

Making of The Development (of India) : A Random Note

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[This essay is not structured in the proper sense. Not deductively narrated. The thoughts have been constructed, written as and when these have appeared in the mind, randomly. There is no intention to conclude anything. Just a description. No claim for originality is placed. The italics and capitals are intentional. This text is a product of dialogues with friends at several times, at several places. It is a community creation.]

India was a colony. The development of India of that time was termed as colonial. The colonial economy of India was designed according to the imperial economic interests of England. British economy was termed as capitalist. The freedom struggle in India was both political and economic. The struggle was against an imperial economy and thus was considered to be against capitalist economy as well. With independence, in the formulation of economic development as a legacy of freedom struggle, the capitalist economic frame was rejected. A kind of development termed as planning was accepted.

Planning was posited as a modern frame. It was, in form, a state designed development project. Modernity is a claim, an agenda, a monopoly position. To prove itself it erases the others, the other forms of development. At the time of independence in India there were different forms and spaces of development. The tribal space. The traditional forms. The Gandhian experiments. The non-state existence. All were rejected, as these were considered to be non-modern. To those who were in power, in political power, in economic power, in ideological power, modernity and Europe–America were synonymous. That was in content but not in form. Form was taken from another, at that time powerful, world—the then socialist economy. Indian development model, its modernity, was a combination of fragments of the then two kinds of accepted moderns—the capitalist economic content and the socialist economic form. This is the external component of the explanation. There is also an internal component. The capitalists in India, the product of colonial economy, were at that time not in a position to give the leadership in the making of capitalist development, both in form and in content. The workers, the communists, the lefts, who were supposed to take the leadership in the demands for socialist development, were not powerful enough. The decision makers made a compromise. A socialistic pattern of society was proposed.

The proposal was a grand scheme. The state was given the leadership in the making of the economic development. The decision making process was centralised and bureaucratised. In the development programme the roles of the amount of capital and the scale of technology were emphasised. Big amount of capital, high technology, large scales of production were targeted. The indices of development were based on the ranges and amounts of production.

For the planned development, for the modern development, the country-people relationship was changed into the state-citizen relationship. The other identities of women and men were erased. And in order to collect the necessary

consent, the state—the administrative and economic state projected itself as a Social Welfare State. The state had taken the responsibility of all the arrangements of the people's lives. The people became state—dependent. The collective spaces of people—the society, the culture, became state-dependent. The independent people had become moulded into dependent citizens for the project of modern economic development.

The state, the centralised state, for its designed development, the singular kind of development, had taken the corresponding programmes. An official Language. A kind of Education. The state Media. The state funded Institutions. The Institutions in charge of the making of citizens for modern development. And so on.

In the process of planned economic development the state control, the state sponsorship, the state subsidy, the state dependence, became absolute and all pervasive in all spheres of the economy, culture, society, way of living, and way of thinking.

The State appeared as the only space of modernity. The state-designed development was projected as the modern development.

But the term modern was textually used for the first time in the official document of the Seventh Five-Year Plan. This modern is different from the earlier, the pre-Seventh Plan modern.

In between the world has changed. The grand Soviet Union has been disintegrated. The socialist economic model has failed to establish itself as a viable alternative in practice. One of the components of this project—the state-designed planned economic development programme has been criticised. The concept of social welfare state has been questioned. The capitalist economic logic has appeared as unchallenged and has thus become aggressive. The global economic powers have introduced and imposed first, the Structural Adjustment Programme and second, the World Trade Organisation. A new modern has been projected in the concept of development.

In between India has changed. Private capital has gained power. They have expressed their aspirations, economically, culturally, and politically for wider areas of operation. The displacement of state capital has been demanded. The programme of state capital has not been considered by the beneficiaries as an ideological issue, and thus not tried to make it a successful concept. The state enterprise has lost its ground. As the development programme has been modelled according to the externally existing frame, the inputs were also imported from the external sources. The Indian economy had become dependent on external capital and external technology.

The global power has taken advantage of the changed situation. The local power has extended the required support. A modern, a new version of modernity especially in the context of India has been programmed. In the new package, the market epitomises the modern development. And in the present frame of reference the market is not confined within its narrow locale but in its extended form—the global market. A new modern has been projected in the space of development

In this project of development several ideas have been introduced. Globalisation. Open Market. Liberalisation. Privatisation. These ideas have their

own agenda, exclusive and overlapping. Globalisation is global production, global supply, global demand, global consumption. Production of homogeneous standardised global product. Generation, movement, investment of global capital. Invention, transfer, use of global technology. Construction of a global economic development.

