



Indian Institute of Public Administration

Bihar Regional Branch, Patna

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Chairman

Shri Vijoy Prakash, IAS (rtd.)

Hony. Secretary

Prof R. K. Verma

Proposal of Eastern Zonal Conference of IIPA on

Viksit Bharat @2047: Concerns of Eastern India

Organised by IIPA, Bihar Regional Branch, Patna to be held on 22nd January, 2025

Theme Note

Introduction

Geographically, the Eastern India comprise of four states namely, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand and fall within 81⁰E and 89⁰E longitude and 27⁰N latitude and 17.8⁰N. The region is very rich in natural resources like minerals, water, land and has abundance of human resources. Most of the reserve of precious minerals (like fuel, metallic and non-metallic ores, mica, uranium etc.) of India are concentrated in this region. It is said that the water resources in the region was compared equal to water system of Nile valley, the richest water system in the world. This region is also rich in culture and cultural diversities. In short, the region has sufficient potential of all round development of India. Unless the eastern region develops properly, it will be difficult to achieve the goal of *Viksit Bharat@2047*.



Map of Eastern Indian States



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The irony is that this region falls in the category of backward region as compared to Indian average in almost all parameters of development like economic growth, social development (education and health) etc.

Eastern India: State of Economy

The economy of the region is in discouraging situation. It will be evident from the following facts. So far GDP is concerned, the GDP of the region remained stagnant at 17% as compared to that of India from 2011-12 to 2022-23 whereas in value terms it has gone up to US \$ 579 billion from merely US \$185 billion in the said period. If the eastern region grows at an annual rate of 9%, it could achieve an output of around US \$ 5 trillion by 2047. The states in region have lower rank (as per figures in 2022-23) in per capita NSDP e.g. Bihar placed at 33rd, Jharkhand at 31st, Odisha at 23rd and West Bengal at 24th place among 33 states and UTs. The per capita income of these states is also lower in comparison to Indian average and other states. In the year 2024 the per capita income in Bihar is around Rs. 60.34 thousand, in Jharkhand Rs. 105 thousand, in Odisha Rs.163 thousand and in West Bengal Rs. 154 thousand as compared to Rs. 184 thousand of Indian average. Though, agriculture is the mainstay of economy of the region, but the high reliance of people on unprofitable agricultural production hinder them to lead the quality life. The region also faces underdevelopment in industrial sector, especially Bihar. The states in the region do also find lower place in terms of gross value added manufacturing. Incidence of poverty in these state is also discouraging say 33.7 percent in Bihar, 28.81 percent in Jharkhand, 15.7 percent in Odisha and 11.9 percent in West Bengal whereas Indian average is 14.8 percent. It is true that historical neglect and poor infrastructure have prevented a robust industrial base, limiting formal jobs and economic diversification in the region.

Eastern India: Labour Force

We have mentioned above that the region has abundance of human resources but there is abject unemployment among youth. The high incidence of labour migration from this region to other parts of the country has also been a severe problem. Covid-19 pandemic has exposed their miseries. The labour resources should be looked into two terms – first, labour force participation rate (LFPR) and second, quality of labour force. It has been found that in the year 2022-23, LFPR in the region was lower than rest of India which amounted to 60 percent (except that of Bihar 50.9 percent). Further, as regards the



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quality of the labour force, the report of Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS)¹ conducted during July 2022-June 2023 reveals that these states have over 83 per cent of the workforce in the “semi-skilled” category, which further indicates that the labour force predominantly in the states possesses a low share of intermediate and high skills, which could have deprived productivity and labour mobilization in the eastern region.

Agriculture & Water Resources

So far agriculture and water resources are concerned, productivity, diversity in staple food, tillage practices and use of improved inputs in agriculture in the region is also discouraging. It is high time to follow the call of our Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi to shift from traditional farming of staple crops to farming of millet crops which will be of great help to reduce input expenses and meeting the nutritional requirements, especially in eastern region. Further, the region lacks sustainable water management and conservation of traditional water bodies as compared to the southern states and other parts of country. A Study finds that the number of traditional water bodies is very high in the eastern region but its irrigation potential is very low in comparison to southern states. The conservation of traditional water bodies can be beneficial in achieving sustainable water resources as these bodies recharge the underground water. Besides, these can conserve the surplus river water during rains.

