

Terrorism in  
the Reference of  
Regional Disparities  
and Under  
Development

Santwana Pandey

Department of  
Political Science,  
Babasaheb Bhimrao  
Ambedkar  
University,  
Lucknow-226025

[www.shodh.net](http://www.shodh.net)

# Terrorism in the Reference of Regional Disparities and Under Development

**Key words:-** Terorism, Under Development, Regional Disparities

*This paper attempts to re-examine the issue of differences in economic growth by focusing on the differences in the steady state of the entire major states of India since independence by employing dynamic fixed effects panel growth regression. The crucial question that arises here is that all spheres of life have been subjected to both the positive and negative elements of global development, still the distribution of resources is not equal in all the fields. While everyone welcomes the new opportunities that has emerged one cannot simply leave those negative elements unattended. This only negative feeling of dissatisfaction guides the common man to destructive features of the society which we call terrorism or naxalism or so on.*

There are many potential causes of terrorism. In Mar 2005, the International Summit on Democracy, Terrorism, and Security looked at five possible roots or underlying causes: psychology, political, economic, religion, and culture<sup>1</sup>. While each of these is a potential cause, many analysts debate about the economic factor: some define it as a direct cause, while others list it as an indirect cause. During his annual statement at the United Nations General Assembly in 2004, President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa argued that while the rich believed that terrorism was the principle threat and challenge to humanity, for the majority of people on the planet poverty and underdevelopment are the real major threats. Similarly, at the recent annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund, the President of the World Bank argued that even though we have to deal with immediate threats, we must not lose sight of the long-term security issue that confronts us all. The greatest potential source of instability on our planet today is poverty and the hopelessness and despair that it brings to so many in our world.

Balance economic growth has been one of the prime objectives of the planning. In this regard, successive reduction in regional disparities has been adopted as an appropriate strategy for development. There are significant inter-regional disparities in respect of development indicators among various regions of the country. Ten years have passed since the Asian economic crisis exposed the dark side of the India's various regions growing interdependence. Since then, India's economy and wellbeing have only become more interconnected, and regional leaders have embarked on a drive to build up a framework for greater regional cooperation and integration under the rubric of an East Asia community. This is not an entirely new movement. There have been a series of halting efforts to construct some sort of regional community

since the 1960s. However, there has been a palpable feeling that these efforts have been infused with a greater sense of purpose over the last decade. The result has been the emergence of a complex set of overlapping multilateral forums and mechanisms in the region, complemented by a growing web of bilateral economic agreements. While many of these arrangements are still nonbinding and fragile, they present a historic opportunity to reshape all the regions to better deal with the increasingly complex realities of an interconnected world and, hopefully, propel it toward a future in which war might be as unthinkable as it is today in Europe. In a sense, East Asia community building is now at a historic crossroads, where it can be further advanced and deepened or where it can succumb to the many disparities and emerging rivalries that characterize this rapidly changing region.

**Indian Profile:-**

India's attempt to tackle the problems of income inequalities has been going on since independence under the centralized planning system. It, however, failed to provide the necessary growth impetus to the poorer states to reduce regional disparities in any meaningful manner in spite of four decades of economic planning. In the post globalization era, considering the size and diversity of the country, shrinking role of government would ultimately be a failure to achieve the set objective. With the opening of economy, states with better infrastructure facilities, better skill labour and work culture, investor friendly environment and more importantly states which can reform themselves in accordance to the need of the market oriented economy have attracted much of the private investment-both national as well as foreign. These states have grown much faster than other states which are not, leading to widening disparities.<sup>2</sup> This has posed a great challenge to academicians and policy makers, to think about those who are really in suffering conditions and struggling for their survival.

To what extent the high growth rate achieved so far has been translated into development for the well-being of its people? It is all the more necessary to ascertain the magnitude of development because development shouldn't be seen as mere enhancement of national or personal income as it alone cannot serve the objective of securing the socio-economic equality. High growth rate achieved so far is a big accomplishment as the resources so generated could be utilized for developmental purposes to meet the desired social ends.<sup>3</sup> It would, however, be highly injustice and misleading to interpret economic growth and economic development synonymously, yet a popular cynicism among the political circle in particular, as development covers much wider range and value. In short, achievement of higher growth rate should be reflected in terms of quality of life of the people.

