

# Status of Industrialization in West Bengal

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**Abstract – The rights of the poor in India are as fundamental as those of the rich. People are the real wealth of nation, the basic purpose of development is to enlarge human freedom. The crucial instrumental freedoms are economic opportunities, political freedoms, transparency guarantees and protective security because the democracy and development are linked in fundamental ways.**

**According to the view of Amartya Sen, their development is the quality of life in terms of capability expansion which explains development as freedom and capability to function. That is what we do with what we have. Capabilities include endowment, individual capacity and social opportunity.**

**Keywords: Development, Infrastructure, Industrialization**

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## INTRODUCTION

There are three core values of development which are sustenance the ability to keep individual alive, self-esteem and freedom from servitude and poverty. Freedom is also good because it creates growth and growth is one of the necessary conditions for the promotion of human development. Three foundations for human development are to live a long, healthy and creative life, to be knowledgeable, and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living. Besides this physical infrastructures such as roads, bridges, electricity, tunnels, dam, potable water, telecommunication are need to be present to ensure development.

Rourkela emerged as a highly modernized city resulting to large scale impact on the indigenous people in terms of livelihood and well-being. Industrialization is the period of social and economic change that transforms a human group from an agrarian society to an industrial one. It is the part of a wider modernization process, where the social and economic developments are closely related with technical innovation. It is the process in which a society or a country transforms itself from a primarily agricultural society into one based on the manufacturing of goods and services. It is the continual expanding of sophisticated technology designed to efficiently draw energy and raw material out of the environment and fashion them for human use. Due to Industrialization the tribal people and other vulnerable section of the population have been displaced from their traditional livelihood and their self-sustaining subsistence system of production.

Diversity is the watchword, and livelihoods approaches have challenged fundamentally single-

sector approaches to solving complex rural development problems. The appeal is simple: look at the real world, and try and understand things from local perspectives. Responses that follow should articulate with such realities and not try and impose artificial categories and divides on complex realities. Belonging to no discipline in particular, livelihoods approaches can allow a bridging of divides, allowing different people to work together – particularly across the natural and social sciences. Being focused on understanding complex, local realities livelihoods approaches are an ideal entry point for participatory approaches to inquiry, with negotiated learning between local people and outsiders.

How prosperous is the future of industrialization, even in a very low scale, in West Bengal which is not an economically stable State in India? This question is more significant particularly when the State is expected to move forward under the stewardship of the exuberant Chief Minister of the present Government.

It is widely recorded by all the concerned that for last about 3 decades, perhaps, only the silhouette of this State exists in the map of the country and that of the world. Thanks to the most damaging and abnormal art of ruling during the period. It is quite scary to notice the most bizarre mindsets very carefully built up in the personalities of the Bengali working force during this era.

## STATUS OF INDUSTRIALIZATION IN WEST BENGAL

Recent exultant wave of hopes cherished by the educated folk in the changed environment created

by the new Chief Minister was difficult to fathom. However, unfortunately that crests of hopes have suffered a rude shock in the reality as mentioned in the succeeding paragraphs.

The get-together [no other term may be suitable] recently arranged by the present Government inviting all the big and medium industrialists is undoubtedly praise-worthy. Though the deliberations in that get-together of the august personalities highlighted a bit rumbling thought processes of the concerned authorities, it is understandable. As observed in the TV, the show has been earmarked by the following:

- Deliberations not based on any proper agenda - remarkably a need of more organizing effort.
- Lack of professionalism felt every moment.

The presence of a number of big and most respected industrialists in that gathering demonstrated entirely the greatness of the guests who thronged there with genuine positive mindset and enthusiasm.

Basic objective in writing this article is to project a very serious phenomenon in the present society of West Bengal currently charged so boisterously in the light of a number of promises by the new ruling party. That phenomenon is the PRO-NON-INDUSTRIALISTS psyche seems to be very carefully nurtured and kept hidden by a section of people and particularly the work force of the State.

Section of the educated lots just felt highly embarrassed witnessing the same attitude which has surfaced now suddenly. This is exemplified by the current incident of harassing and humiliating the Tata Group which is one of the most respected industrialists in India and abroad. Tata Group is not just one group of industrialist; they are also the legend contributing so profusely to the build-up of the industrial world in the country. It deeply pained us including, perhaps, all the industrialists observing how badly such a star industrial group has been treated by the present authorities particularly at this crucial stage. It is more than a platitude that this august group deserves an iota of decency and courtesy in a State where this group has precious contributions for about 5 decades. This has thus reflected the scary images and characteristics of all the concerned in the bandwagon of the previous authorities in power. And that is the matter of concern.

