

P.R. Approach in Inclusive Growth : The Need for a Paradigm Shift

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The New Backdrop

The fact that 'Information is power and an informed citizenry is the eternal strength of a democracy' has been reinforced in recent days by an array of emerging trends in the areas of sustainable and inclusive development. Gone are the days when people were considered as consumers or beneficiaries of development. Now these terms have come to be replaced by the terms like participatory development, public private partnership, peoples' participation, micro level planning etc. With launching of New Economic policy the processes of decentralization, deregulation, administrative reform and liberalization have been set in motion. The statist model of Development characterized by predominant role of the state in initiating, financing, fostering and directing developmental schemes is now giving way to need based and market- driven models. The State is shifting its role to that of a facilitator. Once again the doctrine of Globalization which was abandoned in 1960's with the charges of 'economic colonization' has started dominating developmental thinking in Third World nations. Sufficient reasoning have been laid to believe that regulated liberalization of national economy will expedite the pace & volume of

Changing Role of State

economic growth and reduce the burdens of poverty & underdevelopment. Now that India is a member of World Trade Organisation (WTO), and a signatory to Uruguay Round of General Agreement on Trade & Tariff (GATT), the State is under the obligation to revamp its machinery and make it competitive so as to meet the demands of emerging economic order.

Development is no more the exclusive domain of Governmental machinery. Many new players have registered and demonstrated their role in it. Now a days business, industry and corporate houses are not only for profit. The concepts of corporate social responsibility, social commitment, compensatory action plan for environmental regeneration and restoration of eco-systems are now enforceable under the law. In addition to this, people's organizations, civil societies and professional bodies are emerging as new pressure groups and change agents.

Emergence of new players

The strategies of faster economic growth initiated during 11th Plan period has resulted in much heightened awareness about inclusive growth. There is today a greater desire to access information about rights and entitlements made available by law and state policy. There is an

eagerness to demand accountability from service delivery systems. This indicates a healthy trend. But this emerging social eagerness has to be molded into a positive frame failing which it may add to already growing disappointment and loss of faith in Governmental system. Moulding of this ignited expectations into a positive frame requires flow of guided, dependable and accurate information on one hand; and, liberalization of service delivery systems on the other. The Promises of the System and the

The Heightened Expectation

Expectations of People should not go beyond the extent of Actual Deliverables. Realizing these emerging realities the Panning Commission in its Approach Paper on 12th Five Year Plan has also identified building up Vibrant Grassroots Democracy, Decentralizing Governance Work, reaching Masses through Democratization of Information and using Media for Development as major challenges of sustainable development.

Regenerated & Ignited Odisha

Odisha as a state of vast natural resources and potentialities has started surging ahead along the tracks of this New Backdrop. The state is getting away from its dubious distinction of underdevelopment and indebtedness. As per the report of Transition in Odisha published by World Bank, the State is poised today to make a significant economic turnaround. Its economy is now set on a higher growth trajectory. The state is emerging from a period of economic stagnation and fiscal crisis. Speaking on a National Level Seminar of Skill Odisha Submit, the Chief Secretary Shri Bijay Kumar Patnaik opined that Odisha has been growing consistently over last ten years. The Gross State Domestic Product has grown at 8.5 per cent on an average during last years compared

to India's growth rate of 7.8 per cent. Now having overcome its fiscal crisis state has set on its agenda for administrative reforms, skill development, enhanced productivity and maintenance of higher growth rate. The political will for accelerated growth has been clearly manifested in Governmental policies under the charismatic leadership of Shri Naveen Patnaik as Chief Minister over last decade. The administrative commitment for taking the state ahead has been proved in the innovative and reformative initiatives taken up by Chief Secretary Shri Bijay Kumar Patnaik along with his whole team of executives and administrators. The Government is committed to have fastened and inclusive growth within a specific time frame.

The Need For Paradigm Shift in PR Strategy

Needless to say that these innovative initiatives and reformative measures for inclusive growth require corresponding Public Relation Strategy for their success and sustainability. The impact assessment exercises and evaluation reports have time and again emphasized that people's involvement is the key to inclusive growth. An informed and receptive population is *sine-qua-non* for realization of the objectives of inclusive growth. Peoples' emancipation, empowerment, employment and engagement in developmental process are the pathways for inclusive growth. All these are not automatic outcomes. Well planned public relation and mass mobilization strategies are necessary for building up peoples' participation. These strategies need to be embedded with techniques of communication, motivation and counselling. Effective mechanism of implementation is also necessary for translating these strategies into action. Committed professionals need to be placed in position for carrying on the activities. The out flow of information and public relation

endeavor should be correspondingly followed by real actions at field level by field officials. A proactive and dynamic administrative machinery with innovative mind set and result-oriented work culture has to be placed in position. On the whole, implementation strategies of poverty eradication programmes need to be harmonized with information and public relation endeavors. All these need complete revamping of hitherto information and public relation exercise with a dynamic and pragmatic paradigm.

As such, the The New Vision of Public Relation Exercise has to be building up People's Participation and ensure People's Partnership in Developmental process. The New Mission has to be mobilization and integration of masses by way of effective communication, motivation strategies and human resource management. The human relationships at grass roots need to be made vibrant and receptive. The public relation endeavor has to identify the socio-psychological factors that motivate people or refrain them from participating in a project.

Over last couple of years a number of social categories have been formed through Governmental interventions. These newly formed social platforms are Self Help Groups (SHGs), *Gaon Kalyan Samities* (GKS), *Vana Sanrakshan Samities* (VSS), vigilance committees, institutional level management committees, *Janch* Committees, Mothers' Committees, Parents' Committees, users groups, common interest groups and Community Organizations etc. These social categories provide micro-level platforms for common sharing. They need to be regarded as **Organs of Peoples' Participation** (OPP) and need to be reoriented to developmental initiatives. The new strategy has to be comprehensive and holistic. Action Plan and implementation strategy of various poverty

eradication schemes and developmental projects need to be harmonized with it. It goes without saying that Mobilization and Integration of people in the process of development requires reaching people with correct and guided information coupled with real developmental actions in the field level.

The New Paradigm of Public Relation needs to be related to enhancing universal accessibility to information on Governmental interventions towards:

- 1- High Growth momentum and faster poverty reduction;
- 2- Mobilization of farming community for raising farm productivity through adoption of scientific methods, new technologies and affordable credit;
- 3- Remunerative prices to farmers through accurate and actionable information package;
- 4- Improvement of Human development indicators particularly in field of functional literacy, public health, total sanitation, IT literacy, maintenance of healthy sex ratio, reduction of IMR, MMR and morbidity rate;
- 5- Mobilization of targeted groups for enhancement of their employable skills and productive capacity;
- 6- Utilizing available opportunities for creation of new means of livelihood;
- 7- Fostering of micro-level entrepreneurship in the field of agro-industries, mechanization of agricultural operations and down stream industries;

- 8- Community management and appropriate utilization of natural resources.
- 9- Fostering of micro-level **Public Private Partnership** (PPP) and **People Government Partnership** (PGP) in maintenance and development of community assets.

The developmental scenario is rapidly entering to the age of information and knowledge. The growth of knowledge and stock of information has been phenomenal in present decades. Those not having the accurate and actionable information are left at a disadvantage. State has to be led towards an information based society. Realization of this goal requires nurturing some fundamental

public relation and information dissemination techniques. These are (i) a continuous tracking and synthesis of new actionable information, (ii) an efficient and effective management of information, (iii) quick dissemination of accurate & actionable information across all strata of society particularly among the target group and above all (iv) blending of the out flow of information with actual ground level work of development agencies.

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