The failure to realize the value of high growth is the main reason for the rejection of 'shining India/feel good factor' slogan of the ruling party in 2004 general election. This implies that the higher growth rate achieved so far in the post globalization period could not be translated in terms of improvement in the quality of life of the common people. According to Sen any reform programme should consists of three R's-reach, range and a reason-which every responsible individual should analyze, understand and act accordingly. The values of high growth often depend on what the size, composition and nature of that growth

do to the lives and freedoms of the people involved.<sup>4</sup>

In many developing country cities, many jobs, including those for new migrants, are in the informal sector of the economy. Although informal employment is on the rise in many countries, rich and poor, we know relatively little about the productivity of this sector or the mobility of workers from informal employment to formal jobs.

#### **The Challenges:-**

Overall state of affairs in India is quite alarming as there are so many most neglected regions exist till today. The unattended issues and problems of the past are being accumulated, multi-layered and have become multifarious. Over and above, the mounting pressures of emerging challenges of rapid transformation need to be countered. The clock is ticking fast and situation in the regions is very delicate that is why it explodes many times as a result of dissatisfaction. At this juncture the old habit of alibis and hinting would only aggravate the maladies of the past and swell negative elements of the globalization. Instead, it is the time to think and act collectively.

All these underdeveloped regions have more issues to be addressed and challenges to face than any other parts of the country. Of which, the three most important areas which require immediate attention are insurgency, infrastructure and governance. All the other issues are derivatives which would dry up once these three are addressed.

#### **Insurgency:-**

The problem of insurgency in the underdeveloped regions has a long history. The insular politics and Delhi centric approach of the Indian government is at the core of much of the discontents, widespread criticism, feelings of subjugation and notion of being colonized. There is a constant fear in the minds of the people that their identity is being eroded due to the submergence into the vast ocean of Indian humanity.<sup>5</sup> The people of the regions started alienating themselves and the feeling of self-determination started to germinate. With the aim of preserving their own identity various ethnic groups inhabiting in the region, undisturbed for centuries, began to differentiate among each other severing the local ties and affinities and started to struggle with arms.<sup>6</sup> Thus, insurgency has mushroomed in the regions and the secessionist movements, either for sovereignty or for separate homeland, began to lock horns leading to a vertical division among various ethnic groups.

Therefore, prior to any policy programmed to resolve the problem of insurgency in the region, the political processes that has been framed and pursued to convert a breeding ground of insurgencies must be reversed first. Simultaneously, the attitude and security obsess mindsets of the central government should also change and embrace the regions with open arms so as to restore the lost confidence of the common people.

Insurgency is the major problem inflicting these regions. With the passage of time it has increasingly become more complex and difficult to understand as their objectives, role and activities varied widely.<sup>7</sup> In the name of nationalist movement they were involved and interfered in every state's affairs including household chores, like a moral police, of their people. Each insurgent group runs parallel government. In a way, apart from Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, all the remaining states have

multiple governments.

The problem of insurgency has become the stumbling block in the course of development. It foundered every development strategy and hampered all the developmental works. Kidnapping, extortion, killing, bandh, strikes and curfews have become the order of the day. At the same time, the number and activities of the plain criminals masquerading as insurgents have also increased alarmingly. Today, these regions have become the killing field and specialized in the export to death bodies, if not the manufacturing products. In short, the regions have reached the pinnacle of the industrialization of insurgency and criminalization process.

It would not be easy to find the solution. However, keeping in mind the rising global terrorism, it would be wise to work on a holistic approach for amicable solution sooner or later. At the same time, what every insurgent group, operating in the region, should realize that the formation of separate homeland or attainment of more autonomy or sovereignty is not the solution because within itself formation of new group with new demand can not be ruled out.

**Infrastructure:-**

The rich and natural human resources available in these regions could not be utilized to the full extent mainly due to the geo-political condition, including ever-deteriorating law and order, which has a lot of implication on the development of must needed infrastructure. The negligence of the central government in the past and due to the problems of insurgency at present resulted into the gross deficiency of infrastructure in the region. This has crippled the free flow of factors as well as products. In such a situation, it would be hard for the region to accrue the benefits of globalization.

The lack of infrastructure has not only spoiled the prospect of economic development but has also created a horizontal division among various ethnic groups affecting the fabrics of social harmony in the region. All the "constituent states of the region are internally locked-themselves locked and locking out others, unable to connect with each other physically in terms of poor transport links, and more seriously, unable to make connections intellectually and emotionally with their closest neighbors, or even with and among their own people."<sup>8</sup> It has displaced the common understanding and linkages for peaceful coexistence and regional cooperation.