The development of India in the frame of the earlier modernity has to be transformed into the development frame of the newer modernity. In the previous development project attempt was made to construct a single India. In the present development project attempt will be made to integrate the single India with a single world. The state capital was constructed. Now it will be demolished and private capital will prevail, as the global capital now is private capital. State will remove itself from the economic space. The state will be narrowed down to an administrative state. The state will displace itself from the cultural space. Culture will be organised by the private capital and will be organised through the logic of the market.

In this process of development a citizen will be turned into a market operator—a producer, a consumer, a buyer, a seller, in a globally connected market. For the global standardised market the standardisation of the market-operators will be the need. For the standardisation of operators the standardised culture will be manufactured. The producer woman/man. The buyer/seller mind. The individual man/woman. The competitive mentality. The individual competitive productive and thus modern people.

As a consequence of this development an otherside will emerge. A process of displacement. A realisation of rejection. A section of the people will be unable to participate in the created market. They will be forced to think themselves as inefficient, unnecessary, and as excess. They will be rejected from the officially designed modern developmental space.

Or they will prepare for struggle to build other spaces of development. The other political social cultural economic forms of development. The counter rejection of the project of mainstream economic development. Mutuality in place of individuality. Cooperation in place of competition. Small economic unit in place of big. Simple technology not complex. Required production not abundance. Coexistence with nature not conquering nature.

The other development needs the other culture, the other mind. Being part of the history of economic development of the independent political period the people were made habituated to depend solely on state supported economic functions. The people have lost their widely diversified economic functions composed of varied production processes, extensive range of inputs, well thought out relationship with nature, division between work and leisure. Countering the aggressive global economic power projected development is the reestablishment of people's project. The tribal space. The traditional form. The Gandhian experiments. All these were rejected in the pretext of modern development.

Development is not a general concept. It has its specificity—the geographical, the social, the cultural, the historical specificities. The human specificity. The past development of India with its planned economic programme had denied the specificities. The present proposed development of India as a part of the global scheme of development has disclaimed the specificities.

The other agenda is the consideration of the specificity of a particular locality. The interrelationship between local soil and local seed. Between local hydrology and local agriculture. Local agriculture and local animal husbandry. Local supply and local demand. Local resources and local production. Local production unit, local knowledge system. Exchange of seeds between locals. Exchange of knowledge between locals. The development of a local, independently. The development of two locals on the basis of mutuality. The grand global development scheme erases the localities, the specificities. The global economy is projected as the singular local, the general. And thus the currently proposed singular global economic programme has the declared claim of the development, the modern development. In this development, the market is presented as the sole driving force of economic function. And here market means global market—Globalisation. Market means unrestricted market—Liberalisation.

The unrestricted global market is the project of bringing as many things as possible and as many people as possible into the market. All the things—produced and not-produced. Nature. Plants. Animals. Body. Mind. Thought. Relations. Culture. Anything and everything. All things are meant to be sold and bought. And thus all and everyone is compelled to remain in production, buying, selling. In the Market. Development through market. The modern development.

Market has its own logic. Logic of the power of capital. Logic of profit. Everything is determined in the scale of profit. Profit is development. The modern development.

Options as campaigned by the official powers are simple. Give all your efforts to enter this market. Mould yourself to earn this profit. Make yourself prepared to participate in this development process. Or consider yourself inefficient. Accept yourself as being rejected. A non-participation. A non-Existence.

Or not to accept this non-existence as imposed by the official power. Counter the argument of official market. Subvert the logic of official profit. Resist the justification of official modern development.

The earlier official programme was to project planned development as the only form of development. The present official programme is to project market-based development as the only kind of development. The earlier project was to make people citizens. The present project is to make people market (wo) man. People are always to be kept dependent.

Or People can make themselves independent. Prepare their own development programmes. Resist the making of everything marketable commodities. Nature-Animal- Plant-Body-Mind-Culture-Relations-Thought-Art-Creation. Resist the bringing of every one into the market. Construct diversified development programmes considering the specificities, the locals. Make Development a multiple idea and work. □□□

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