

Globalisation: Role of District Administration

Today, global recession and generally depressed international markets for primary export products continue to stifle the export-oriented development drive of most developing nations. They have been forced to accept worsening terms of trade for fear of complete exclusion from international economic activity. For the wealthy, continents such as Africa and Asia remain the source of oil and scarce non-renewable-resources.

Simply put, in this New Age, the poor face the danger of perpetual irrelevance. Most developing nations find themselves caught between the Devil and the deep sea. Such nations have, on the one hand, internal problems to contend with and, on the other, an unstoppable globalising process, which only exacerbates such problems. In short, these economically embattled nations are made to face two hostile forces, one external and the other internal. Many of the consequences of globalisation include:

1. Shift of power from states to markets leaving states sensitive to changes in the global economy and vulnerable in the sense of few alternatives to these changes to minimise sensitivity.
2. Increased power of non-state actors like MNCs, banks, individuals, civil society leading to democratisation or pluralisation of power.
3. Multiplicity of issues connecting societies.
4. Increased power of capital at the expense of monetary policies and national policies in general.
5. Continuing importance of politics and power conceptions.
6. Increased discrimination and privileging of those who participate against those who do not.
7. Changes in the technology of production as manifested in computer-directed, high-quality, lean production.
8. Greater competitiveness.

9. Emergence of complex systems of global production.
10. Increasing number and variety of inter-corporate alliances.
11. Globalisation raising questions about integration and homogenising of the dominant culture.
12. Integration and homogenising of culture deepening divisions between participants and non-participants.
13. Unequal distribution of benefits.
14. Backlash against globalisation.

The onward march of the juggernaut of globalisation and its attendant manifestations has also been seen in areas other than economics and here we would focus mainly on its socio-cultural implication for the district administration.

World Wide Web or Internet has emerged as the principal carrier of the message of globalisation and the district administration has to brace itself up for its many insidious effects, which would soon be surfacing at their level to transform as a major administrative challenge. Internet has dented the concept of nation-state by eroding whatever importance was left to the geographical boundaries between the states by allowing facile access across the length and breadth of this globalised world. Today, district administration has to guard against the sundry pathological manifestations of social media in the form of broken families as facilitated and expedited by the online licit and illicit amorous affairs and the consequent psychosomatic diseases they engender.

Also, the many snoop software and applications that peep right into our bedrooms and spy on us on the sly have also been a cause for concern and have been giving rise to many familial, social and cultural problems. Similarly, the district administration has to be chary about destructive cracking and hacking of the many strategically or economically crucial websites in its jurisdiction. Such hacking may have negative implications for the socio-culture life of the district and may negative compromise the capability of the district administration itself in the form of striking on its various administrative measures.

The local administration also need to provide for the various counselling centres so as to inform, guide and educate its clientele about and against myriad negative influences stemming from the web. It would help people adjust better to the new emerging realities of the world.

The voluminous information flowing through World Wide Web may create problems of different kind for the local administration e.g. law and order problems by spreading canards or rumours negatively impacting the social and cultural life. So, here the district administration need to be always on its toes to counter any such attempt by way of counter, positive and pro-active information drive using various media. Problems generated because of Internet would be more in times to come, so the local administration need to do anticipatory preparation to counter the challenges flowing there from rather than being caught unawares.

Again, the problem emanating because of the liberalisation, privatisation, and free trade that globalisation brings in its wake also require customised approach by the district administration. First and foremost, the emerging socio-economic realities as stemming from globalisation need to be sensitively negotiated by the district administration to help

people tide over the same effectively. Such people not only face many personal problems at the social and cultural levels but also need various supports to sustain their lives. Here, the administration has to actively guard against any pessimism or negative mental state from taking over such people which, if not guarded against, may surface in increased crime rate. So, it has not only to assist such people through proper counselling but also through retraining and rehabilitating them through skill-building, capacity-building and productive training.

Also, the local administration needs to proactively cushion against the complex law and order situations as emerging from the sundry socio-cultural influences emerging as a result of increased globalisation. Here, the effort should be to tackle and counter such cultural invasion from a position of strength rather than overly reacting and shutting it completely as in today's globalised world such ostrich approach to new ideas ought not to be advisable.

While the District Administration needs to raise its effort by the bootstrap in successfully meeting the various challenges, it also needs to grab the opportunities offered in the garb of these challenges. The District Administration need not only work at all those levels as suggested but it would also need to redefine and rediscover itself to come true to the various expectations from it.

But before the District Administration can actually do all which have been suggested and prescribed to face the new reality of globalisation, it would first need to concentrate on its primary task of providing a safe and secure atmosphere in its jurisdiction. So, an effective law and order machinery become a desideratum before one can actually hope to reap the various benefits emanating from globalisation. The District Administration itself should be fast and effective together with an improved social infrastructure including a better health system and a better education system with focus on basic education.

The upshot of it all is that the Administration should ensure the improvement of human resources in the district. Also, with population increasing dangerously, the District Administration should be more watchful here as it could erode developmental advantages. Also, the District Administration should work towards ensuring social security in its area including an improved public distribution system and a better disaster management system.

Moreover, the District Administration should play a principal role in the decentralisation of democratic power and work for the better functioning of the panchayati raj institutions so as to ensure better delivery of development and modernisation of agriculture so as to increase agricultural productivity and spur development in the countryside. Here, it should also ensure better extension of new technologies to the far-flung areas. Again, the Administration should work towards better management of water resources as well. With new players coming in, it is important for the district administration to encourage and institutionalise an interface with NGOs and the civil society.

Only after the District Administration is able to prepare the basic ground and provide a positive infrastructure in terms of a sound law and order machinery, skilled and healthy human resources, and a dynamic civil society, could it expect to deal successfully with the realities of globalisation and WTO. Last but not the least, if only the District Administration could concentration well on the area of its core competence by way of ensuring good governance

instead of stretching itself way beyond its capabilities, it would have more than met all its own responsibilities vis-à-vis the ubiquitous and irreversible process of globalisation.

Salient Points

- In this New Age, the poor face the danger of perpetual irrelevance. They are made to face hostile forces both external and the internal.
- Consequences of globalisation include shift of power from states to markets and non-state actors; democratisation of power, competitiveness, inequalities .
- DA to be alert about destructive cracking and hacking of the many strategically or economically crucial websites.
- DA to provide for the various counselling centres so as to educate its clientele about negative influences stemming from the web and social media.
- DA has to actively guard against any pessimism or negative mental state from taking over such people which, if not guarded against, may surface in increased crime rate.
- District Administration should play a principal role in the decentralisation of democratic power.
- DA should concentrate well on the area of its core competence by way of ensuring good governance.

Glossary

Juggernaut: anything requiring blind devotion or cruel sacrifice

Insidious: operating or proceeding in a harmless way but actually with grave effect

Facile: intended to entrap

Amorous: expressing love

Sly: cunning

Canards: a false or baseless, usually derogatory story

Desideratum: something wanted or needed

Ubiquitous: omnipresent