

# **National Symposium on Development, Democracy and Governance**

**Jointly Organized by**

**Centre for CODP/ SSW, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai**

**And**

**Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata**

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In the wake of globalisation and globalisation-induced development the relation between governance and democracy has become critical more than ever. The development discourse and governing mechanism that has been shaped by a variety of socio-economic and political shifts in the last two decades has, on the one hand, accentuated vulnerabilities and exclusion for large section of people; and on the other hand, made the processes of participation and claim-making more decentralised. Some of the legislative and governmental measures for acceleration of development of a particular kind and impeding development of another kind reflect the juridical-political norms of governance. The evolving norms of present day governance have been influenced through policy explosion, particularly in the last one and half decades. Concomitantly, the governance structure, systems and institutional arrangements have also been altered to adjust and respond to the changing realities. One realises the symptoms of various impacts of these changes on the style and content of governance. For instance, the ascendancy of the executive is overwhelming; the executive now represents detailed governmental management of poverty, capital formation, urban growth and rural development, and development of infrastructure, social justice, communal relations, and the gigantic and elaborate process of electoral democracy. However, alongside this ascendancy of executive on management of government programmes and projects, the delegation of hands-on tasks and responsibilities to non-government institutions are visible more than ever before. Governments are outsourcing practically every aspect of governance. The impact of changes brought through neo-liberal policies and carried forward by changed governing processes and structures is most apparent through the growing hiatus between the affluent few and underprivileged majority. This paradigm of inequality gets manifested in multi-faceted way. The contemporary development process across the world and in India is increasingly benefiting only some sections of the society, leading to deprivation and marginalization of various communities.

In order to investigate the changing contours of governance in the developmental democracy, one has to analyse the so called 'second transition' in the democratic regime. Whereas the first transition of democracy in India is traced from its origin in a colonial polity to the first phase of its independent life after the promulgation of the Indian Constitution in 1950, the second transition is to be understood in the context of globalisation induced economic regime. This has substantively impacted the course of development and altered the norms and procedure of governance. The process of transition from welfare orientation of government to a developmental regime, instituted by a pronounced market-friendly state, needs to be examined and deliberated upon. In this phase of second transition, legitimacy has been sought and attained through the use of newer mechanism of 'scientific governance'. Role of e-governance, electronic media, use of biometrics for UID and GPS maps, etc

have had impacted the paradigm of governance by bringing the element of 'scientific', 'objective' and 'indispensability' in governing processes.

It is exceedingly significant to examine and understand what is happening with people in this period of transition within the dominant paradigm of development and governance. How are people coping?, How are they reacting and responding to the situations that have direct bearings upon them? How have they been emerging as political subjects? At one level the political subject is the citizen-militant fighting at the barricades, raising manifestos, assembling crowds, organising parties, writing and speaking on behalf of collectives. At another level, the political subject is less of a citizen because s/he has either opted out, or s/he has not been taken in as a legitimate member of the political society. The act of formation/creation of political subject is to be acknowledged in the sense of mass politics. Democratic governance also means governing a democracy, in particular governing the tensions, claims and collective claim-makings that developmental processes and a developmental regime provoke in a democracy. The dynamics of claim making and assertion by political subjects make the process of governance all the more complex and challenging. In this process, appropriation of subjects is done quite often by democratic regime. Aiding and abetting vigilante groups, pitching one community against another, etc. are the strategies of governance that is based on appropriation of subjects.

In the backdrop of some of the issues and concerns mentioned above, Tata Institute of Social Sciences and Calcutta Research Group are jointly organising a national symposium on 'Development, Democracy and Governance' to deliberate on the developmental experiences and governance processes in a democratic regime. Based on the research experiences of both the institutes, it would bring forth experiences of governing and responding developmental needs expressed by different segments of society. Investigation of policy formulations; analysis of reports of commissions and committees; role, responsibility and accountability of people in grass-roots governance, exceptionality in governance structure of new economic and corporate zones, etc. would be examined and analysed during the symposium. The variations in governing the rich and poor, organised and unorganised, minority and majority, excluded and included, natives and migrant and rural and urban, etc. would be explored during the symposium deliberations. Besides, the dialogue in the symposium would also lead to identifying future research and advocacy agenda around which work would be initiated by both the institutes, either independently or collaboratively.

The broad theme of the symposium would be deliberated upon under four sub-themes. The sub-themes for the symposium are as follows:

- (1) The Juridical-Political Route to Norms of Governance
- (2) Paradigms of inequality, pathways to entitlement
- (3) Second transition: Sources of legitimacy and 'Scientific Governance'
- (4) Governance and the Production of Appropriate Subjects