UNIT I

Development Policies and Experience (1947-90)

The two chapters in this unit give us an overview of the state of the Indian economy as it was at the eve of independence till after four decades of planned development, which was a path that India chose. This meant that the Government of India had to take a series of steps such as the establishment of the Planning Commission and announcement of five year plans. An overview of the goals of five year plans and a critical appraisal of the merits and limitations of planned development has been covered in this unit.

1

Indian Economy on the Eve of Independence

After studying this chapter, the learners will

- become familiar with the state of the Indian economy in 1947, the year of India's Independence
- understand the factors that led to the underdevelopment and stagnation of the Indian economy.

> ***"India is the pivot of our Empire... If the Empire loses any other part of its Dominion we can survive, but if we lose India, the sun of our Empire will have set."***
>
> ***Victor Alexander Vruce, the Viceroy of British India in 1894***

1.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this book, *Indian Economic Development*, is to familiarise you with the basic features of the Indian economy, and its development, as it is today, in the aftermath of Independence. However, it is equally important to know something about the country's economic past even as you learn about its present state and future prospects. So, let us first look at the state of India's economy prior to the country's independence and form an idea of the various considerations that shaped India's post-independence development strategy.

The structure of India's present-day economy is not just of current making; it has its roots steeped in history, particularly in the period when India was under British rule which lasted for almost two centuries before India finally won its independence on 15 August 1947. The sole purpose of the British colonial rule in India was to reduce the country to being a raw material supplier for Great Britain's own rapidly expanding modern industrial base. An understanding of the exploitative nature of this relationship is essential for any assessment of the kind and level of development which the Indian economy has been able to attain over the last six and half decades.

1.2 Low Level of Economic Development under the Colonial Rule

India had an independent economy before the advent of the British rule. Though agriculture was the main source of livelihood for most people, yet, the country's economy was characterised by various kinds of manufacturing activities. India was particularly well known for its handicraft industries in the fields of cotton and silk textiles, metal and precious stone works etc. These products enjoyed a worldwide market based on the reputation of the fine quality of material used and the high standards of craftsmanship seen in all imports from India (See Box 1.1).

Box 1.1: Textile Industry in Bengal

Muslin is a type of cotton textile which had its origin in Bengal, particularly, places in and around Dhaka (spelled during the pre-independence period as Dacca), now the capital city of Bangladesh. 'Daccai Muslin' had gained worldwide fame as an exquisite type of cotton textile. The finest variety of muslin was called *malmal*. Sometimes, foreign travellers also used to refer to it as *malmal shahi* or *malmal khas* implying that it was worn by, or fit for, the royalty.

The economic policies pursued by the colonial government in India were concerned more with the protection and promotion of the economic interests of their home country than with the development of the Indian economy. Such policies brought about a fundamental change in the structure of the Indian economy — transforming the country into supplier of raw materials and consumer of finished industrial products from Britain.

Obviously, the colonial government never made any sincere attempt to estimate India's **national** and **per capita income**. Some individual attempts which were made to measure such incomes yielded conflicting and inconsistent results. Among the notable estimators — Dadabhai Naoroji, William Digby, Findlay Shirras, V.K.R.V. Rao and R.C. Desai — it was Rao, whose estimates during the colonial period was considered very significant. However, most studies did find that the country's growth of aggregate real output during the first half of the twentieth century was less than two per cent coupled with a meagre half per cent growth in per capita output per year.

1.3 Agricultural Sector

India's economy under the British colonial rule remained fundamentally agrarian — about 85 per cent of the country's population lived mostly in villages and derived livelihood directly or indirectly from agriculture (See Box 1.2). However, despite being the occupation of such a large population, the agricultural

Box 1.2: Agriculture During Pre-British India

The French traveller, Bernier, described seventeenth century Bengal in the following way: "The knowledge I have acquired of Bengal in two visits inclines me to believe that it is richer than Egypt. It exports, in abundance, cottons and silks, rice, sugar and butter. It produces amply — for its own consumption — wheat, vegetables, grains, fowls, ducks and geese. It has immense herds of pigs and flocks of sheep and goats. Fish of every kind it has in profusion. From *rajmahal* to the sea is an endless number of canals, cut in bygone ages from the Ganges by immense labour for navigation and irrigation."

Fig. 1.1 *India's agricultural stagnation under the British colonial rule*

➢ Take note of the agricultural prosperity in our country in the seventeenth century. Contrast it with agricultural stagnation around the time when the British left India, around 200 years later.

sector continued to experience stagnation and, not infrequently, unusual deterioration. **Agricultural pro-ductivity** became low though, in absolute terms, the sector experienced some growth due to the expansion of the aggregate area under cultivation. This stagnation in the agricultural sector was caused mainly because of the various systems of **land settlement** that were introduced by the colonial government. Particularly, under the *zamindari* system which was implemented in the then Bengal Presidency comprising parts of India's present-day eastern states, the profit accruing out of the agriculture sector went to the *zamindars* instead of the cultivators. However, a considerable number of *zamindars*, and not just the colonial government, did nothing to improve the condition of agriculture. The main interest of the *zamindars* was only to collect rent regardless of the economic condition of the cultivators; this caused immense misery and social tension among the latter. To a very great extent, the terms of the **revenue settlement** were also responsible for the *zamindars* adopting such an attitude; dates for depositing specified sums of revenue were fixed, failing which the *zamindars* were to lose their rights. Besides this, low levels of technology, lack of irrigation facilities and negligible use of fertilisers, all added up to aggravate the plight of the farmers and contributed to the dismal level of agricultural productivity. There was, of course, some evidence of a relatively higher yield of cash crops in certain areas of the country due to **commercialisation of agriculture**.

Work These Out

- Compare the map of British India with that of independent India and find out the areas that became parts of Pakistan. Why were those parts so important to India from the economic point of view? (Refer, to your advantage, Dr Rajendra Prasad's book, *India Divided)*.
- What were the various forms of revenue settlement adopted by the British in India? Where did they implement them and to what effect? How far do you think those settlements have a bearing on the current agricultural scenario in India? (In your attempt to find answers to these questions, you may refer to Ramesh Chandra Dutt's *Economic History of India*, which comes in three volumes, and B.H. Baden-Powell's *The Land Systems of British India*, also in two volumes. For better comprehension of the subject, you can also try and develop an illustrated agrarian map of British India either by hand or with the help of your school computer. Remember, nothing helps better than an illustrated map to understand the subject at hand).

But this could hardly help farmers in improving their economic condition as, instead of producing food crops, now they were producing cash crops which were to be ultimately used by British industries back home. Despite some progress made in irrigation, India's agriculture was starved of investment in terracing, flood-control, drainage and desalinisation of soil. While a small section of farmers changed their cropping pattern from food crops to commercial crops, a large section of tenants, small farmers and sharecroppers neither had resources and technology nor had incentive to invest in agriculure.

1.4 Industrial Sector

As in the case of agriculture, so also in manufacturing, India could not develop a sound industrial base under the colonial rule. Even as the country's world famous handicraft industries declined, no corresponding modern industrial base was allowed to come up to take pride of place so long enjoyed by the former. The primary motive of the colonial government behind this policy of systematically de-industrialising India was two-fold. The intention was, first, to reduce India to the status of a mere exporter of important raw materials for the upcoming modern industries in Britain and, second, to turn India into a sprawling market for the finished products of those industries so that their continued expansion could be ensured to the maximum advantage of their home country — Britain. In the unfolding economic scenario, the decline of the indigenous handicraft industries created not only massive unemployment in India but also a new demand in the Indian consumer market, which was now deprived of the supply of locally made goods. This demand was profitably met by the increasing imports of cheap manufactured goods from Britain.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, modern industry began to take root in India but its progress remained very slow. Initially, this development was confined to the setting up of cotton and jute textile mills. The cotton textile mills, mainly dominated by Indians, were located in the western parts of the country, namely, Maharashtra and Gujarat, while the jute mills dominated by the foreigners were mainly concentrated in Bengal. Subsequently, the iron and steel industries began coming up in the beginning of the twentieth century. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO) was incorporated in 1907. A few other industries in the fields of sugar, cement, paper etc. came up after the Second World War.

However, there was hardly any **capital goods industry** to help promote further industrialisation in India. Capital goods industry means industries which can produce machine tools which are, in turn, used for producing articles for current consumption. The establishment of a few manufacturing units here and

Work These Out

- Prepare a list showing where and when other modern industries of India were first set up. Can you also find out what the basic requirements are for setting up any modern industry? What, for example, might have been the reasons for the setting up of the Tata Iron and Steel Company at Jamshedpur, which is now in the state of Jharkhand?
- How many iron and steel factories are there in India at present? Are these iron and steel factories among the best in the world or do you think that these factories need restructuring and upgradation? If yes, how can this be done? There is an argument that industries which are not strategic in nature should not continue to be in the public sector. What is your view?
- On a map of India, mark the cotton textiles, jute mills and textile mills that existed at the time of independence.

there was no substitute to the near wholesale displacement of the country's traditional handicraft industries. Furthermore, the growth rate of the new industrial sector and its contribution to the **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** or **Gross Value Added** remained very small. Another significant drawback of the new industrial sector was the very limited area of operation of the public sector. This sector remained confined only to the railways, power generation, communications, ports and some other departmental undertakings.

1.5 Foreign Trade

India has been an important trading nation since ancient times. But the restrictive policies of commodity production, trade and tariff pursued by the colonial government adversely affected the structure, composition and volume of India's foreign trade. Consequently, India became an exporter of primary products such as raw silk, cotton, wool, sugar, indigo, jute etc. and an importer of finished consumer goods like cotton, silk and woollen clothes and capital goods like light machinery produced in the factories of Britain. For all practical purposes, Britain maintained a monopoly control over India's exports and imports. As a result, more than half of India's foreign trade was restricted to Britain while the rest was allowed with a few other countries like China, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Persia (Iran). The opening of the Suez Canal further intensified British control over India's foreign trade (see Box 1.3).

The most important characteristic of India's foreign trade throughout the colonial period was the generation of a large export surplus. But this surplus came at a huge cost to the country's economy. Several essential commodities—food grains, clothes,

Work These Out

- Prepare a list of items that were exported from and imported into India during the British rule.
- Collect information from the *Economic Survey* for various years published by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India, on various items of export from India and its imports. Compare these with imports and exports from the pre-independence era. Also find out the names of prominent ports which now handle the bulk of India's foreign trade.

kerosene etc. — were scarcely available in the domestic market. Furthermore, this export surplus did not result in any flow of gold or silver into India. Rather, this was used to make payments for the expenses incurred by an office set up by the colonial government in Britain, expenses on war, again fought by the British government, and the import of invisible items, all of which led to the drain of Indian wealth.

