

National Seminar
On
Nature of Social Transformation in North-West Region

As we move into the second decade of 21st century the social trajectories of transformation has acquired great significance. The demand from below on vital issues of daily concerns such as corruption price rise, crime against women and lack of concern on part of the state has substantially transformed the nature and styles of people's protest. While the protest from below is spontaneous the evasive response of the state in addressing the social issues is of vital concern. The protest movement witnessed in recent times has not to be seen as sporadic outburst of stray incidents but has been wide spread. One of the salient attribute of the protest has been its overriding support from all sections i.e. rich, middle class and poor. In this sense a silent discontent among the people at large has aimed at eradication of poverty, ignorance, disease and provides equal opportunity of freedom to all sections of society.

The first two decades after independence no doubt brought political stability in India but thereafter period between 1967 to 1990 was marked by political instability characterized by social, economic and political transformations of our country. The Haryana which was formed as separate state on November 1st, 1966 witnessed political instability right from the beginning. However, its political instability was marked by green revolution in 70s and 80s accounting for record economic growth in agricultural field. The gains of agricultural prosperity, however, were uneven. Besides, its economic prosperity did not bring about corresponding transformation in social and cultural domain. The post reform period has also created paradox in society under the influence of globalization process.

Thus, in a newly formed state of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, trajectories of economic, social and political transformation has been marked by both some remarkable achievements in economic field as well as failures in socio-demographic and cultural field. In Punjab and Haryana the green revolution recorded high per capita income. Infrastructural development further created a platform for progressive transformations of our society. The ethnic strife and the struggle for freedom have also put a question mark on the functioning of the state at large in some of the states of North-West regions. Furthermore, skewed sex ratio in Punjab and Haryana has also been a matter of concern. Even in the field of agriculture, rates of farmer's suicide and peasants moving away from agriculture further pose problem. The government's policy of acquiring farmer's land under SEZ has also been a cause of unrest in Haryana.

Thus when we examine the condition of North-West Indian Region the performance of Punjab and Haryana seems to have succeeded in transforming the material resources. However, a corresponding

transformation in people's living conditions has yet not been achieved. The unaimed opulence combined with disparities of development, poverty, ill health, crime against women and the dalits is a sharp pointer of unrest arising in social field. For progressive transformation role of education in promoting better human qualities has been recognized world over. Within India if we compare the North-Indian states with states like Kerala we may notice that lack of quality education has failed to curb the menace of declining sex-ratio.

Needless to mention the vigilant role of public action and civil society organizations will go a long way in initiating the positive discourse on issues of corruption. The problems of violence against dalit and women towards declining sex ratio, reassessment of the role of Khap Panchayat, farmer's precarious economic conditions and women role in Panchayati Raj institutions as an agency of transformation are some of the areas of abiding interest and in two days deliberation our focus will be to address these issues.

The theoretical and empirical studies conducted on the issue mentioned above will also be taken up for discussion in two day seminar organized by the department on 22 – 23 March, 2013. The seminar has been sponsored by North-West Regional centre of ICSSR, the sub-theme of the seminar is listed below. You are requested invited to submit the abstract by March 15th, 2013 and full paper by March 20th, 2013 and the address given below. Furthermore, a registration fee of Rs.500/- will be charged from the participants.

Sub-Themes of the Seminar

1. Social Deprivation, inequality and gender justice
2. Role of State in Social, Economic and Political upliftment of Dalit, Women, Minorities and Weaker Sections.
3. Mobilization of people for public action
4. Open Session

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