

CONTEMPLATION OF ECOLOGY; STATE AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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Abstract: World reached to a stage where issue of environment is concern of both individual and state. Demand for clean environment became primary aspect. It is not only the duty of individual to protect ecology but it is also the duty of welfare state to provide clean atmosphere to its public. For sustainable development of mankind, collateral damage to environment shall be stopped. There is need to identify various type of damages for taking appropriate measures. This will enable man at least in future to preserve ecology for future generations to come. Community consultation and participation is not same, therefore community involvement in decision making process enables the feeling of empowerment and ownership for the community. Thus, community participation is important element in success of any public policy. Progressive and inclusive values should be considered because it is imperative for addressing problems of environmental imbalance and climatic change. Here an attempt has been made how the natural resources are exploited by the states in the context of modern development and to study the role of state and community in contemplation of ecology.

Key Words: Ecology, Atmosphere, community participation, Sustainable development, Public policy.

1. INTRODUCTION:

As said by Aristotle, 'Man is a social animal' and it makes man different from other living beings. But, thing to remember is, man is also a creature but socialized one, that emerged on earth as one of the fittest species. It can also said that the environment on the earth is suitable for human being to survive and prosper. Men as an individual like other species utilize the resources in ecosystem for his survival. With the evolution of state, it became state affair to maintain the surrounding. Ecology is not something an individual aspect but became communal aspect.

Notion of civilization changed with mans changing relationship with environment. Compared to other studies about study about surrounding is much younger but interesting. This change is reflected in scriptures and texts of all languages in India and even in oral traditions. Human being began his journey from forests but gradually he distanced himself away from forest in the name of culture and civilization. The sacred scriptures like Ramayana and Mahabharata, also speaks about spread of humans deep into the peninsular tracts. This gradual shift from forests to formation of human conglomerates or habitations is depicted in scriptures as moving towards high culture. As a whole, world woke up from slumber with the publication of 'Silent spring' in 1962. It not only speaks about damage happened but also about impending danger. Environmental studies speak not only about degradation but also about its impact on human being and unethical human activities.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To study the various environment protection acts, policies and programmes in India.
- To study the importance of the state and community participation in protection of ecology
- To identify the problems of ecology. And suggest the suitable remedial measures for improvement of ecosystem system.

3. METHODOLOGY:

The research paper based on secondary data and that will be collected from Internet, Text books. Magazines, government acts, newspapers journals and un-published thesis etc.,

World reached to a stage where issue of environment is concern of both individual and state. Demand for clean environment became primary aspect. It is not only the duty of individual to protect ecology but it is also the duty of welfare state to provide clean atmosphere to its individual. The world space has been categorized into five zones, they are Littoral, wet lands, the pastoral tracts, dry zones and hilly wooded lands. Construction of dams, clearing of forests, cultivation on large scale, urbanization, industrialization etc has threatened the ecological balance. Hence, human anxiety to improve his comforts, food security and health standards has knowingly or unknowingly altered his environment adversely. Human activity has not only depletion of natural resources but also polluted the remaining and brought imbalance.

Societies in the west initially experienced the impact of pollution since 18th century itself. During industrial revolution, to quench the thirst of industries for raw materials made man to exploit nature. It is because of this the Waves of environmental movements began both in Europe and American societies. These movements are out of realizations for the need of clean environments.

For sustainable development of mankind, collateral damage to environment shall be stopped. There is need to identify various type of damages for taking appropriate measures. This will enable man at least in future to preserve ecology for future or generations to come.

Suitable atmosphere on earth facilitated genesis and survival of organisms. Its little imbalance leads to extinction of life from earth. An organism survives and flourishes if its health is intact. According to WHO (a body of UNO), 'health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity'. Factors like biological, chemical, physical, Psychological influence man's wellbeing and may cause damage to health, if disturbed. It seems, the answer lies in sustainable development through adopting simple lifestyle. It means, utilizing natural resources without compromising about the requirements of future generations.

Present paper is not intended to put forward neither types nor causes of pollution or environmental destruction but to highlight the state policies on ecology and involvement of subjects in its success.

Since ancient days culture and way of living in India emerged in co-relation with ecology. Hymns of all the four Vedic texts, Kautilyas Arthashastra, Charakasamhita, Sushurata (father of surgery) samhita,¹ Patanjali's Yogashastra, the concept of Ayurveda speaks about relevance of flora and fauna that help not only in survival of human being but also helps in curing various ailments and diseases. Ayurveda was believed to be received by Dhanvantari from the Creator, Brahma. Though the Later, rishis like Bharadvaja, Angirasa, Brihaspati and Kanva, Nagarjuna and several others too contributed in enriching knowledge. Development of above said knowledge system speaks about relevance of natural habitat. In the words of Environmentalist, Ramachandra Guha, like west, In India too there happened three waves of environmental movements in post independent era itself. Therefore, nature consciousness is not new to Indians in past and present.²

But, India sub-continent with its geographical location is vulnerable to extreme weather conditions. Annually one third suffers from drought like conditions and another quarter with floods. But, if added with anthropogenic environmental hazards then disasters shall be fourfold. Prevention and mitigation become a tough task for both individual and state. Therefore, environmental consciousness is not only a concern of individual but also of state as a whole collectively.