1.6 Demographic Condition

Various details about the population of British India were first collected through a census in 1881. Though suffering from certain limitations, it revealed the unevenness in India's population growth. Subsequently,

Fig.1.2 *Suez Canal: Used as highway between India and Britain*

Box 1.3: Trade Through the Suez Canal

Suez Canal is an artificial waterway running from north to south across the Isthmus of Suez in north-eastern Egypt. It connects Port Said on the Mediterranean Sea with the Gulf of Suez, an arm of the Red Sea. The canal provides a direct trade route for ships operating between European or American ports and ports located in South Asia, East Africa and Oceania by doing away with the need to sail around Africa. Strategically and economically, it is one of the most important waterways in the world. Its opening in 1869 reduced the cost of transportation and made access to the Indian market easier.

every ten years such census operations were carried out. Before 1921, India was in the first stage of **demographic transition**. The second stage of transition began after 1921. However, neither the total population of India nor the rate of population growth at this stage was very high.

The various social development indicators were also not quite encouraging. The overall literacy level was less than 16 per cent. Out of this, the female literacy level was at a negligible low of about seven per cent. Public health facilities were either unavailable to large chunks of population or, when available, were highly inadequate. Consequently, water and air-borne diseases were rampant and took a huge toll on life. No wonder, the overall **mortality rate** was very high and in that, particularly, the **infant mortality rate** was quite alarming—about 218 per thousand in contrast to the present infant mortality rate of 33 per thousand. **Life expectancy** was also very low—44 years in contrast to the present 69 years. In the absence of reliable data, it is difficult to specify the extent of poverty at that time but there is no doubt that extensive poverty prevailed in India during the colonial period which contributed to the worsening profile of India's population of the time.

1.7 Occupational Structure

During the colonial period, the occupational structure of India, i.e., distribution of working persons across different industries and sectors, showed little sign of change. The agricultural sector accounted for

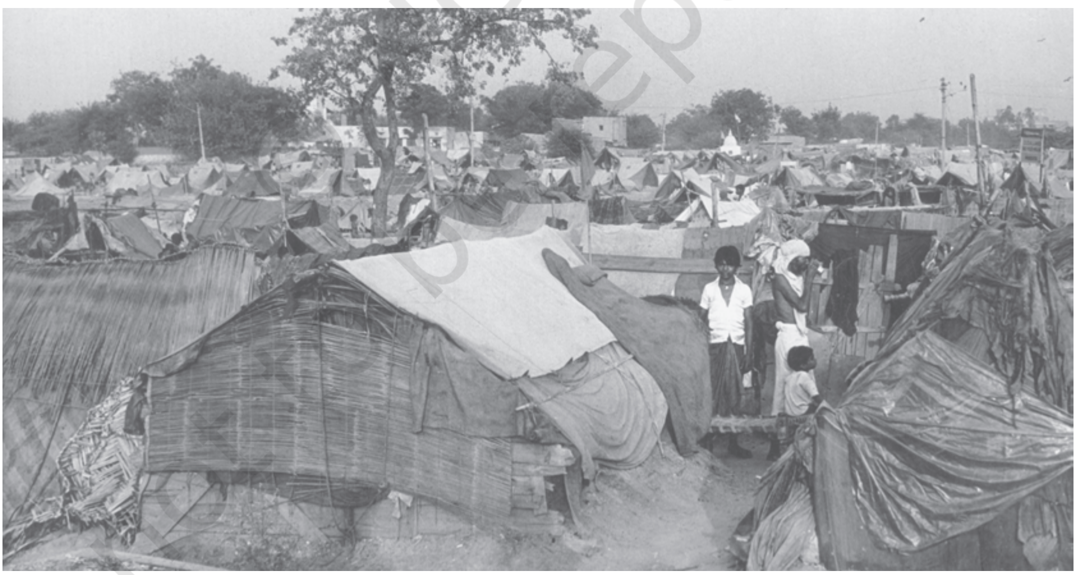


Fig. 1.3 *A large section of India's population did not have basic needs such as housing*

Work These Out

- Can you find out the reasons behind frequent occurrence of famines in India before independence? You may read from Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen's book, *Poverty and Famines.*
- Prepare a pie chart for the occupational structure in India at the time of independence.

the largest share of workforce, which usually remained at a high of 70-75 per cent while the manufacturing and the services sectors accounted for only 10 and 15-20 per cent respectively. Another striking aspect was the growing regional variation. Parts of the then Madras Presidency (comprising areas of the present-day states of Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka), Bombay and Bengal witnessed a decline in the dependence of the workforce on the agricultural sector with a commensurate increase in the manufacturing and the services sectors. However, there had been an increase in the share of workforce in agriculture during the same time in states such as Orissa, Rajasthan and Punjab.

1.8 Infrastructure

Under the colonial regime, basic infrastructure such as railways, ports, water transport, posts and telegraphs did develop. However, the real motive behind this development was not to provide basic amenities to the people but to subserve various colonial interests. Roads constructed in India prior to the advent of the British rule were not fit for modern transport. The roads that were built primarily served the purposes of mobilising the army within India and drawing out raw materials from the countryside to the nearest railway station or the port to send these to far away England or other lucrative foreign destinations. There always remained an acute shortage of all-weather roads to reach out to the rural areas during the rainy season. Naturally, therefore, people mostly living in these areas suffered grievously during natural calamities and famines.

The British introduced the railways in India in 1850 and it is considered as one of their most important contributions. The railways affected the structure of the Indian economy in two important ways. On the one hand it enabled people to undertake long distance travel and thereby break geographical and cultural barriers while, on the other hand, it fostered commercialisation of Indian agriculture which adversely affected the self-sufficiency of the village economies in India. The volume of India's exports undoubtedly expanded but its benefits rarely accrued to the Indian people. The social benefits, which the

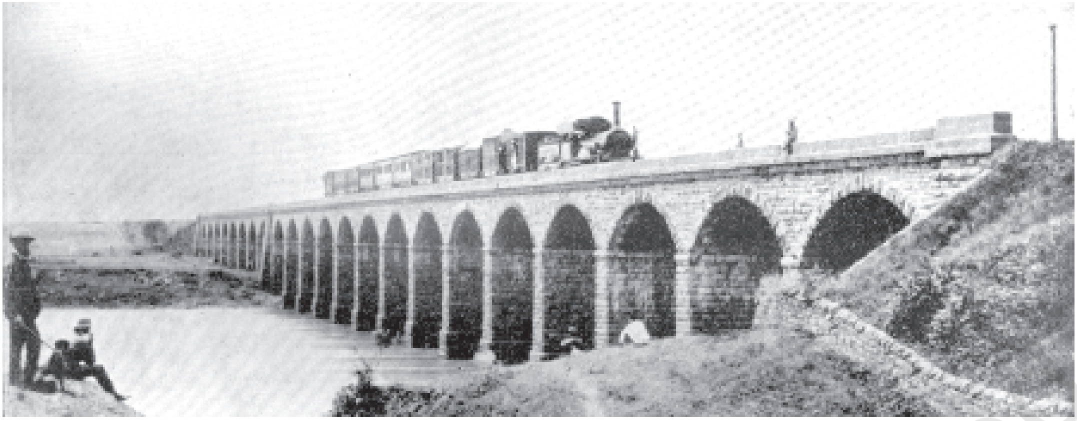


Fig. 1.4 *First Railway Bridge linking Bombay with Thane, 1854*

Indian people gained owing to the introduction of the railways, were thus outweighed by the country's huge economic loss.

Along with the development of roads and railways, the colonial dispensation also took measures for developing the inland trade and sea lanes. However, these measures were far from satisfactory. The inland waterways, at times, also proved uneconomical as in the case of the Coast Canal on the Orissa coast. Though the canal was built at a huge cost to the government exchequer, yet, it failed to compete with the railways, which soon traversed the region running parallel to the canal, and had to be ultimately abandoned. The introduction of the expensive system of electric telegraph in India, similarly, served the purpose of maintaining law and order. The postal services, on the other hand, despite serving a useful public purpose, remained all through

Work This Out

- There is a perception still going around that in many ways the British administration in India was quite beneficial. This perception needs an informed debate. How would you look at this perception? Argue this out in your class—'Was the British Raj good for India'?

Fig.1.5 *Tata Airlines, a division of Tata and Sons, was established in 1932 inaugurating the aviation sector in India*

inadequate. You will learn more about the present status of various infrastructure in Chapter 8.

1.9 Conclusion

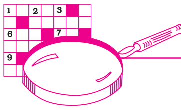
By the time India won its independence, the impact of the two-century long British colonial rule was already showing on all aspects of the Indian economy. The agricultural sector was already saddled with surplus labour and extremely low productivity. The industrial sector was crying for modernisation, diversification, capacity building and increased public investment. Foreign trade was oriented to feed the Industrial Revolution in Britain. Infrastructure facilities, including the famed railway network, needed upgradation, expansion and public orientation. Prevalence of rampant poverty and unemployment required welfare orientation of public economic policy. In a nutshell, the social and economic challenges before the country were enormous.

Recap

- An understanding of the economy before independence is necessary to know and appreciate the level of development achieved during the post-independence period.
- Under the colonial dispensation, the economic policies of the government were concerned more with the protection and promotion of British economic interests than with the need to develop the economic condition of the colonised country and its people.
- The agricultural sector continued to experience stagnation and deterioration despite the fact that the largest section of Indian population depended on it for sustenance.
- The rule of the British-India government led to the collapse of India's world famous handicraft industries without contributing, in any significant manner, to its replacement by a modern industrial base.
- Lack of adequate public health facilities, occurrence of frequent natural calamities and famines pauperised the hapless Indian people and resulted in engendering high mortality rates.
- Some efforts were made by the colonial regime to improve infrastructure facilities but these efforts were spiced with selfish motives. However, the independent Indian government had to built on this base through planning.

EXERCISES

1. What was the focus of the economic policies pursued by the colonial government in India? What were the impacts of these policies?
2. Name some notable economists who estimated India's per capita income during the colonial period.
3. What were the main causes of India's agricultural stagnation during the colonial period?
4. Name some modern industries which were in operation in our country at the time of independence.
5. What was the two-fold motive behind the systematic de-industrialisation effected by the British in pre-independent India?
6. The traditional handicrafts industries were ruined under the British rule. Do you agree with this view? Give reasons in support of your answer.
7. What objectives did the British intend to achieve through their policies of infrastructure development in India?
8. Critically appraise some of the shortfalls of the industrial policy pursued by the British colonial administration.
9. What do you understand by the drain of Indian wealth during the colonial period?
10. Which is regarded as the defining year to mark the demographic transition from its first to the second decisive stage?
11. Give a quantitative appraisal of India's demographic profile during the colonial period.
12. Highlight the salient features of India's pre-independence occupational structure.
13. Underscore some of India's most crucial economic challenges at the time of independence.
14. When was India's first official census operation undertaken?
15. Indicate the volume and direction of trade at the time of independence.
16. Were there any positive contributions made by the British in India? Discuss.



SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Prepare a list of goods and services that were available to people in pre-independence India in rural and urban areas. Compare it with the consumption pattern of such goods and services by the people today. Highlight the perceptible difference in the people's standard of living.
2. Find pictures of towns/villages, in your vicinity, of the pre-independence period and compare these with their present scenario. What changes can you mark? Are such changes for better or for worse? Discuss.
3. Rally around your teacher and organise a group discussion on 'Has the *zamindari* system really been abolished in India'? If the consensus is negative, then what measures would you think should be taken to banish it and why?
4. Identify the major occupations followed by the people of our country at the time of independence. What major occupations do the people follow today? In the light of reform policies, how would you visualise the occupational scenario in India 15 years from now—say, 2035?

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2

Indian Economy 1950–1990

After studying this chapter, the learners will

- come to know the goals of India's five year plans
- know about the development policies in different sectors such as agriculture and industry from 1950-1990
- learn to think about the merits and limitations of a regulated economy.

> ***The central objective of Planning in India... is to initiate a process of development which will raise the living standards and open out to the people new opportunities for a richer and more varied life.***
>
> ***First Five Year Plan***

2.1 Introduction

On 15 August 1947, India woke to a new dawn of freedom. Finally we were masters of our own destiny after some two hundred years of British rule; the job of nation building was now in our own hands. The leaders of independent India had to decide, among other things, the type of **economic system** most suitable for our nation, a system which would promote the welfare of all rather than a few. There are different types of economic systems (see Box 2.1) and among them, socialism appealed to Jawaharlal Nehru the most. However, he was not in favour of the kind of socialism established in the former Soviet Union where all the means of production, i.e. all the factories and farms in the country, were owned by the government. There was no private property. It is not possible in a democracy like India for the government to change the ownership pattern of land and other properties of its citizens in the way that it was done in the former Soviet Union.

Nehru, and many other leaders and thinkers of the newly independent India, sought an alternative to the extreme versions of capitalism and socialism. Basically sympathising with the socialist outlook, they found the answer in an economic system which, in their view, combined the best features of socialism without its drawbacks. In this view, India would be a socialist society with a strong public sector but also with private property and democracy; the government would plan (see Box 2.2) for the

Work These Out

- Prepare a chart on the different types of economic systems prevalent in the world. List out the countries as capitalist, socialist and mixed economy.
- Plan a class trip to an agriculture farm. Divide the class into seven groups with each group to plan a specific goal, for example, the purpose of the visit, money expenditure involved, time taken, resources, people accompanying the group and who need to be contacted, possible places of visit, possible questions to be asked etc. Now, with the help of your teacher, compile these specific goals and compare with long-term goals of successful visit to an agricultural farm.

Box 2.1: Types of Economic Systems

Every society has to answer three questions

- What goods and services should be produced in the country?
- How should the goods and services be produced? Should producers use more human labour or more capital (machines) for producing things?
- How should the goods and services be distributed among people?

One answer to these questions is to depend on the **market forces** of supply and demand. In a market economy, also called capitalism, only those consumer goods will be produced that are in demand, i.e., goods that can be sold profitably either in the domestic or in the foreign markets. If cars are in demand, cars will be produced and if bicycles are in demand, bicycles will be produced. If labour is cheaper than capital, more labour-intensive methods of production will be used and vice-versa. In a **capitalist** society the goods produced are distributed among people not on the basis of what people need but on the basis of Purchasing Power—the ability to buy goods and services. That is, one has to have the money in the pocket to buy it. Low cost housing for the poor is much needed but will not count as demand in the market sense because the poor do not have the purchasing power to back the demand. As a result this commodity will not be produced and supplied as per market forces. Such a society did not appeal to Jawaharlal Nehru, our first prime minister, for it meant that the great majority of people of the country would be left behind without the chance to improve their quality of life.

A **socialist** society answers the three questions in a totally different manner. In a socialist society the government decides what goods are to be produced in accordance with the needs of society. It is assumed that the government knows what is good for the people of the country and so the desires of individual consumers are not given much importance. The government decides how goods are to be produced and how they should be distributed. In principle, distribution under socialism is supposed to be based on what people need and not on what they can afford to purchase. Unlike under capitalism, for example, a socialist nation provides free health care to all its citizens. Strictly, a socialist society has no private property since everything is owned by the state. In Cuba and China, for example, most of the economic activities are governed by the socialistic principles.

Most economies are **mixed economies,** i.e. the government and the market together answer the three questions of what to produce, how to produce and how to distribute what is produced. In a mixed economy, the market will provide whatever goods and services it can produce well, and the government will provide essential goods and services which the market fails to do.

Box 2.2: What is a Plan?

A plan spells out how the resources of a nation should be put to use. It should have some general goals as well as specific objectives which are to be achieved within a specified period of time; in India plans were of five years duration and were called five year plans (we borrowed this from the former Soviet Union, the pioneer in national planning). Our plan documents upto the year 2017 not only specify the objectives to be attained in the five years of a plan but also what is to be achieved over a period of twenty years. This long-term plan is called 'perspective plan'. The five year plans were supposed to provide the basis for the perspective plan.

It will be unrealistic to expect all the goals of a plan to be given equal importance in all the plans. In fact the goals may actually be in conflict. For example, the goal of introducing modern technology may be in conflict with the goal of increasing employment if the technology reduces the need for labour. The planners have to balance the goals, a very difficult job indeed. We find different goals being emphasised in different plans in India.

India's five year plans did not spell out how much of each and every good and service is to be produced. This is neither possible nor necessary (the former Soviet Union tried to do this and failed). It is enough if the plan is specific about the sectors where it plays a commanding role, for instance, power generation and irrigation, while leaving the rest to the market.

economy with the private sector being encouraged to be part of the plan effort. The 'Industrial Policy Resolution' of 1948 and the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution reflected this outlook. In 1950, the **Planning Commission** was set up with the Prime Minister as its Chairperson. The era of five year plans had begun.

2.2 The Goals of Five Year Plans

A plan should have some clearly specified goals. The goals of the five year plans were: growth, modernisation, self-reliance and equity. This does not mean that all the plans have given equal importance to all these goals. Due to limited resources, a choice has to be made in each plan about which of the goals is to be given primary importance. Nevertheless, the planners have to ensure that, as far as possible, the policies of the plans do not contradict these four goals. Let us now learn about the goals of planning in some detail.

Growth: It refers to increase in the country's capacity to produce the output of goods and services within the country. It implies either a larger stock of productive capital, or a larger size of supporting services like transport and banking, or an increase in the efficiency of productive capital and services. A good indicator of economic growth, in the language of

Box 2.3: Mahalanobis: the Architect of Indian Planning

Many distinguished thinkers contributed to the formulation of India's five year plans. Among them, the name of the statistician, Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, stands out.

Planning, in the real sense of the term, began with the Second Five Year Plan. The Second Plan, a landmark contribution to development planning in general, laid down the basic ideas regarding goals of Indian planning; this plan was based on the ideas of Mahalanobis. In that sense, he can be regarded as the architect of Indian planning.

Mahalanobis was born in 1893 in Calcutta. He was educated at the Presidency College in Calcutta and at Cambridge University in England. His contributions to the subject of statistics brought him international fame. In 1945 he was made a Fellow (member) of Britain's Royal Society, one of the most prestigious organisations of scientists; only the most outstanding scientists are made members of this Society.

Mahalanobis established the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI) in Calcutta and started a journal, *Sankhya*, which still serves as a respected forum for statisticians to discuss their ideas. Both, the ISI and *Sankhya*, are highly regarded by statisticians and economists all over the world to this day.

During the second plan period, Mahalanobis invited many distinguished economists from India and abroad to advise him on India's economic development. Some of these economists became Nobel Prize winners later, which shows that he could identify individuals with talent. Among the economists invited by Mahalanobis were those who were very critical of the socialist principles of the second plan. In other words, he was willing to listen to what his critics had to say, the mark of a great scholar.

Many economists today reject the approach to planning formulated by Mahalanobis but he will always be remembered for playing a vital role in putting India on the road to economic progress, and statisticians continue to profit from his contribution to statistical theory.

Source: *Sukhamoy Chakravarty, 'Mahalanobis, Prasanta Chandra' in John Eatwell et.al, (Eds.) The New Palgrave Dictionary: Economic Development, W.W. Norton, New York and London.*

Box 2.4: The Service Sector

As a country develops, it undergoes 'structural change'. In the case of India, the structural change is peculiar. Usually, with development, the share of agriculture declines and the share of industry becomes dominant. At higher levels of development, the service sector contributes more to the GDP than the other two sectors. In India, the share of agriculture in the GDP was more than 50 per cent—as we would expect for a poor country. But by 1990 the share of the service sector was 40.59 per cent, more than that of agriculture or industry, like what we find in developed nations. This phenomenon of growing share of the service sector was accelerated in the post 1991 period (this marked the onset of globalisation in the country which will be discussed in chapter 3).

economics, is steady increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The GDP is the market value of all the goods and services produced in the country during a year. You can think of the GDP as a cake and growth is increase in the size of the cake. If the cake is larger, more people can enjoy it. It is necessary to produce more goods and services if the people of India are to enjoy (in the words of the First Five Year Plan) a more rich and varied life.

The GDP of a country is derived from the different sectors of the economy, namely the agricultural sector, the industrial sector and the service sector. The contribution made by each of these sectors makes up the **structural composition** of the economy. In some countries, growth in agriculture contributes more to the GDP growth, while in some countries the growth in the service sector contributes more to GDP growth (see Box 2.4).

Modernisation: To increase the production of goods and services the producers have to adopt new technology. For example, a farmer can increase the output on the farm by using new seed varieties instead of using the old ones. Similarly, a factory can increase output by using a new type of machine. Adoption of new technology is called modernisation.

However, modernisation does not refer only to the use of new technology but also to changes in social outlook such as the recognition that women should have the same rights as men. In a traditional society, women are supposed to remain at home while men work. A modern society makes use of the talents of women in the work place — in banks, factories, schools etc. — and such a society in most occassions is also prosperous.

Self-reliance: A nation can promote economic growth and modernisation by using its own resources or by using resources imported from other nations. The first seven five year plans gave importance to self-reliance which means avoiding imports of those goods which could be

Work These Out

- Discuss in your class the changes in technology used for
  - (a) Production of food grains
  - (b) Packaging of products
  - (c) Mass communication
- Find out and prepare a list of major items that India imported and exported during 1990-91 and 2018-19. (For this, see P. 192 also).
  - (a) Observe the difference
  - (b) Do you see the impact of self-reliance? Discuss.

