



FOREST PARTICIPATION IN RURAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT:-

Forest sector is important, as it is the second largest land use after agriculture; it is a source of goods & services used by society. In remote forest fringe villages about 300 millions Tribal & other local people depend on the forest for their subsistence & livelihood & about 70% of India's rural population depends on fuel wood to meet its domestic energy needs. For about of them, forests are main source of livelihood & cash income from fuel wood, non-timber forests or construction material. More than half of India's 70% tribal people, the most disadvantage section of society, subsist from forests. Forest protect important catchments for water, conserve soil, ameliorate, climate & combat against global warming & desertification. It provides services a wildlife refuge, water shed protection, prevention of soil & water-runoff & ground water recharge. Both wood & non-wood products are important so are environmental services of flora & fauna.

Key words :-

Forest sector, Tribal Community, Rural Culture, Rural economy, Development,

INTRODUCTION:-

The lot of the rural poor as compare to that of the urban dwellers is perhaps more serve, more pernicious and more hopeless, the roots of the problem of rural poverty are, in general, population growth and raising expectation it is almost impossible to maintain desired level of production from available land therefore, augment agricultural production and to create industries forest land has been cleared. This is more so in the thickly populated regions where the rural poor live. The tribal communities in INDIA largely occupy the forested regions, they live away from the main stream of life but in harmony with nature with the large scale indiscriminate felling of the trees and the resultant de-





forestation, the tribal in particular, and the rural poor in general have been badly hit, this has often led to soil erosion and environmental degradation further loss of forest cover would create ecological insecurity and increase poverty.

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH FOREST:-

Forest's play a vital role in rural economy for nearly three quarter of the population of developing countries. Wood is the staple energy source .In many areas ,particularly where majority of population is landless, forest and trees are among the few resources that are available rural dwellers they provide three kind of benefits: Jobs and income often needed to supplement in adequate returns from agriculture produce such as fuel wood, food, fodder and building poles for the homes and less directly but just as importantly a range of environmental benefits, without which other activity, such as agriculture might be impossible

Forest contributes 1.7% of GDP of the country, however, this figure does not take into account its numerous nonmarket and external benefits and the vast amount of fuel wood and fodder and other forest product collected legally and illegally. one estimate shows that total annual removals from the forest is worth about Rs.30000 cores which includes about 270 million tons of fuel wood, 280 millions tone of fodder and over 12 million cubic meter of timber and countless non-timber forest products. This does not include value of environmental services provided by the forest.

PRESENT SCENARIO IN INDIA:-

Land area of India totals 328.7million hector of which 142.5million is under agriculture it is 43.3% total land area, forest covers 76.5 million hector 23.27% Of the total land area according to the state of forest report, published by forest survey of India in 1997, the actual





forest cover is 63,34 million hector 19.27% of the country's area of which 26.13 million hector are degraded.

In term of per capita forest area, India ranks among the lowest in the world he per-capita forest area of 0.16 hector in 1961 has been reduced to 0.08 hector in 2000.

FOREST MANAGEMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:-

Traditionally, forest management practices aimed at the developing and understanding the protective and productive aspects of natural forest. Biological, technical and microeconomic consideration received overriding priority in the process, peoples role safe guarding the resources and their active participation where relegated to a secondary place, only recently the social role of forest and forestry together with their protection and production roles have received attention.

SOCIAL FORESTRY:-

The national commission on agriculture,1976 stressed the socio economic importance of social forestry in the rural community as well as in the management of forest resources. This primarily aimed at providing goods and services to the rural poor.

In the contest of INDIA, social forestry was conceived as the science and arts of growing trees or other vegetation on all land available for the purpose in and outside traditional forest areas and managing the existing forest within intimate involvement of the people and more or less integrated with their operations, resulting in the balanced and complementary land used with a viewed to provide a wide range of goods and services to the individuals as well as to the society.

The social forestry program was designed to cover all segment of society rural and urban for an overall development of the nation. The main objectives development of rural economy were

- To provide fodder firewood and small timber:





- To provide timber for sustaining and creating village level cottage industries based on wood:
- To improve socio-economic level of the village through increased the avenues for gainful employment:
- To optimize the use of agricultural land through agro-forestry practices and to increase the formers income level and
- To improve the income from marginal agricultural land through tree plantation.

It aimed at growing trees in groups, strips, in lines or singly over vacant lands near habitation which were otherwise not utilize. The economic benefit to the landless poor people came through employment. Beyond this the community participation was not very significant.

Let us critically examine what kind of significant contribution it is bringing to the millions of rural people of India. it is a fact that the rural population depends mainly on fuel wood for cooking & eating in the rural areas more than 75% of total energy is derive from biological produce, including cow dung . Due to shortage of fuel wood, cow dung is being used increasingly. A time may come when there may be food to eat but no fuel wood to cook it .

AGRICULTURE SECTOR AND FOREST:-

The agricultural sector depends almost entirely on live stock for the energy needed for various farm operations .The economics of maintaining cattle ,sheep and goats is largely dependant on forest as a source of fodder be its grass, leaf or fruit fodder. The village community also requires timbers for making





various types of ploughs and agricultural implements and for the construction of houses apart from this, bamboo is used for various other purposes. Animal husbandry and dairy development programs are also related to the availability of grass, fodder, leaves and so on.

Tribal life is connected in one way or the other, with forests ,right from birth to death .Their folklore ,rights and rituals revolve around the forest ,In times of distress the forest is the last resort for them even in areas where forests do not exists tribal continue to periodically visits the distant forest to procure traditional requirements. Apart from this some financial benefits accrue to them from the collection and sale of non-timber forest product. Forests are their economic resource and occupy the central position in the tribal economy. Tribal life is profoundly affected by whatever happens to the forests.

For several tribal groups living in or near forest, about 30% of their diet is derived from forest sources i.e. wild vegetables, tuber, fruits, nuts, bamboo shoots, small animals. Medicinal plants are important in the primary health care system. The indigenous people have developed interesting, and often sophisticated knowledge system of ethno–medicine and used of a vast variety of plants for medicinal purpose.

Forests offers scope of the development of village industry also many trees provide the source of raw material for cottage industries such as tsar and silk production, rearing mulch cattle, petal(leaf plate)making, basket weaving, oil, paper making and others.

CONCLUSION :-

Sustainable forest management is key to the sustainable rural development. There has to be a harmonious balance between conservation of forests & development of communities through livelihood security. Forest is no more a technical subject dealing with trees only. It





is socio-technical & now synthesis of wide ranging & diverse subject. Silvicultural practices & forest management has to be integrated with subject like sociology, Anthropology, economics, law, environmental science, remote sensing, business administration, tribal art, park of wild life management, plant & animal genetics & such other subjects as we are dealing with whole complex ecosystems, which is trying to address the poverty of this country. The holistic view is but essential a sustainable alliance has to be forged among government organization, non-government organization & local level organization. There has to be an effective partnership among all the stake holders for capacity building, monitoring an evolution of forest management to achieve the ultimate goal of planning & development i.e, self reliance and Gandhiji's 'gram swaraj' may be a reality management .

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