This most disturbing incident concerning one of the most respected industrialists caused by the present Government of West Bengal has shaken the root of all prospects of industrialization in the State.

The treatment caused recently to the Tata Group at the very juncture of the new program of industrialization in a big way in the State, envisages

what lies ahead in the future approach of the present Government of West Bengal. With rudimentary knowledge, one knows that Land is one of the four most precious factors or parameters of a Production Function, other factors being Building, Labor and Entrepreneur. Without land no production unit can work. Interestingly, the Government of West Bengal have withdrawn themselves entirely from this most important commitment. Purchasing large number of plots of land from private owners by the industrialists is next to impossible and absolutely not feasible. This entails a series of inconvenient tasks, viz., contacting owners, pursuing them, obtaining their consent, verifying the actual legal ownership and so on. This is a horrendous job. The industrialists just cannot afford to do that. So in absence of State Government's help and commitment, land cannot be made available to the industrialists. Thus the Government of West Bengal sledge-hammered the whole prospect of industrialization in the State.

## DISCUSSION

West Bengal is gifted with fertile agricultural land is well known. At Singur where Tata Group has built up their automobile Factory, the present Government of West Bengal is extraordinarily keen to 'return' plots of land to 'unwilling' farmers. This reflects compassion and sympathy to those farmers. That is quite fine. But what about addressing alarming unemployment problem? It is interesting to ascertain to what extent those farmers will be able to lead a normal life with at least two square meals a day and to afford to arrange most essential goods and services for a daily normal life. On the other hand if one member in each of those farmers' families would get employed in that factory, their life style would have been upgraded manifold permanently.

The State is already deeply problematic and tension-oriented which is not so congenial for industrialization. The industrialists have to encounter unpredictable hurdles every moment. More serious aspect is that Government of West Bengal will not be in a position to provide better facilities than what have been offered by Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka Governments.

Judging the situation in the State, it seems to be quite justified and appropriate if the State moves for agricultural development rather than for industrial development erasing, of course, the unemployment problem from the agenda. This proposition is appropriate keeping with the facts that major portion of land in West Bengal are highly fertile and cultivable. Availability of fallow land as such for building up factories is really an impediment in West Bengal.

West Bengal, India's sixth largest state in terms of economic size, had a Gross State Domestic

Product (GSDP) of US\$ 158.40 billion in 2017-18. The state's GSDP grew at a CAGR of 11.88 per cent from 2011-12 to 2017-18.

West Bengal has 12 growth centres for medium and large scale industries, set up by the West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation (WBIDC). Major industrial areas of West Bengal are Haldia, Kolkata, Asansol-Durgapur region, and Kharagpur.

As of December 17, 2018, West Bengal had 21 SEZs; of which, 7 are operational, 5 are notified, 7 are formally approved and 2 have in-principle approval.

As of December 2018, West Bengal had a total installed power generation capacity of 10,522.59 MW, of which 6,577.95 MW was under state utilities, 2,773.87 MW was under the private sector and 1,170.77 MW was under central utilities. Of the total installed power capacity, 8,685.77 MW was contributed by thermal power, 1,396.00 MW by hydropower and 440.82 MW by renewable power.

The state is the second-largest tea growing state in India. Total tea production in West Bengal stood at 387.86 million kgs in 2017-18, accounting for 29.27 per cent share of India's total production. Tea production from January to December 2018 reached 385.87 million kgs.

## CONCLUSION

The state government has introduced West Bengal Information Technology and Electronics Policy 2018 which has envisaged West Bengal as one of the leading states in India in the IT, ITeS, ICT and ESDM sectors.

In August 2018, the state government has launched the Silicon Valley IT hub project to attract investments in IT/ITeS/ICT and create state-of-the-art ecosystem for new technologies and innovation.

In state budget 2018-19, an amount of Rs 123 crores (US\$ 18.1 million) has been extended to develop and modernize the Industrial Parks and Growth Centers to attract entrepreneurs.

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) is going to undertake construction of a 4.38 km stretch of metro rail from Noapara to Dakshineswar. The work is expected to be completed by May 2019.

West Bengal plans to raise its share in the country's IT exports to 25 per cent by 2030. Total export from IT sector of the state is estimated to have crossed Rs. 19,000 crores (US\$ 2.83 billion) in 2016-17.

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