For getting these details you may refer to *Economic Survey* of the latest year.

produced in India itself. This policy was considered a necessity in order to reduce our dependence on foreign countries, especially for food. It is understandable that people who were recently freed from foreign domination should give importance to self-reliance. Further, it was feared that dependence on imported food supplies, foreign technology and foreign capital may make India's sovereignty vulnerable to foreign interference in our policies.

Equity: Now growth, modernisation and self-reliance, by themselves, may not improve the kind of life which people are living. A country can have high growth, the most modern technology developed in the country itself, and also have most of its people living in poverty. It is important to ensure that the benefits of economic prosperity reach the poor sections as well instead of being enjoyed only by the rich. So, in addition to growth, modernisation and self-reliance, equity is also important. Every Indian should be able to meet his or her basic needs such as food, a decent house, education and health care and inequality in the distribution of wealth should be reduced.

Let us now see how the first seven five year plans, covering the period 1950-1990, attempted to attain these four goals and the extent to which they succeeded in doing so, with reference to agriculture, industry and trade. You will study the policies and developmental issues taken up after 1991 in Chapter 3.

2.3 Agriculture

You have learnt in Chapter 1 that during the colonial rule there was neither growth nor equity in the agricultural sector. The policy makers of independent India had to address these issues which they did through land reforms and promoting the use of 'High Yielding Variety' (HYV) seeds which ushered in a revolution in Indian agriculture.

Land Reforms: At the time of independence, the land tenure system was characterised by intermediaries

Box 2.5: Ownership and Incentives

The policy of 'land to the tiller' is based on the idea that the cultivators will take more interest—they will have more incentive—in increasing output if they are the owners of the land. This is because ownership of land enables the tiller to make profit from the increased output. Tenants do not have the incentive to make improvements on land since it is the landowner who would benefit more from higher output. The importance of ownership in providing incentives is well illustrated by the carelessness with which farmers in the former Soviet Union used to pack fruits for sale. It was not uncommon to see farmers packing rotten fruits along with fresh fruits in the same box. Now, every farmer knows that the rotten fruits will spoil the fresh fruits if they are packed together. This will be a loss to the farmer since the fruits cannot be sold. So why did the Soviet farmers do something which would so obviously result in loss for them? The answer lies in the incentives facing the farmers. Since farmers in the former Soviet Union did not own any land, they neither enjoyed the profits nor suffered the losses. In the absence of ownership, there was no incentive on the part of farmers to be efficient, which also explains the poor performance of the agricultural sector in the Soviet Union despite availability of vast areas of highly fertile land.

Source: *Thomas Sowell, Basic Economics: A Citizen's Guide to the Economy, New York: Basic Books, 2004, Second Edition.*

(variously called *zamindars, jagirdars* etc.) who merely collected rent from the actual tillers of the soil without contributing towards improvements on the farm. The low productivity of the agricultural sector forced India to import food from the United States of America (U.S.A.). Equity in agriculture called for **land reforms** which primarily refer to change in the ownership of landholdings. Just a year after independence, steps were taken to abolish intermediaries and to make the tillers the owners of land. The idea behind this move was that ownership of land would give incentives (see Box 2.5) to the tillers to invest in making improvements provided sufficient capital was made available to them.

Land ceiling was another policy to promote equity in the agricultural sector. This means fixing the maximum size of land which could be owned by an individual. The purpose of land ceiling was to reduce the concentration of land ownership in a few hands.

The abolition of intermediaries meant that some 200 lakh tenants came into direct contact with the government — they were thus freed from being exploited by the *zamindars*. The ownership conferred on tenants gave them the incentive to increase output and this contributed to growth in agriculture. However, the goal of equity was not fully served by abolition of intermediaries. In some areas the former *zamindars* continued to own large areas of land by making use of some loopholes in the legislation; there were cases where tenants were evicted and the landowners claimed to be self-cultivators (the actual tillers), claiming ownership of the land; and even when the tillers got ownership of land, the poorest of the agricultural labourers (such as sharecroppers and landless labourers) did not benefit from land reforms.

The land ceiling legislation also faced hurdles. The big landlords challenged the legislation in the courts, delaying its implementation. They used this delay to register their lands in the name of close relatives, thereby escaping from the legislation. The legislation also had a lot of loopholes which were exploited by the big landholders to retain their land. Land reforms were successful in Kerala and West Bengal because these states had governments committed to the policy of land to the tiller. Unfortunately other states did not have the same level of commitment and vast inequality in landholding continues to this day.

The Green Revolution: At independence, about 75 per cent of the country's population was dependent on agriculture. Productivity in the agricultural sector was very low because of the use of old technology and the absence of required infrastructure for the vast majority of farmers. India's agriculture vitally depends on the monsoon and if the monsoon fell short the farmers were in trouble unless they had access to irrigation facilities which very few had. The stagnation in agriculture during the colonial rule was permanently broken by the green revolution. This refers to the large increase in production of food grains resulting from the use of high yielding variety (HYV) seeds especially for wheat and rice. The use of these seeds required the use of fertiliser and pesticide in the correct quantities as well as regular supply of water; the application of these inputs in correct proportions is vital. The farmers who could benefit from HYV seeds required reliable irrigation facilities as well as the financial resources to purchase fertiliser and pesticide. As a result, in the first phase of the green revolution (approximately mid 1960s upto mid 1970s), the use of HYV seeds was restricted to the more affluent states such as Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Further, the use of HYV seeds primarily benefited the wheat-growing regions only. In the second phase of the green revolution (mid-1970s to mid-1980s), the HYV technology spread to a larger number of states and benefited more variety of crops. The spread of green revolution technology enabled India to achieve self-sufficiency in food grains; India no longer had to be at the mercy of America, or any other nation, for meeting its food requirements.

Growth in agricultural output is important but it is not enough. If a large proportion of this increase is

consumed by the farmers themselves instead of being sold in the market, the higher output will not make much of a difference to the economy as a whole. If, on the other hand, a substantial amount of agricultural produce is sold in the market by the farmers, the higher output can make a difference to the economy. The portion of agricultural produce which is sold in the market by the farmers is called **marketed surplus**. A good proportion of the rice and wheat produced during the green revolution period (available as marketed surplus) was sold by the farmers in the market. As a result, the price of food grains declined relative to other items of consumption. The low-income groups, who spend a large percentage of their income on food, benefited from this decline in relative prices. The green revolution enabled the government to procure sufficient amount of food grains to build a stock which could be used in times of food shortage.

While the nation had immensely benefited from the green revolution, the technology involved was not free from risks. One such risk was the possibility that it would increase the disparities between small and big farmers—since only the big farmers could afford the required inputs, thereby reaping most of the benefits of the green revolution. Moreover, the HYV crops were also more prone to attack by pests and the small farmers who adopted this technology could lose everything in a pest attack.

Fortunately, these fears did not come true because of the steps taken by the government. The government provided loans at a low interest rate to small farmers and subsidised fertilisers so that small farmers could also have access to the needed inputs. Since the small farmers could obtain the required inputs, the output on small farms equalled the output on large farms in the course of time. As a result, the green revolution benefited the small as well as rich farmers. The risk of the small farmers being ruined when pests attack their crops was considerably reduced by the services rendered by research institutes established by the government. You should note that the green revolution would have favoured the rich farmers only if the state did not play an extensive role in ensuring that the small farmer also gains from the new technology.

The Debate Over Subsidies: The economic justification of subsidies in agriculture is, at present, a hotly debated question. It is generally agreed that it was necessary to use subsidies to provide an incentive for adoption of the new HYV technology by farmers in general and small farmers in particular. Any new technology will be looked upon as being risky by farmers. Subsidies were, therefore, needed to encourage farmers to test the new technology. Some economists believe that once the technology is found profitable and is widely adopted, subsidies should be phased out since their purpose has been served. Further, subsidies are meant to benefit the farmers but a substantial amount of fertiliser subsidy also benefits the fertiliser industry; and among farmers, the subsidy largely benefits the farmers in the more prosperous regions. Therefore, it is argued that there is no case for continuing with fertiliser subsidies; it does not benefit the target group and it is a huge burden on the government's finances (see also Box 2.6).

On the other hand, some believe that the government should continue with agricultural subsidies because farming in India continues to be a risky business. Most farmers are very poor and they will not be able to afford the required inputs without subsidies. Eliminating subsidies will increase the inequality between rich and poor farmers and violate the goal of equity. These experts argue that if subsidies are largely benefiting the fertiliser industry and big farmers, the correct policy is not to abolish subsidies but to take steps to ensure that only the poor farmers enjoy the benefits.

Thus, by the late 1960s, Indian agricultural productivity had increased sufficiently to enable the country to be self-sufficient in food grains. This is an achievement to be proud of. On the negative side, some 65 per cent of the country's population continued to be employed in agriculture even as late as 1990. Economists have found that as

Box 2.6: Prices as Signals

You would have learnt in an earlier class about how prices of goods are determined in the market. It is important to understand that prices are signals about the availability of goods. If a good becomes scarce, its price will rise and those who use this good will have the incentive to make efficient decisions about its use based on the price. If the price of water goes up because of lower supply, people will have the incentive to use it with greater care; for example, they may stop watering the garden to conserve water. We complain whenever the price of petrol increases and blame it on the government. But the increase in petrol price reflects greater scarcity and the price rise is a signal that less petrol is available—this provides an incentive to use less petrol or look for alternate fuels.

Some economists point out that subsidies do not allow prices to indicate the supply of a good. When electricity and water are provided at a subsidised rate or free, they will be used wastefully without any concern for their scarcity. Farmers will cultivate water intensive crops if water is supplied free, although the water resources in that region may be scarce and such crops will further deplete the already scarce resources. If water is priced to reflect scarcity, farmers will cultivate crops suitable to the region. Fertiliser and pesticide subsidies result in overuse of resources which can be harmful to the environment. Subsidies provide an incentive for wasteful use of resources. Think about subsidies in terms of incentives and ask yourself whether it is wise from the economic viewpoint to provide free electricity to farmers.

a nation becomes more prosperous, the proportion of GDP contributed by agriculture as well as the proportion of population working in the sector declines considerably. In India, between 1950 and 1990, the proportion of GDP contributed by agriculture declined significantly but not the population depending on it (67.5 per cent in 1950 to 64.9 per cent by 1990). Why was such a large proportion of the population engaged in agriculture although agricultural output could have grown with much less people working in the sector? The answer is that the industrial sector and the service sector did not absorb the people working in the agricultural sector. Many economists call this an important failure of our policies followed during 1950-1990.

