

DISPARITY IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Disparity in socio-economic development refers to difference in socio-economic and uneven economic achievement in different geographical regions. In north-east India state wise we have been experiencing regional disparity because of certain reasons such as historical, geographical locational etc.

Historically, regional imbalances in North-East India started from its British regime. The British rulers as well as industrialists started to develop only those earmarked regions of the region which as per their own interests. For example, Digboi was developed only for the discovery of oil in the region.

Geographical factors play an important role in the developmental activities of a developing economy. The difficult terrain surrounded by hills, rivers and dense forests leads to increase in the cost of administration, cost of developmental projects, besides making mobilization of resources particularly difficult. Dense forest and hilly areas of the region do not support settlement and hence highest population is concentrated in the plains of Brahmaputra, Barak, Manipur, Tripura etc. Again, due to availability of fertile plain land on the sides of Brahmaputra and Barak river agriculture is well developed in Assam followed by Tripura is at middle level developed, while Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh are at the developing stage, Mizoram is at low developed. Besides rugged and difficult terrain of the region do not favour setting up of heavy industry and hence industries and factories has been established in certain plain areas N-E.

Locational advantages are playing an important role in determining the development strategy of a region. Due to some locational advantages, regions like Guwahati, Digboi, Bongaigaon, Shillong, Aagartala, Itanagar, etc. are getting special favour in respect of site selections of various developmental projects. For example, Digboi is developed because it is near the sources of natural gas and petroleum, Guwahati, shilling, Itanagar etc. being the capital of state and well connected by transport and communications are getting special attention whereas far remote areas of north east are always ignored for their development.

Economic overheads like transport and communication facilities, power, technology, banking and insurance etc. are considered very important for the development of a particular

region. As we know that 70 % of the region is occupied by hilly region, therefore development of these facilities in these areas of North-East is not satisfactory than the plain areas of the region.

Reducing the regional disparity is imperative as the demographic potential of states are different. The states with poor developmental indices are the youngest ones and must be developed to reap the demographic dividend and a sustained development of north-east India.