5. STATE POLICIES AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SUSTAINABLE ECOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT:

Formulation of state policies on environment doesn't mean that there were no environmental movements in India like that of west. In west as said was the result of industrial revolution. But in India unlike west, is part of cultural consciousness. Interestingly, India is one of the earliest states to make laws on prevention of environment after independence. In post-independence era series of laws were made. Other than celebration 'World Environment day' (since 5th June, 1972- result of UN conference on Environment in Stockholm), we find series of related legitimate steps on environmental protection. They are like Wild life (protection) Act, 1972, Water (prevention and control of pollution) Act, 1974, The forest (conservation) Act, 1980, Air (protection and control of pollution) Act, 1981 and The Environment (protection) act, 1986 were framed to prevent other pollutions related to water, air, forests, land etc Several conservation projects for individual endangered species like lion (1972), Tiger (1973), Crocodile (1974), brown antlered deer (1981) were part of wild life act of 1972.³

A need for specialized machinery was felt that continuously monitors ecological balance. Out of this a Central and a state pollution control boards (CPCD & SPCD) were established. This is an institution that provides the incumbent governments all the information related to the health of environment. Its duty is not only to advice but also to monitor and report the progress made by the state. It also co-ordinates various public institutions in framing laws, by organizing training programmes and by indicating the levels of damage along with measures of recovery.

Large changes can be noticed in framing public laws on ecological safeguards. Initially, it was about protection of wild species, forest cover but later with changing needs of time, various other issues of relevance came to notice. These newly surfaced issues are about ozone depletion, solid- liquid waste management, E-waste, sewage purification, Batteries management and handling, plastic manufacturing and recycle, chemical storage, usage and handling along with their disposal.

With extreme natural exploitation many floral and faunal species entered into Red book. Many species became endangered and are on the verge of extinction. There are various reasons behind this devastation. During medieval period, sanctuaries were created and protected for gaining and hunting. It was part of Royal amusement. This even continued during colonial era.

Shift in attitude of state can be noticed. Now state is creating sanctuaries to protect the flora and fauna. Early it was for hunting and pouching i.e. for entertainment but now it is against hunting and pouching.⁴ In modern days success of state policies on present issue is lethargic in nature. The implementation of environmental policies may be due to lack of seriousness of state or may be due to lack of community participation. Certain common draw backs were noticed in implementation of public policies. Most of the early environmental laws in post-independence era are nothing but extension of colonial legacy. Colonial laws were framed with commercial intensions. They were more exploitative than conservative in nature. British forest laws of 1865 and Nizam's laws of 1867 are good example. Environmental laws should be based on justifiable utilization of resources at community level and also should be framed in the frame of sustainability, so that the resources can also cater the needs of future generations.⁵

Consideration of logical reasons while framing laws leads to fast depletion of resources. In spite of many acts and attempts we are away from achieving target of bringing 33% of our land under forest cover, resulting in steep depletion of forest cover and wild life in it; Rivers turned into open sewerages; cities are badly populated and became smogging centres (Delhi in India and Lahore in Pakistan are good examples).

Another significant drawback in wild life conservation Act, 1972 is that the state failed to provide sufficient machinery to the agencies involved in it. Simply men in arms were deployed to protect reserved areas and flora and fauna in it from hunters and poachers. People, whose habitats are within and surrounding of reserves or preserved areas were not taken into confidence. Rights and privileges of tribes should be protected without compromising the care for wild life. Joan Martinez Alier, in his Environmentalism of the poor speaks about need for balance between use of natural resources and protecting the interests of poor. Therefore, without communal awareness and participation no successful end to the framed laws can be seen in near future. This can be noticed regarding, the forest conservation Act of 1980. In this act, simple demarcation of boundaries, drawing of lines to show reserved and non-reserved forests, creating conservation zones were noticed but it didn't solved the problem for which it was meant. Human habitats, agrarian and cultivable lands in reserves cause difficulties in movement of fauna. The protected wild species shall be prone to poaching and hunting. Villages should be rehabilitated to solve the issue. But India don't has good track record in successful rehabilitation. Thus success of above laws depends on community involvement only.⁶

Better execution of afforestation, social forestry and farm forestry programmes can be considered. Other than this, spreading awareness on ill effects of burning carbon fuels, replacing conventional with non-conventional energy resources, introducing technology in solving various issues is necessary.⁷ Geo-tagging of flora and fauna species, recording track of implementation and result of laws may to some extent solve the ecological problems. Information technology can be used in creating Data base. environmental information system using of remote sensing, geographical information system (GIS), satellite imaging, preparing thematic maps of water bodies, resources, human settlements, industrial growth, soil erosions, rail-road network, diseases, fauna movements etc can be marked and recorded with help of technology and also can be stored in digital information mode.

While planning itself, need of the poor, better targeting poverty programmes, more responsive government machinery in delivering services, well awarded responsible and self-initiating citizens are necessary. Thus, integrating sustainable environmental development plans as a part of local public policy is the need of hour. Environment and sustainable development should be seen as single aspect to deal with.⁸

Community consultation and participation is not same, therefore community involvement in decision making process enables the feeling of empowerment and ownership for the community. Thus community participation is crucial

element in success of any public policy. Community based development (CBD) is the most important mechanism to success. No matter how much of funds pumped in to resolve the crisis, without community involvement nothing gets materialized. In the contest for protection of space on one side and efforts to preserve on other, issues like political ecology and ecological economics are issues to be addressed on priority basis.⁹ to address present issue, alternative governance informed by progressive and inclusive values should be considered because it is imperative for addressing problems of environmental imbalance and climatic change.

6. CONCLUSION:

More sustainable technologies are being developed time to time. We need to make optimum use and management of natural resources, adoption of green concept, sound planning, public awareness, environmental education and community participation in all developmental activities in order to reduce any future impacts. Community participation is crucial element in success of any public policy. Progressive and inclusive values should be considered because it is imperative for addressing problems of environmental imbalance and climatic change existing acts and policies are to be strengthened and should be strictly implemented.

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