2.4 Industry and Trade

Economists have found that poor nations can progress only if they have a good industrial sector. Industry provides employment which is more stable than the employment in agriculture; it promotes modernisation and overall prosperity. It is for this reason that the five year plans placed a lot of emphasis on industrial development. You might have studied in the previous chapter that, at the time of independence, the variety of industries was very narrow

Work These Out

- A group of students may visit an agricultural farm, prepare a case study on the method of farming used, that is, types of seeds, fertilisers, machines, means of irrigation, cost involved, marketable surplus and income earned. It will be beneficial if the changes in cultivation methods could be collected from an elderly member of the farming family
  - (a) Discuss the findings in your class.
  - (b) The different groups can then prepare a chart showing variations in cost of production, productivity, use of seeds, fertilisers, means of irrigation, time taken, marketable surplus and income of the family.
- Collect newspaper cuttings related to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation (and meets of G7, G8, G10 countries). Discuss the views shared by the developed and developing countries on farm subsidies.
- Prepare pie charts on the occupational structure of the Indian economy available in the following table. Discuss the possible reasons for the change in the shape of pies.

Sector	*1950–51*	*1990–91*
Agriculture	72.1	66.8
Industry	10.7	12.7
Services	17.2	20.5

- Study the arguments for and against agricultural subsidies. What is your view on this issue?
- Some economists argue that farmers in other countries, particularly developed countries, are provided with high amount of subsidies and are encouraged to export their produce to other countries. Do you think our farmers will be able to compete with farmers from developed countries? Discuss.

— largely confined to cotton textiles and jute. There were two well-managed iron and steel firms — one in Jamshedpur and the other in Kolkata — but, obviously, we needed to expand the industrial base with a variety of industries if the economy was to grow.

Public and Private Sectors in Indian Industrial Development: The big question facing the policy makers was — what should be the role of the government and the private sector in industrial development? At the time of independence, Indian industrialists did not have the capital to undertake investment in industrial ventures required for the development of Indian economy; nor was the market big enough to encourage industrialists to undertake major projects even if they had the capital to do so. It is principally for these reasons that the erstwhile governments had to play an extensive role in promoting the industrial sector. In addition, the decision to develop the Indian economy on socialist lines led to the policy of the government controlling the commanding heights of the economy, as the Second Five Year plan put it. This meant that the government would have complete control of those industries that were vital for the economy. The policies of the private sector would have to be complimentary to those of the public sector, with the public sector leading the way.

Industrial Policy Resolution 1956 (IPR 1956): In accordance with the goal of the state controlling the commanding heights of the economy, the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 was adopted. This resolution formed the basis of the Second Five Year Plan, the plan which tried to build the basis for a socialist pattern of society. This resolution classified industries into three categories. The first category comprised industries which would be exclusively owned by the government; the second category consisted of industries in which the private sector could supplement the efforts of the public sector, with the government taking the sole responsibility for starting new units; the third category consisted of the remaining industries which were to be in the private sector.

Although there was a category of industries left to the private sector, the sector was kept under state control through a system of licenses. No new industry was allowed unless a license was obtained from the government. This policy was used for promoting industry in backward regions; it was easier to obtain a license if the industrial unit was established in an economically backward area. In addition, such units were given certain concessions such as tax benefits and electricity at a lower tariff. The purpose of this policy was to promote **regional equality**.

Even an existing industry had to obtain a license for expanding output or for diversifying production (producing a new variety of goods). This was meant to ensure that the quantity of goods produced was not more than what the economy required. License to expand production was given only if the government was convinced that the economy required a larger quantity of goods.

Small-Scale Industry: In 1955, the Village and Small-Scale Industries Committee, also called the Karve Committee, noted the possibility of using small-scale industries for promoting rural development. A 'small-scale industry' is defined with reference to the maximum investment allowed on the assets of a unit. This limit has changed over a period of time. In 1950 a small-scale industrial unit was one which invested a maximum of rupees five lakh; at present the maximum investment allowed is rupees one crore.

It is believed that small-scale industries are more 'labour intensive' i.e., they use more labour than the large-scale industries and, therefore, generate more employment. But these industries cannot compete with the big industrial firms; it is obvious that development of small-scale industry requires them to be shielded from the large firms. For this purpose, the production of a number of products was reserved for the small-scale industry; the criterion of reservation being the ability of these units to manufacture the goods. They were also given concessions such as lower excise duty and bank loans at lower interest rates.

2.5 Trade Policy: Import Substitution

The industrial policy that India adopted was closely related to the **trade policy**. In the first seven plans, trade was characterised by what is commonly called an inward looking trade strategy. Technically, this strategy is called **import substitution**. This policy aimed at replacing or substituting imports with domestic production. For example, instead of importing vehicles made in a foreign country, industries would be encouraged to produce them in India itself. In this policy the government protected the domestic industries from foreign competition. Protection from imports took two forms: tariffs and quotas. Tariffs are a tax on imported goods; they make imported goods more expensive and discourage their use. Quotas specify the quantity of goods which can be imported. The effect of tariffs and quotas is that they restrict imports and, therefore, protect the domestic firms from foreign competition.

The policy of protection was based on the notion that industries of developing countries were not in a position to compete against the goods produced by more developed economies. It was assumed that if the domestic industries were protected they would learn to compete in the course of time. Our planners also feared the possibility of foreign exchange being spent on import of luxury goods if no restrictions were placed on imports. Nor was any serious thought given to promote exports until the mid-1980s.

Effect of Policies on Industrial Development: The achievements of India's industrial sector during the first seven plans are impressive indeed. The proportion of GDP contributed by the industrial sector increased in the period from 13 per cent in 1950-51 to 24.6 per cent in 1990-91. The rise in the industry's share of GDP is an important indicator of development. The six per cent annual growth rate of the industrial sector during the period is commendable. No longer was Indian industry restricted largely to cotton textiles and jute; in fact, the industrial sector became well diversified by 1990, largely due to

Work These Out

- Construct a pie chart for the following table on sectoral contribution to GDP and discuss the difference in the contribution of the sectors in the light of effects of development during 1950-91.

Sector	*1950-51*	*1990-91*
Agriculture 	59.0	34.9
Industry 	13.0	24.6
Services 	28.0	40.5

- Conduct a debate in your classroom on the usefulness of Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) by dividing the class into two groups. One group may speak in favour of PSUs and the other group against the motion (involve as many students as possible and encourage them to give examples).

the public sector. The promotion of small-scale industries gave opportunities to those people who did not have the capital to start large firms to get into business. Protection from foreign competition enabled the development of indigenous industries in the areas of electronics and automobile sectors which otherwise could not have developed.

In spite of the contribution made by the public sector to the growth of the Indian economy, some economists are critical of the performance of many public sector enterprises. It was proposed at the beginning of this chapter that initially public sector was required in a big way. It is now widely held that state enterprises continued to produce certain goods and services (often monopolising them) although this was no longer required. An example is the provision of telecommunication service. This industry continued to be reserved for the Public Sector even after it was realised that private sector firms could also provide it. Due to the absence of competition, even till the late 1990s, one had to wait for a long time to get a telephone connection. Another instance could be the establishment of Modern Bread, a bread-manufacturing firm, as if the private sector could not manufacture bread! In 2001 this firm was sold to the private sector. The point is that after four decades of Planned development of Indian Economy no distinction was made between (i) what the public sector alone can do and (ii) what the private sector can also do. For example, even now only the public sector supplies national defense. And even though the private sector can manage hotels well, yet, the government also runs hotels. This has led some scholars to argue that the state should get out of areas which the private sector can manage and the government may concentrate its resources on important services which the private sector cannot provide.

Many public sector firms incurred huge losses but continued to function because it is difficult to close a government undertaking even if it is a drain on the nation's limited resources. This does not mean that private firms are always profitable (indeed, quite a few of the public sector firms were originally private firms which were on the verge of closure due to losses; they were then nationalised to protect the jobs of the workers). However, a loss-making private firm will not waste resources by being kept running despite the losses.

The need to obtain a license to start an industry was misused by industrial houses; a big industrialist would get a license not for starting a new firm but to prevent competitors from starting new firms. The excessive regulation of what came to be called the **permit license raj** prevented certain firms from becoming more efficient. More time was spent by industrialists in trying to obtain a license or lobby with the concerned ministries rather than on thinking about how to improve their products.

The protection from foreign competition was also being criticised on the ground that it continued even after it proved to do more harm than good. Due to restrictions on imports, the Indian consumers had to purchase whatever the Indian producers produced. The producers were aware that they had a captive market; so they had no incentive to improve the quality of their goods. Why should they think of improving quality when they could sell low quality items at a high price? Competition from imports forces our producers to be more efficient.

A few economists also point out that the public sector is not meant for earning profits but to promote the welfare of the nation. The public sector firms, on this view, should be evaluated on the basis of the extent to which they contribute to the welfare of people and not on the profits they earn. Regarding protection, some economists hold that we should protect our producers from foreign competition as long as the rich nations continue to do so. Owing to all these conflicts, economists called for a change in our policy. This, alongwith other problems, led the government to introduce a new economic policy in 1991.

2.6 Conclusion

The progress of the Indian economy during the first seven plans was impressive indeed. Our industries became far more diversified compared to the situation at independence. India became self- sufficient in food production thanks to the green revolution. Land reforms resulted in abolition of the hated *zamindari* system. In industrial sector, many economists became dissatisfied with the performance of many public sector enterprises. Excessive government regulation prevented growth of entrepreneurship. In the name of self-reliance, Indian producers were protected against foreign competition and this did not give them the incentive to improve the quality of goods that they produced. Indian policies were 'inward oriented' that failed to develop a strong export sector. The need for reform of economic policy was widely felt in the context of changing global economic scenario, and the new economic policy was initiated in 1991 to make Indian economy more efficient. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Recap

- After independence, India envisaged an economic system which combines the best features of socialism and capitalism—this culminated in the mixed economy model.
- All the economic planning has been formulated through five year plans.
- Common goals of five year plans are growth, modernisation, self-sufficiency and equity.
- The major policy initiatives in agriculture sector were land reforms and green revolution. These initiatives helped India to become self-sufficient in food grains production.
- The proportion of people depending on agriculture did not decline as expected.
- Import substitution policy initiatives in the industrial sector raised its contribution to GDP.
- One of the major drawbacks in the industrial sector was the inefficient functioning of the public sector as it started incurring losses leading to drain on the nation's limited resources.

