

“Planning for Inclusive Growth”

For B.A. 6th Semester
Economics (Major)
Paper – 6.6

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In the year 2015, **President Pranab Mukharjee**, while addressing both houses of Parliament at the start of the budget session described “Inclusive growth covering the poorest of poor” as the Government's top priority. The emphasis seems from the realization that there has been a gap between the pace and pattern of **growth in India**. The country's progress on various fronts has not been translated into overall improvement in life of poor and marginalized sections of society. India's rank on UNDP's Human Development Index substantiates this fact. In India, a need has always been felt to broad base economic growth and share the benefits of the growth process to make it more inclusive.

The concept of “**Inclusive growth**” was first envisaged in the Eleventh five year plan document which intended to achieve a growth process with broad-based improvement in the quality of life and equality of opportunity to all. Twelfth plan document highlighted this agenda more emphatically with specific focus on reducing poverty, improving health and education facilities and livelihood opportunities.

Inclusive growth means economic growth that creates employment opportunities and helps in reducing poverty. It means having access to essential services in health and education by the poor. It includes providing equality of opportunity and empowering people through education & skill development. So inclusive growth implies direct links between the macroeconomic and microeconomic dimensions of the economy and economic growth.

Poverty & exclusion are interrelated. So the Govt. has launched several initiatives to ensure inclusive growth by bringing excluded sections of the society into the mainstream and enabling them to reap the benefits of faster economic growth. The major steps in the direction of bringing about financial inclusion, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Beema Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Suraksha Yojana and Atal Pension Yojana have been introduced with the intention of creating sustainable security in the country. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has improved the standard of living of people and has been able to check migration to a great extent. Kisan Card, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY), National Agriculture Market (NAM) are aimed at benefitting largely the agrarian community, an important indicator of socio –economic well-being of the country.

However, with a diverse population of 1.38 billion, the biggest challenge is to take the levels of growth to all sections of the society and to all parts of the country. Institutional strength and structural features is to be increased. We need to focus on durability and sustainability. This is where the role of appropriate technology comes into play. Digital India Programme launched by the Govt. proposes to address these challenges and use technology effectively and efficiently for the benefit of people by delivering governance and services to the last person. The mission aims to use technology to bring about complete transformation in the basic sectors of education, health, agriculture and manufacturing thereby improving general quality of life.

To benefit the society, or to attain togetherness in the journey of development process, Indian economy headed in a new direction with a board objective of “Inclusive growth” promising a more prosperous economy.