In order to reconnect the lost connectivity, trade and commerce and more importantly to foster emotional attachment among various ethnic groups inhabiting in the region infrastructures like roads, transports, communications electricity, banking etc. must be developed adequately. Such exercise would not only enlarge the base for the growth of the economy in the region but also enhance the regional cooperation-an engine of growth in this era of globalization.

Underdevelopment breeds insurgency and insurgency retards development. These two are mutually reinforcing. This is a classic case of vicious cycle of underdevelopment-insurgency-underdevelopment. Therefore, any policy programmes either to resolve the problems of insurgency or development of much needed infrastructure should go concurrently and not sequentially as it hampered the progress of one another.

Under the critical circumstances mere allocation of funds or implementation of new policy would not suffice to tackle the problems of any particular region. Considering the emotional sentiments of the inhabitants and sensitivity of the issues, these regions must be handled with care. Every developmental programme should have the consent of the inhabitants and needs to be executed with sincerity without delay.

**Governance:-**

"The state is responsible for the creation of conducive political, legal and economic environment for building individual capabilities and encouraging private initiatives."<sup>9</sup> It would, however, depend on the quality of the governance-mechanism, processes, systems, structures and institutions that guide the social, economic and political relationship. Good governance exercises its legitimate political power in a manner that is perceived as equitable, non-discriminatory, socially sensitive, participatory, transparent and accountable to the people at large. This includes not only the process of transformation of human and natural endowments to a socially desired ends but also reveals the long term vision and commitment of the state to secure human well being and sustained development of the people.<sup>10</sup>

The state of governance in these regions is in pathetic condition. Government machinery is on the brink of collapse. Corruption, squandering of public funds, deteriorating law and order, lack of transparency and accountability, bureaucratic rigmarole, insensitivity and so forth are quite rampant in the region. There is widespread allegation of insurgency-government officials-bureaucrats-politician nexus, including law enforcing agencies, and siphon off public funds. All this has eroded the individual capabilities and institutional capacities to meet the social objectives.

Until and unless the quality of governance has been improved, no matter how much is the fund earmarked for whatever the policy programme initiated would not be successful and only the common people have to bear the brunt. Taking into consideration of the paradigm shift in the development strategy and the amount of funds allocated<sup>11</sup> in recent time, we may no longer be able to blame the central government in the near future. The present state of affairs in these regions is past deed of the central government and what the future generation will face would be decided by what our government has done today.

**Opportunities:-**

The economy of these regions has been disrupted by the forces discussed in the preceding section in spite of her rich natural resources. Besides the natural resources, many new opportunities have also emerged with the changing contour of world economy that can boost the economy of these regions. But, the need of the hour is to focus on those areas which would lead to growth of the economy, develop the sense of participation and can extinguish the social and political chasm. The two main areas that can boost the economy are as follows:

**Tourism:-**

Tourism is one sector where these regions have comparative advantage. This industry is highly competitive where the tourists have a wide range of choices and look for good value of their money. With bountiful nature's breathtaking scenic beauty, salubrious climatic conditions, extraordinarily diverse rich art and cultural heritage of

the people, these regions can become a hotspot for eco and adventure tourism.

Tourism industry involves a vast network of business activities relating to attracting, receiving, accommodating, managing and servicing of tourists. These include hotels, restaurants, transport agency and several other related activities. The development of this industry would promote national integration and international understanding, generate employment and revenue and provide prospective buyers for local manufactured products especially handloom and handicraft products-a dyeing industry due to lack of access to market.

Tourism can generate more employment per million of rupees spent than any other activities. It can generate jobs in the remotest corners for unskilled to highly specialized skilled workers which would help in the realization of plan objectives. It would also enlarge the base of locally manufactured products. All this, however, would be possible only when there is well-developed infrastructure like transport and communication and sense of participation of the people of these region.

**Border trade:-**

The lack of connectivity and access to market, the main causes for under utilization of resources and weak resource-industry linkages, have set the economy of the region by half a century behind. They have lost the markets in their neighborhood, particularly in Bangladesh, due to partition, insurgency and diplomatic strains and tensions.

Due to the peripheral location and stiff competition from mainland industries having better access to critical inputs like finance, technology and management, the base of traditional manufacturing in the regions has been eroded leading to deindustrialization. While resource base can support a variety of industries at all scales, the existing industrial structure, dominated by small-scale demand based industries has not been developed proportionately. This has widened the gap between resource base and industrial structure in the region. Further, due to the restriction of free movement of men and material across the border, the notion of isolation has developed in the minds of the people. It is in this context, there is a strong argument to develop border trade.