EXERCISES

1. Define a plan.
2. Why did India opt for planning?
3. Why should plans have goals?
4. What are High Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds?
5. What is marketable surplus?
6. Explain the need and type of land reforms implemented in the agriculture sector.
7. What is Green Revolution? Why was it implemented and how did it benefit the farmers? Explain in brief.
8. Explain 'growth with equity' as a planning objective.
9. Does modernisation as a planning objective create contradiction in the light of employment generation? Explain.
10. Why was it necessary for a developing country like India to follow self-reliance as a planning objective?
11. What is sectoral composition of an economy? Is it necessary that the service sector should contribute maximum to GDP of an economy? Comment.
12. Why was public sector given a leading role in industrial development during the planning period?
13. Explain the statement that green revolution enabled the government to procure sufficient food grains to build its stocks that could be used during times of shortage.
14. While subsidies encourage farmers to use new technology, they are a huge burden on government finances. Discuss the usefulness of subsidies in the light of this fact.
15. Why, despite the implementation of green revolution, 65 per cent of India's population continued to be engaged in the agriculture sector till 1990?
16. Though public sector is very essential for industries, many public sector undertakings incur huge losses and are a drain on the economy's resources. Discuss the usefulness of public sector undertakings in the light of this fact.

17. Explain how import substitution can protect domestic industry.

18. Why and how was private sector regulated under the IPR 1956?

19. Match the following:

1. Prime Minister	A. Seeds that give large proportion of output
2. Gross Domestic Product	B. Quantity of goods that can be imported
3. Quota	C. Chairperson of the planning commission
4. Land Reforms	D. The money value of all the final goods and services produced within the economy in one year
5. HYV Seeds	E. Improvements in the field of agriculture to increase its productivity
6. Subsidy	F. The monetary assistance given by government for production activities.

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UNIT II

Economic Reforms Since 1991

After forty years of planned development, India has been able to achieve a strong industrial base and became self-sufficient in the production of food grains. Nevertheless, a major segment of the population continues to depend on agriculture for its livelihood. In 1991, a crisis in the balance of payments led to the introduction of economic reforms in the country. This unit is an appraisal of the reform process and its implications for India.

3

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LIBERALISATION, PRIVATISATION AND GLOBALISATION: AN APPRAISAL

After studying this chapter, the learners will

- understand the background of the reform policies introduced in India in 1991
- understand the mechanism through which reform policies were introduced
- comprehend the process of globalisation and its implications for India
- be aware of the impact of the reform process in various sectors.

> ***There is a consensus in the world today that economic development is not all and the GDP is not necessarily a measure of progress of a society.***
>
> ***K.R. Narayanan, Former President of India***

3.1 Introduction

You have studied in the previous chapter that, since independence, India followed the mixed economy framework by combining the advantages of the capitalist economic system with those of the socialist economic system. Some scholars argue that, over the years, this policy resulted in the establishment of a variety of rules and laws, which were aimed at controlling and regulating the economy, ended up instead in hampering the process of growth and development. Others state that India, which started its developmental path from near stagnation, has since been able to achieve growth in savings, developed a diversified industrial sector which produces a variety of goods and has experienced sustained expansion of agricultural output which has ensured food security.

In 1991, India met with an economic crisis relating to its external debt — the government was not able to make repayments on its borrowings from abroad; **foreign exchange reserves**, which we generally maintain to import petroleum and other important items, dropped to levels that were not sufficient for even a fortnight. The crisis was further compounded by rising prices of essential goods. All these led the government to introduce a new set of policy measures which changed the direction of our developmental strategies. In this chapter, we will look at the background of the crisis, measures that the government has adopted and their impact on various sectors of the economy.

3.2 Background

The origin of the financial crisis can be traced from the inefficient management of the Indian economy in the 1980s. We know that for implementing various policies and its general administration, the government generates funds from various sources such as taxation, running of public sector enterprises etc. When expenditure is more than income, the government borrows to finance the **deficit** from banks and also from people within the country and from international **financial institutions**. When we import goods like petroleum, we pay in dollars which we earn from our exports.

Development policies required that even though the revenues were very low, the government had to overshoot its revenue to meet challenges like unemployment, poverty and population explosion. The continued spending on development programmes of the government did not generate additional revenue. Moreover, the government was not able to generate sufficiently from internal sources such as taxation. When the government was spending a large share of its income on areas which do not provide immediate returns such as the social sector and defence, there was a need to utilise the rest of its revenue in a highly efficient manner. The income from public sector undertakings was also not very high to meet the growing expenditure. At times, our **foreign exchange**, borrowed from other countries and international financial institutions, was spent on meeting consumption needs. Neither was an attempt made to reduce such profligate spending nor sufficient attention was given to boost exports to pay for the growing imports.

In the late 1980s, government expenditure began to exceed its revenue by such large margins that meeting the expenditure through borrowings became unsustainable. Prices of many essential goods rose sharply. Imports grew at a very high rate without matching growth of exports. As pointed out earlier, foreign exchange reserves declined to a level that was not adequate to finance imports for more than two weeks. There was also not sufficient foreign exchange to pay the interest that needed to be paid to international lenders. Also no country or international funder was willing to lend to India.

India approached the **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)**, popularly known as **World Bank** and the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, and received $7 billion as loan to manage the crisis. For availing the loan, these international agencies expected India to liberalise and open up the economy by removing restrictions on the private sector, reduce the role of the government in many areas and remove trade restrictions between India and other countries.

India agreed to the conditionalities of World Bank and IMF and announced the **New Economic Policy (NEP)**. The NEP consisted of wide ranging economic reforms. The thrust of the policies was towards creating a more competitive environment in the economy and removing the barriers to entry and growth of firms. This set of policies can broadly be classified into two groups: the stabilisation measures and the structural reform measures. Stabilisation measures are short-term measures, intended to correct some of the weaknesses that have developed in the **balance of payments** and to bring **inflation** under control. In simple words, this means that there was a need to maintain sufficient foreign exchange reserves and keep the rising prices under control. On the other hand, structural reform policies are long-term measures, aimed at improving the efficiency of the economy and increasing its international competitiveness by removing the rigidities in various segments of the Indian economy. The government initiated a variety of policies which fall under three heads viz., liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation.

3.3 Liberalisation

As pointed out in the beginning, rules and laws which were aimed at regulating the economic activities became major hindrances in growth and development. Liberalisation was introduced to put an end to these restrictions and open various sectors of the economy. Though a few liberalisation measures were introduced in 1980s in areas of industrial licensing, **export-import policy**, technology upgradation, **fiscal policy** and foreign investment, reform policies initiated in 1991 were more comprehensive. Let us study some important areas, such as the industrial sector, financial sector, tax reforms, **foreign exchange markets** and trade and investment sectors which received greater attention in and after 1991.

Deregulation of Industrial Sector: In India, regulatory mechanisms were enforced in various ways (i) industrial licensing under which every entrepreneur had to get permission from government officials to start a firm, close a firm or decide the amount of goods that could be produced (ii) private sector was not allowed in many industries (iii) some goods could be produced only in small-scale industries, and (iv) controls on price fixation and distribution of selected industrial products.

The reform policies introduced in and after 1991 removed many of these restrictions. Industrial licensing was abolished for almost all but product categories — alcohol, cigarettes, hazardous chemicals, industrial explosives, electronics, aerospace and drugs and pharmaceuticals. The only industries which are now reserved for the public sector are a part of defence equipment, atomic energy generation and railway transport. Many goods produced by small-scale industries have now been **dereserved**. In many industries, the market has been allowed to determine the prices.

Financial Sector Reforms: Financial sector includes financial institutions, such as commercial banks, investment banks, **stock exchange** operations and foreign exchange market. The financial sector in India is regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). You may be aware that all banks and other financial institutions in India are regulated through various norms and regulations of the RBI. The RBI decides the amount of money that the banks can keep with themselves, fixes interest rates, nature of lending to various sectors, etc. One of the major aims of financial sector reforms is to reduce the role of RBI from regulator to facilitator of financial sector. This means that the financial sector may be allowed to take decisions on many matters without consulting the RBI.

The reform policies led to the establishment of private sector banks, Indian as well as foreign. Foreign investment limit in banks was raised to around 74 per cent. Those banks which fulfil certain conditions have been given freedom to set up new branches without the approval of the RBI and rationalise their existing branch networks. Though banks have been given permission to generate resources from India and abroad, certain managerial aspects have been retained with the RBI to safeguard the interests of the account-holders and the nation. **Foreign Institutional Investors (FII)**, such as merchant bankers, mutual funds and pension funds, are now allowed to invest in Indian financial markets.

Tax Reforms: Tax reforms are concerned with the reforms in the government's taxation and public expenditure policies, which are collectively known as its **fiscal policy**. There are two types of taxes: direct and indirect. **Direct taxes** consist of taxes on incomes of individuals, as well as, profits of business enterprises. Since 1991, there has been a continuous reduction in the taxes on individual incomes as it was felt that high rates of income tax were an important reason for tax evasion. It is now widely accepted that moderate rates of income tax encourage savings and voluntary disclosure of income. The rate of **corporation tax**, which was very high earlier, has been gradually reduced. Efforts have also been made to reform the **indirect taxes**, taxes levied on commodities, in order to facilitate the establishment of a common national market for goods and commodities.

In 2016, the Indian Parliament passed a law, Goods and Services Tax Act 2016, to simplify and introduce a unified indirect tax system in India. This law came into effect from July 2017. This is expected to generate additional revenue for the government, reduce tax evasion and create 'one nation, one tax and one market'. Another component of reform in this area is simplification. In order to encourage better compliance on the part of taxpayers, many procedures have been simplified and the rates also substantially lowered.

Foreign Exchange Reforms: The first important reform in the external sector was made in the foreign exchange market. In 1991, as an immediate measure to resolve the balance of payments crisis, the rupee was **devalued** against foreign currencies. This led to an increase in the inflow of foreign exchange. It also set the tone to free the determination of rupee value in the foreign exchange market from government control. Now, more often than not, markets determine exchange rates based on the demand and supply of foreign exchange.

Trade and Investment Policy Reforms: Liberalisation of trade and investment regime was initiated to increase international competitiveness of industrial production and also foreign investments and technology into the economy. The aim was also to promote the efficiency of local industries and adoption of modern technologies.

In order to protect domestic industries, India was following a regime of **quantitative restrictions** on imports. This was encouraged through tight control over imports and by keeping the **tariffs** very high. These policies reduced efficiency and competitiveness which led to slow growth of the manufacturing sector. The trade policy reforms aimed at (i) dismantling of quantitative restrictions on imports and exports (ii) reduction of tariff rates and (iii) removal of licensing procedures for imports. **Import licensing** was abolished except in case of hazardous and environmentally sensitive industries. Quantitative restrictions on imports of manufactured consumer goods and agricultural products were also fully removed from April 2001. **Export duties** have been removed to increase the competitive position of Indian goods in the international markets.

Work These Out

- Give an example each of nationalised bank, private bank, private foreign bank, FII and a mutual fund.
- Visit a bank in your locality with your parents. Observe and find out the functions it performs. Discuss the same with your classmates and prepare a chart on it.
- Find out from your parents if they pay taxes. If yes, why do they do so and how?
- Do you know that for a very long time countries used to keep silver and gold as reserves to make payments abroad? Find out in what form do we keep our foreign exchange reserves and find out from newspapers, magazines and the Economic Survey how much foreign exchange reserves India had during the last year. Also find the foreign currency of the following countries and its latest rupee exchange rate.

