succeeded not only because it was a planned initiative, but also because it was a conscious and well-conceived program. It adopted the right approaches and was alive to the needs and aspirations of the farmers. Therefore it was well received. The planning and awareness exhibited in the project helped create a higher level organization that could harness the enthusiasm and energies of the farmers more effectively.

Planned development differs from natural development, in the sense that it is a program sponsored by the government to accelerate the development process. The success of a planned initiative depends on its ability to ensure the terms and conditions that help the natural process succeed. Many planned government initiatives fail because they begin without proper understanding of the conditions necessary for their fulfillment. During the 1960s only the Government of India had the resources necessary to launch a massive program of such dimensions. But today, India's private sector is perhaps even better equipped than government to bring about rapid development as illustrated by the dramatic expansion of the country's IT industry.

The Green Revolution was so successful that it helped India achieve food self-sufficiency within five years and double food production within ten years. This was totally unexpected, and took even many experts by surprise. More than

the increased food production, the elevation of agricultural operation in India to a higher level of organization was a more noteworthy achievement. It was a perfect demonstration of the success that a planned initiative could achieve when implemented with the required knowledge and awareness.

Conclusion

In conclusion we command that Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) range from international organizations like Oxfam to local ones which confines its activities to a village or a group of persons. They are usually non-profit, voluntary citizens' groups, organized at local, national or international levels. They perform a wide variety of functions including delivering services, performing advocacy, informing the Government of the concerns of citizens and providing 'voice' to disadvantaged sections of society, and working as pressure groups. Many NGOs are formed top address specialized issues like environment, human rights, health, and education. UN defines NGO to cover all kinds of private organizations that are independent from government control.

Bibliography

1. Jacobs, Garry and Asokan N., "Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Social Development". In: Human Choice, World Academy of Art & Science, USA, 1999, p. 152.
2. International Commission on Peace and Food, Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development, Zed Books, UK, 1994, p. 163.
3. Victor Fic (1970), "Kerala: Yenan of India The Rise of Communist Power 1937 -1969" (Nachiketa Publishing Bombay)
4. Jacobs, Garry and Asokan, N., "Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Social Development". In: Human Choice, World Academy of Art & Science, USA, 1999, p. 51.
5. Jacobs, Garry and Asokan, N., "Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Social Development". In: Human Choice, World Academy of Art & Science, USA, 1999, p. 57.
6. Cleveland, Harlan and Jacobs, Garry, The Genetic Code for Social Development". In: Human Choice, World Academy of Art & Science, USA, 1999, p. 7.
7. International Commission on Peace and Food, Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development, Zed Books , UK, 1994, p. 168.
8. International Commission on Peace and Food, Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development, Zed Books, UK, 1994, p. 162
9. Macfarlane, Robert and Van Harten, Robert. "Engines of Development". In: Human Choice, World Academy of Art & Science, USA, 1999, p. 47
10. International Commission on Peace and Food, Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development, Zed Books, UK, 1994, p. 158.
11. Cleveland, Harlan and Jacobs, Garry. "Human Choice: The Genetic Code for Social Development". In: Futures Research Quarterly, Vol. 31, No. 9–10, November–December 1999, Pergamon, UK, p. 964.

12. International Commission on Peace and Food, Uncommon Opportunities: An Agenda for Peace and Equitable Development, Zed Books, UK, 1994, pp 27, 174.