In this increasingly borderless world, establishment of border trade would not only provide an opportunity to revive the local manufactured units but also serve as a transit corridor for the mainland big industrial units to explore the vast Asian market. This would also bring the centrality and visibility of the otherwise peripheral north eastern region.<sup>12</sup> It is with this vision that 'look east policy' was initiated in 1991. Unfortunately, as old habits die hard, the central government still continues to live in the shadow of security obsessed mindset and prefers inward looking approach. As a result, even after fifteen years of implementation of border trade agreement, it has failed to invigorate the region's trade with their neighboring countries. As a result, India's look east policy has, by and large, bypassed the region.

The percentage of trade with neighboring countries have zoom up to 8 per cent of the country's total volume of trade in 2003-04 from a mere 1.7 per cent in 1987-88. However, over two-third of the total volume of trade with these countries flow via Bay of Bengal while the land borders of the region have been left for transit corridors for illegal trade . The tepidity of the central government in implementation of

the policy has only led to rise in the porosity of these borderlands. An impressionistic assessment reveals that there is a rise in negative activities like cross-border insurgency, gunrunning, smuggling drugs, narcotics and AIDS, money laundering, trafficking women, illegal immigration etc. which further add to the existing multifarious problems in the country.

**Conclusion:-**

Globalization of both terrorism and development has become the most potent force emerged in recent time. It virtually affects every walk of life--positive or negative. Unlike other regions of the Indian union, Jharkhand, Uttaranchal, Orissa, Chattisgarh, North East India, and so many other parts of Uttar Pradesh also are more likely to swamp by its negative effects. These areas are at the throes of discernible crisis. Since 1991, there has been an increase in inequality and unemployment, decline in the quality of the governance, rise in smuggling, trafficking, illegal immigration, corruption, squandering of public funds, escalation in insurgency related activities, etc. These have led to underdevelopment and erosion of the capacity of the individual and quality of life resulting dissatisfaction to the government policies, aggression and fight against them. A sense of deprivation has developed particularly among the educated youths of these areas. They are feeling their future to be in dark that is why very easily they get motivated to the disrupted activities. The clock is ticking fast and fuse is not long. It is time to work on a holistic approach to resolve problems in these important and most sensitive pockets of our country.

**Reference:-**

1. Ahluwalia, Montek S. (2000): "Economic Performance of States in Post-Reforms Period", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 35, no. 19, pp. 1637-1648.
2. Bhattacharya, B. B. & S. Sakthivel (2004): "Regional Growth and Disparity in India: A Comparison of Pre and Post-Reform Decades", <http://iegindia.org/worksakthi244.pdf>.
3. Ghosh, Madhusudan (2006): "Economic Growth and Human Development in Indian States", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 41, no. 30, pp. 3321-3329.
4. GOI (2001): "National Human Development Report", Planning Commission, New Delhi, <http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/nhdrep/nhdreportf.htm>
5. GOI (2002): "Report of the Committee on India Vision 2020", Planning Commission, New Delhi, [http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/pl\\_vsn2020.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/pl_vsn2020.pdf).
6. GOI (2004): "Report of the Twelfth Finance Commission (2005-10)", Ministry of Finance, <http://finance.rajasthan.gov.in/doc/12fceng.pdf>.
7. Humanshu (2007): "Recent Trends in Poverty and Inequality: Some Preliminary Results", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 42, no. 6, pp. 497-508.
8. Kurian, N. J. (2000): "Widening Regional Disparities in India: Some Indicators", Economic and Political weekly, vol. 35. No. 7, pp. 538-550.
9. NSSO (1997): Employment and Unemployment in India, 1993-94, 50th Round, Report No. 409.
10. NSSO (2006): Employment and Unemployment Situation in India, 2004-05, 61st Round, Report No. 515.

- 11.Ramachandran, H.: "Governance and People's Participation", 15 Background Paper: Vision 2020, <http://planningcommission.nic.in/reports/genrep/reportsf.htm>.
- 12.Sen, Amartya (2005): "The Three R's of Reforms", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 40, no. 19, pp. 1971-1974.
- 13.Sinha, Aseema: "Globalization, Rising Inequality, and New Insecurities in India", <http://209.235.207.197/imgtest/TaskForceDiffIneqDevSinha.pdf>