Country	*Currency*	*Value of 1(one) unit of foreign currency in Indian rupee*
U.S.A. U.K. Japan China Korea Singapore Germany		

3.4 Privatisation

It implies shedding of the ownership or management of a government owned enterprise. Government companies are converted into private companies in two ways (i) by withdrawal of the government from ownership and management of public sector companies and or (ii) by outright sale of public sector companies.

Privatisation of the public sector enterprises by selling off part of the equity of PSEs to the public is known as **disinvestment**. The purpose of the sale, according to the government, was mainly to improve financial discipline and facilitate modernisation. It was also envisaged that private capital and managerial capabilities could be effectively utilised to improve the performance of the PSUs.

Box 3.1: *Navratnas* and Public Enterprise Policies

You must have read in your childhood about the famous *Navratnas* or Nine Jewels in the Imperial Court of King Vikramaditya who were eminent persons of excellence in the fields of art, literature and knowledge. In order to improve efficiency, infuse professionalism and enable them to compete more effectively in the liberalised global environment, the government identifies PSEs and declare them as *maharatnas, navratnas* and *miniratnas.* They were given greater managerial and operational autonomy, in taking various decisions to run the company efficiently and thus increase their profits. Greater operational, financial and managerial autonomy has also been granted to profit-making enterprises referred to as *miniratnas.*

The Central Public Sector Enterprises are designated with different status. A few examples of public enterprises with their status are as follows: (i) *Maharatnas* – (a) Indian Oil Corporation Limited, and (b) Steel Authority of India Limited, (ii) *Navratnas* – (a) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, (b) Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited; and (iii) *Miniratnas* – (a) Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited; (b) Airport Authority of India and (c) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited.

Many of these profitable PSEs were originally formed during the 1950s and 1960s when self-reliance was an important element of public policy. They were set up with the intention of providing infrastructure and direct employment to the public so that quality end-product reaches the masses at a nominal cost and the companies themselves were made accountable to all stakeholders.

The granting of status resulted in better performance of these companies. Scholars allege that instead of facilitating public enterprises in their expansion and enabling them to become global players, the government partly privatised them through disinvesment. Of late, the government has decided to retain them in the public sector and enable them to expand themselves in the global markets and raise resources by themselves from financial markets.

Work These Out

- Some scholars refer to disinvestment as the wave of privatisation spreading all over the world to improve the performance of public sector enterprises whereas others call it as outright sale of public property to the vested interests. What do you think?
- Prepare a poster which contains 10-15 news clippings which you consider as important and relating to *navaratnas* from newspapers. Also collect the logos and advertisements of these PSEs. Put these on the notice board and discuss them in the classroom.
- Do you think only loss making companies should be privatised? Why?
- Losses incurred by public sector enterprises are to be met out of the public budget. Do you agree with this statement? Discuss.

The government envisaged that privatisation could provide strong impetus to the inflow of FDI.

The government has also made attempts to improve the efficiency of PSUs by giving them autonomy in taking managerial decisions. For instance, some PSUs have been granted special status as *maharatnas*, *navratnas* and *miniratnas* (see Box 3.1).

3.5 Globalisation

Although globalisation is generally understood to mean integration of the economy of the country with the world economy, it is a complex phenomenon. It is an outcome of the set of various policies that are aimed at transforming the world towards greater interdependence and integration. It involves creation of networks and activities transcending economic, social and geographical boundaries. Globalisation attempts to establish links in such a way that the happenings in India can be influenced by events happening miles away. It is turning the world into one whole or creating a borderless world.

Outsourcing: This is one of the important outcomes of the globalisation process. In outsourcing, a company hires regular service from external sources, mostly from other countries, which was previously provided internally or from within the country (like legal advice, computer service, advertisement, security — each provided by respective departments of the company). As a form of economic activity, outsourcing has intensified, in recent times, because of the growth of fast modes of communication, particularly the growth of Information Technology (IT). Many of the services such as voice-based business processes (popularly known as BPO or call centres), record keeping,

Box 3.2: Global Footprint!

Owing to globalisation, you might find many Indian companies have expanded their wings to many other countries. For example, ONGC Videsh, a subsidiary of the Indian public sector enterprise, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation engaged in oil and gas exploration and production has projects in 16 countries. Tata Steel, a private company established in 1907, is one of the top ten global steel companies in the world which have operations in 26 countries and sell its products in 50 countries. It employs nearly 50,000 persons in other countries. HCL Technologies, one of the top five IT companies in India has offices in 31 countries and employs about 15,000 persons abroad. Dr Reddy's Laboratories, initially was a small company supplying pharmaceutical goods to big Indian companies, today has manufacturing plants and research centres across the world.

Source: *www.rediff.com accessed on 14.10.2014.*

accountancy, banking services, music recording, film editing, book transcription, clinical advice or even teaching are being outsourced by companies in developed countries to India. With the help of modern telecommunication links including the Internet, the text, voice and visual data in respect of these services is digitised and transmitted in real time over continents and national boundaries. Most multinational corporations, and even small companies, are outsourcing their services to India where they can be availed at a cheaper cost with reasonable degree of skill and accuracy. The low wage rates and availability of skilled manpower in India have made it a destination for global outsourcing in the post-reform period.

World Trade Organisation (WTO): The WTO was founded in 1995 as the successor organisation to the General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT). GATT was established in 1948 with 23 countries as the global trade organisation to administer all **multilateral trade agreements** by providing equal opportunities to all countries in the international market for trading purposes. WTO is expected to establish a rule-based trading regime in which nations cannot place arbitrary restrictions on trade. In addition, its purpose is also to enlarge

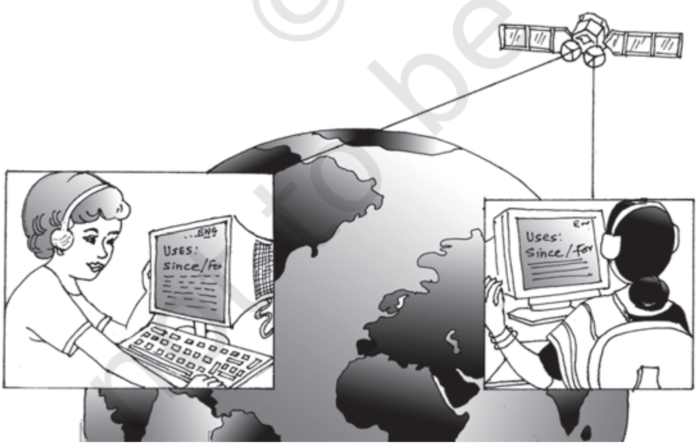

Fig. 3.1 *Outsourcing: a new employment opportunity in big cities*

Work These Out

- Many scholars argue that globalisation is a threat as it reduces the role of the government in many sectors. Some counter argue that it is an opportunity as it opens up markets to compete in and capture. Debate in the classroom.
- Prepare a chart consisting of a list of five companies that have BPO services in India, along with their turnover.
- Read this excerpt of a news item from a daily newspaper describing something that is now becoming increasingly common.

  "On a morning, a few minutes before 7 A.M., Greeshma sat in front of her computer with her headset on and said in accented English 'Hello, Daniella'. Seconds later, she gets the reply, 'Hello, Greeshma'. The two chatted excitedly before Greeshma said that 'we will work on pronouns today'. Nothing unusual about this chat except that Greeshma, 22, was in Kochi and her student Daniella, 13, was at her home in Malibu, California. Using a simulated whiteboard on their computers, connected by the Internet, and a copy of Daniella's textbook in front of Greeshma, she guides the teenager through the intricacies of nouns, adjectives and verbs. Greeshma, who grew up speaking Malayalam, was teaching Daniella English grammar, comprehension and writing."

  - ✓ How has this become possible? Why can't Daniella get lessons in her own country? Why is she getting English lessons from India, where English is not the mother tongue?
  - ✓ India is benefiting from liberalisation and integration of world markets. Do you agree?
- Is employment in call centres sustainable? What kinds of skills should people working in call centres acquire to get a regular income?
- If the multinational companies outsource many services to countries like India because of cheap manpower, what will happen to people living in the countries where the companies are located? Discuss.

production and trade of services, to ensure optimum utilisation of world resources and to protect the environment. The WTO agreements cover trade in goods as well as services to facilitate international trade (**bilateral** and multilateral) through removal of tariff as well as **non-tariff barriers** and providing greater market access to all member countries.

As an important member of WTO, India has been in the forefront of framing fair global rules, regulations and safeguards and advocating the interests of the developing world. India has kept its commitments towards liberalisation of trade, made in the WTO, by removing quantitative restrictions on imports and reducing tariff rates.

TABLE 3.1

Growth of GDP and Major Sectors (in %)

Sector	*1980-91*	*1992-2001*	*2002-07*	*2007-12*	*2012-13*	*2013-14*	*2014-15*
Agriculture	3.6	3.3	2.3	3.2	1.5	4.2	– 0.2*
Industry	7.1	6.5	9.4	7.4	3.6	5	7.0*
Services	6.7	8.2	7.8	10	8.1	7.8	9.8*
Total	**5.6**	**6.4**	**7.8**	**8.2**	**5.6**	**6.6**	**7.4**

Source: *Economic Survey for various years, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.*

Note: **Data pertaining to Gross Value Added (GVA). The GVA is estimated from GDP by adding subsidies on production and subtracting indirect taxes.*

Some scholars question the usefulness of India being a member of the WTO as a major volume of international trade occurs among the developed nations. They also say that while developed countries file complaints over agricultural subsidies given in their countries, developing countries feel cheated as they are forced to open their markets for developed countries but are not allowed access to the markets of developed countries. What do you think?

Fig. 3.2 *IT industry is seen as a major contributor to India's exports*

3.6 Indian Economy During Reforms: an Assessment

The reform process has completed three decades since its introduction. Let us now look at the performance of the Indian economy during this period. In economics, the growth of an economy is measured by the Gross Domestic Product. Look at Table 3.1. The post–1991 India witnessed a rapid growth in GDP on a continual basis for two decades. The growth of GDP increased from 5.6 per cent during 1980–91 to 8.2 per cent during 2007–12. During the reform period, the growth of agriculture has declined. While the industrial sector reported fluctuation, the growth of the service sector has gone up. This indicates that this growth is mainly driven by growth in the service sector. During 2012-15, there has been a setback in the growth rates of different sectors witnessed post–1991. While agriculture recorded a high growth rate during 2013–14, this sector witnessed negative growth in the subsequent year. While the service sector continued to witness a high level of growth — higher than the overall GDP growth in 2014–15, this sector witnessed the high growth rate of 9.8 per cent. The industrial sector witnessed a steep decline during 2012–13, in the subsequent years it began to show a continuous positive growth.

