

'Development' --- A dynamic concept

4th SEM HONS, CC-8

Prepared by Dr Surajit Let

Development is a dynamic concept. It has different meanings for different people. In fact, there is no agreement on the meaning of development among planners and thinkers. Some people say it means increase in income, others lay emphasis on employment, quality of life and happiness. Still others give stress on meeting the basic needs of the people. The only thing on which every one agrees is that development is necessary; and every one wants, although in his own image and perhaps in his own way. Development has been defined as "a process of growth, expansion or realization of potential; bringing regional resources into full productive use". In another words development is a process of change aiming at socio-economic transformation of a traditional societies into modern one which is greatly influenced by human beings. Activities related to the development is generally directed towards national buildings and socio-economic. Development planning has also been defined as "any action by the state whose purpose is to raise the rate of economic growth above that which would take place without any conscious effort". Development planning is being done by the state; it has the dual purpose of economic growth and social structural change; it is comprehensive, covering every sector, region and aspect of life. The achievement of a state of development would enable individuals to make their own histories and geographies under conditions of their own choosing.

Regional research and regionalization are classic themes of geography. Ideas of spatial development compose the core of the theoretical basis of geography. However, in the epoch of scientific and technological revolutions the very concepts of 'development' and 'space' undergo transformation, this being reflected in the changes of concepts in the sciences investigating these phenomena and process.

The Concept of Development 'Development' is a multidimensional process. There are, therefore, many interpretations of it. In geographical literature during the late 1970s and early 1980s, there have come certain works which attempt to define development. Notable examples include Brookfield's (1975) Interdependent Development, Robert's (1978), Cities of peasants, Mabogunje's (1980), The Development process: a Spatial Perspective, Chisholm's (1982) Modern World Development, a Geographical perspective and Harriss's (1982), Rural Development: Theories of peasant Economy and Agrarian change. Each presents its own, very different view of 'development' provides a particular perspective from which further research can take its course. Mabogunje has identified four main ways in which the term 'development' has been used: development as economic growth, as modernization, as distributional justice and as socio-economic transformation. He argues that for a long time following the Second World War development was seen simply as economic growth; it implied a rapid rise in productivity per capita, and a changed economic structure. Holder (1968), thus concentrated on economic development in his book on the tropics, and Chisholm (1982) has described development as "a term used to signify an evolution of the economic structure accompanying expansion in total output". Chisholm (1982), goes on to distinguish between 'development' and 'modernization', the latter being seen as the social

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transformation of a nation. For Mabogunje'(1980) this is the second way in which the word 'development' has been used. Development, still in the sense of economic growth, came to be seen as part of a much wider process of social change described as modernization. Lipton" (1977) has thus, for example seen "development as modernizing structural change". However, Mabogunje" (1980) also points out a crucial aspect of this view of 'development' as modernization is that "to be modern meant to endeavour to consume goods and services of the type usually manufactured in advanced industrial nations". He goes on to observe that more recently de\ elopment has been identified with distributional justice: as a way of reducing the poverty level among the masses or, as it was more succinctly put, satisfying their 'basic' needs (Mabogunje 1980)'. For this to be successful the concept of accessibility was crucial, and much attention was therefore paid to an analysis of the access of the poorest of the poor to 'resources' defined in the broadest of terms. In his last category of views of development, Mabogunje'^ (1980) suggests that "Scholars of a Marxist philosophical persuasion argue that the questions of distribution and social justice can not be considered or resolved independently of the prevailing mechanisms governing production and distribution". This, Mabogunje argues, gave rise to dependency theory, in which development and under development are seen as being totally interrelated and also to an emphasis on three broad issues: the fact that development is human issue, its requirements of the full mobilization of society and the idea of development is human issue, its requirements of the full mobilization of society and the idea of development as a redefinition of a country's international relations. In this view Roberts"* (1978) has advocated that "Development is an interdependent process in which some countries and regions acquire predominant place with in division of labour, using coercion to organize production elsewhere, as in case of colonialism or control of capital or advanced technology and market This situation is expressed in two related concepts that of dependency and that of the core periphery relationship". 'Development' is thus defined as a process of betterment for a large human group. It includes economic development as well as social transfoimiation. The United Nations University Expert Group on Human and Social Development in November 1975 gave the meaning of 'development' as "Development is a fundamentally about, by and for human beings. Development must therefore begin by identifying human needs. The objective of development is to raise the level of living of the masses of the people and to provide all human beings with the opportunity to develop their potential". Thus the definition clarifies that the development implies not only expansion in quantitative terms but also structural changes in the society and its economy as expansion proceeds. Structural changes includes institutional, social and economic (sectoral as well as spatial) aspects. This implicit assumption behind the lumping together of all these aspects is that change in one element depends on and generates changes in all others. Secondly, development means change in a desired direction and at a desired speed. The direction and rates of change will depend upon the goals and objectives of development. Thirdly, development presupposes policy interventions direct or indirect in achieving the given goals and objectives. Fourthly, development also involves socio-psychological transformation of

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human beings to prepare them for the eventual as well as current benefits occurring from the changing socio-economic structure of society; and finally development, development involves temporal, sectoral and spatial phasing and integration of planning.