Social Progress

Let us have a look on the status of social development in the region. The four states of this region are placed among worst ten states in the country in terms of social development. The Social Progress Index² (SPI) 2023 reveals that no state from the eastern region is among the high tiers of social progress, i.e., Tier 1 and Tier 2. Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Odisha rank slightly higher in tiers 4 and 5 of social progress, i.e. lower middle and low social progress. Bihar and Jharkhand rank the lowest among all states and UTs in India. They are in Tier 6 of social progress, i.e., very low performance. Further the

¹ The survey is conducted annually by Ministry of Statistics and Programme implementation, Government of India, New Delhi.

² Parameters of social progress index include availability of basic human needs (shelter, safety, nutrition, water, sanitation, health, wellness etc.), foundations of wellbeing (access to knowledge, information and communication, quality environment etc.) and opportunities (in personal freedom and rights, inclusiveness, advanced education etc.)



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report shows that the performance of among Aspirational Districts³, most of the districts of Bihar and Jharkhand are in the bottom 20 districts across the country.

Concerns of Tribal Population

The region has sizeable tribal (Scheduled tribes) population as compared to Indian average. India has merely 8% tribal population whereas Jharkhand has over 26%, Odisha 23%, West Bengal 6% and Bihar has 1%. Although the tribal population is concentrated in Jharkhand and Odisha, yet its impact on development scenario of these states cannot be denied. Tribal population represents a heterogeneous group scattered in different regions, each tribe has its own characteristics in terms of language, cultural practices, socio-economic status and pattern of livelihood. Besides having low parameters in economic, educational and health status, these tribes face varied problems like a) forced migration, exploitation, displacement etc. , b) debt traps and poverty and c) hard occupational pattern telling upon their natural livelihood and so on. If they are properly developed and brought in mainstream, development of the region can be assured.

Rationale of the Conference

As result, the region's persistent poverty traps large populations in cycles of low education and limited economic opportunities. It is evident from NITI Aayog SDG India Index 2023-24 that finds that Bihar scored 57 points, the lowest, followed by Jharkhand with 62, indicating poor performance. Bridging these gaps is essential for enabling these states of the regions to contribute more productively to India's goal of becoming a developed economy by 2047. This disparity underscores the urgency for policy changes to align the region's growth trajectory with national aspirations. Creation of appropriate infrastructure and adequate investment in industrial and other sectors. But it raises striking questions – despite rich natural resources and abundance of human resources, what is wrong with the region? What ails the governance that makes it unable to harness the resources up to optimum level? Is civil society of the region reluctant to development efforts? Why there is disparity in development parameters within the region? What are the bottlenecks in the pace of development in different states of eastern region?

³ Aspirational districts are those 707 districts of India which were studied in terms of performance in the various indicators of social progress.



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In view of the above concerns, the Indian Institute of Public Administration, Bihar Regional Branch, Patna proposes to organise the EASTERN ZONAL CONFERENCE of IIPA on 22nd January, 2025 on the following concerns of governance:

1. Role of bureaucracy (Civil Servants) in the policy formulation and implementation
2. Improvements in governance in regard to achieving the SDGs
3. Participation of PRIs, ULBs and civil society in the development process
4. Issues of Equity and Inclusion, especially SCs, STs, Women and other vulnerable groups
5. Scenario in Bihar

Target Group and Participants

The target group of the conference will be members of IIPA, policy framers, bureaucrats and academicians. The participants will be from all regional and local branches of IIPA falling in the eastern region, such as regional branches of West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand and local branches of Burdwan, Howrah, Cuttack, Jamshedpur, Muzaffarpur and Patliputra.

Proposed Schedule:

Date	Time	Programme/ Session	Remarks
22-01-2024	09.30 am	Inaugural Session	
	10.30 am	Presentation by Regional Branches	
	01.30 pm	Lunch break	
	02.00 pm	Presentation by local branches	
	05.00 pm	Summing up and Valedictory Address	
	05.30 pm	Vote of Thanks	
	05.40 am	High tea	