The opening of the economy has led to a rapid increase in foreign direct investment and foreign exchange reserves. The foreign investment, which includes **foreign direct investment (FDI)** and **foreign institutional investment (FII)**, has increased from about US $100 million in 1990-91 to US $ 30 billion in 2017-18. There has been an increase in the foreign exchange reserves from about US $ 6 billion in 1990-91 to about US $ 413 billion in 2018-19. India is one of the largest foreign exchange reserve holders in the world.

India is seen as a successful exporter of auto parts, engineering goods, IT software and textiles in the reform period. Rising prices have also been kept under control.

On the other hand, the reform process has been widely criticised for not being able to address some of the basic problems facing our economy especially in areas of employment, agriculture, industry, infrastructure development and fiscal management.

Work These Out

- In the previous chapter, you might have studied about subsidies in various sectors, including agriculture. Some scholars argue that subsidy in agriculture should be removed to make the sector internationally competitive. Do you agree? If so, how can it be done? Discuss in class.
- Read the following passage and discuss in class.

  Groundnut is a major oilseed crop in Andhra Pradesh. Mahadeva, who was a farmer in Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh, used to spend Rs. 10,000 for growing groundnut on his plot of half an acre. The cost included expenditure on raw material (seeds, fertilisers, etc.), labour, bullock power and machinery used. On an average, Mahadeva used to get two quintals of groundnut, and each quintal was sold for Rs. 7,000. Mahadeva, thus, was spending Rs. 10,000 and getting an income of Rs. 14,000. Anantpur district is a drought-prone area. As a result of economic reforms, the government did not undertake any major irrigation project. Recently, groundnut crop in Anantpur is facing problems due to crop disease. Research and extension work has gone down due to lower government expenditure. Mahadeva and his friends brought this matter repeatedly to the notice of the government officials entrusted with this responsibility, but failed. Subsidy was reduced on material (seeds, fertilisers) which increased Mahadeva's cost of cultivation. Moreover, the local markets were flooded with cheap imported edible oils, which was a result of removal of restriction on imports. Mahadeva was not able to sell his groundnut in the market as he was not getting the price to cover his cost.

  What could be done to farmers like Mahadeva from incurring losses? Discuss in the class.

Growth and Employment: Though the GDP growth rate has increased in the reform period, scholars point out that the reform-led growth has not generated sufficient employment opportunities in the country. You will study the link between different aspects of employment and growth in the next unit.

Reforms in Agriculture: Reforms have not been able to benefit agriculture, where the growth rate has been decelerating.

Public investment in agriculture sector especially in infrastructure, which includes irrigation, power, roads, market linkages and research and extension (which played a crucial role in the Green Revolution), has fallen in the reform period. Further, the partial removal of fertiliser subsidy has led to increase in the cost of production, which has severely affected the small and marginal farmers. This sector has been experiencing a number of policy changes such as reduction in import duties on agricultural products, low minimum support price and lifting of quantitative restrictions on the imports of agricultural products. These have adversely affected Indian farmers as they now have to face increased international competition.

Moreover, because of export-oriented policy strategies in agriculture, there has been a shift from production for the domestic market towards production for the export market focusing on cash crops in lieu of production of food grains. This puts pressure on prices of food grains.

Reforms in Industry: Industrial growth has also recorded a slowdown. This is because of decreasing demand of industrial products due to various reasons such as cheaper imports, inadequate investment in infrastructure etc. In a globalised world, developing countries are compelled to open up their economies to greater flow of goods and capital from developed countries and rendering their industries vulnerable to imported goods. Cheaper imports have, thus, replaced the demand for domestic goods. Domestic manufacturers are facing competition from imports. The infrastructure facilities, including power supply, have remained inadequate due to lack of investment. Globalisation is, thus, often seen as creating conditions for the free movement of goods and services from foreign countries that adversely affect the local industries and employment opportunities in developing countries.

Moreover, a developing country like India still does not have the access to developed countries' markets because of high non-tariff barriers. For example, although all quota restrictions on exports of textiles and clothing have been removed in India, USA has not removed their quota restriction on import of textiles from India and China.

Disinvestment: Every year, the government fixes a target for disinvestment of PSEs. For instance, in 1991-92, it was targeted to mobilise Rs 2500 crore through disinvestment.

The government was able to mobilise ₹ 3,040 crore more than the target. In 2017–18, the target was about ₹ 1,00,000 crore, whereas, the achievement was about ₹ 1,00,057 crore. Critics point out that the assets of PSEs have been undervalued and sold to the private sector. This means that there has been a substantial loss to the government. Moreover, the proceeds from disinvestment are used to offset the shortage of government revenues rather than using it for the development of PSEs and building social infrastructure in the country. Do you think selling a part of the properties of government companies is the best way to improve their efficiency?

Reforms and Fiscal Policies: Economic reforms have placed limits on the growth of public expenditure, especially in social sectors. The tax reductions in the reform period, aimed at yielding larger revenue and curb tax evasion, have not resulted in increase in tax revenue for the government. Also, the reform policies, involving tariff reduction, have curtailed the scope for raising revenue through custom duties. In order to attract foreign investment, tax incentives are provided to foreign investors which further reduced the scope for raising tax revenues. This has a negative impact on developmental and welfare expenditures.

3.7 Conclusion

The process of globalisation through liberalisation and privatisation policies has produced positive, as well as, negative results both for India and other countries. Some scholars argue that globalisation should be seen as an opportunity in terms of greater access to global markets, high technology and increased possibility of large industries of developing countries to become important players in the international arena.

Box 3.3: Siricilla Tragedy!

Power sector reforms in many Indian states led to do away with the supply of electricity at subsidised rates and steep rise in power tariff. This has affected workers engaged in small industries. Powerloom textile industry in Andhra Pradesh is an example. Since the wages of the powerloom workers are linked to the production of cloth, power cut means cut in wages of weavers, who were already suffering from hike in tariff. A few years ago, this led to a crisis in the livelihood of the weavers and 50 powerloom workers committed suicide in a small town called 'Siricilla' in Andhra Pradesh.

- Do you think the power tariff should not be raised?
- What would be your suggestions to revive small industries affected by reforms?

On the contrary, the critics argue that globalisation is a strategy of the developed countries to expand their markets in other countries. According to them, it has compromised the welfare and identity of people belonging to poor countries. It has further been pointed out that market-driven globalisation has widened the economic disparities among nations and people.

Viewed from the Indian context, some studies have stated that the crisis that erupted in the early 1990s was basically an outcome of the deep-rooted inequalities in Indian society and the economic reform policies initiated as a response to the crisis by the government, with externally advised policy package, further aggravated the inequalities. Further, it has increased the income and quality of consumption of only high-income groups and the growth has been concentrated only in some select areas in the services sector such as telecommunication, information technology, finance, entertainment, travel and hospitality services, real estate and trade, rather than vital sectors such as agriculture and industry which provide livelihoods to millions of people in the country.

Recap

- The economy was facing problems of declining foreign exchange, growing imports without matching rise in exports and high inflation. India changed its economic policies in 1991 due to a financial crisis and pressure from international organisations like the World Bank and IMF.
- In the domestic economy, major reforms were undertaken in the industrial and financial sectors. Major external sector reforms included foreign exchange deregulations and import liberalisation.
- With a view to improving the performance of the public sector, there was a consensus on reducing its role and opening it up to the private sector. This was done through disinvestment and liberalisation measures.
- Globalisation is the outcome of the policies of liberalisation and privatisation. It means an integration of the economy of the country with the world economy.
- Outsourcing is an emerging business activity.
- The objective of the WTO is to establish a rule based trade regime to ensure optimum utilisation of world resources.
- During the reforms, growth of agriculture and industry has gone down but the service sector has registered growth.
- Reforms have not benefited the agriculture sector. There has also been a decline in public investment in this sector.
- Industrial sector growth has slowed down due to availability of cheaper imports and lower investment.

EXERCISES

1. Why were reforms introduced in India?
2. Why is it necessary to became a member of WTO?
3. Why did RBI have to change its role from controller to facilitator of financial sector in India?
4. How is RBI controlling the commercial banks?
5. What do you understand by devaluation of rupee?
6. Distinguish between the following
   (i) Strategic and Minority sale
   (ii) Bilateral and Multi-lateral trade
   (iii) Tariff and Non-tariff barriers.
7. Why are tariffs imposed?
8. What is the meaning of quantitative restrictions?
9. Those public sector undertakings which are making profits should be privatised. Do you agree with this view? Why?
10. Do you think outsourcing is good for India? Why are developed countries opposing it?
11. India has certain advantages which makes it a favourite outsourcing destination. What are these advantages?
12. Do you think the *navaratna* policy of the government helps in improving the performance of public sector undertakings in India? How?
13. What are the major factors responsible for the high growth of the service sector?
14. Agriculture sector appears to be adversely affected by the reform process. Why?
15. Why has the industrial sector performed poorly in the reform period?
16. Discuss economic reforms in India in the light of social justice and welfare.

SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. The table given below shows the GDP growth rate at 2004-05 prices. You have studied about the techniques of presentation of data in your *Statistics for Economics* course. Draw a time series line graph based on the data given in the table and interpret the same.

Year	*GDP Growth Rate (%)*
2005-06	9.5
2006-07	9.6
2007-08	9.3
2008-09	6.7
2009-10	8.6
2010-11	8.9
2011-12	6.7
2012-13	5.4
2013-14	6.4
2014-15	7.4

2. Observe around you — you will find State Electricity Boards (SEBs), BSES and many public and private organisations supplying electricity in different states and union territories. There are private buses on roads alongside the goverment bus services and so on.
   - (i) What do you think about this dual system of the co-existence of public and private sectors?
   - (ii) What are the merits and demerits of such a dual system? Discuss.

3. With the help of your parents and grandparents prepare a list of multinational companies that existed in India at the time of independence. Now put a (✓) mark against those which are still growing and a (✗) against those which do not exist any more. Are there any companies whose names have changed? Find out the new names, the country of origin, nature of product, logo and prepare charts and display in your class.

4. Give appropriate examples for the following:

Nature of Product	*Name of a Foreign Company*
Biscuits	
Shoes	
Computers	
Cars	
TV and Refrigerators	
Stationery	

Now, find out if these companies which are mentioned above existed in India before 1991, or came after the New Economic Policy. For this, take the help of your teacher, parents, grandparents and shopkeepers.

5. Collect a few relevant newspaper cuttings on meetings organised by WTO. Discuss the issues debated in these meetings, and find out how WTO facilitates world trade.

6. Was it necessary for India to introduce economic reforms at the behest of World Bank and International Monetary Fund? Was there no alternative for the government to solve the balance of payments crisis? Discuss in the classroom.

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