

Cultural Heritage and Indian Economy

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ABSTRACT

Cultural Heritage, classic and contemporary, contributes to the identity and branding of territory, so relevant in an age of globalization and fierce competition, as also the base for sustainable and endogenous development.

It constitutes an essential engine for economic development being the major measure of economic impact on heritage conservation entailing jobs for household income; center city revitalization; heritage tourism; property values and small business incubation. Central to building a sustainable local economy is import substitution, creating locally what otherwise would be purchased from elsewhere. Heritage conservation is locally based upon, using expertise, labor and materials available in the local market, but import substitution also requires efforts to train local workers.

India's diverse economy encompasses traditional village farming, modern agriculture, handicrafts, a wide range of modern industries and a multitude of services.

Services are the major source of economic growth, accounting for more than half of India's output with less than one third of its labor force.

We all know that India has a very rich cultural heritage. However, it is not known to many that India was a well developed country in terms of its economy and business. Excavations, written records, literature and above all, India's immense wealth had attracted several foreigners to attack India that bear testimony to the fact. The Indian civilization was not only agriculture

based but there was also flourishing trade and commerce both inside and outside the country. It had contributed immensely to the world of business in different fields. Indian business was unique, innovative, dynamic and qualitatively superior to many other countries at that time.

Keywords: - *Cultural Heritage, Classic Heritage, Contemporary Heritage, Labor Force, Economic Impact, Heritage Tourism, Traditional village farming, Modern agriculture, handicrafts Import substitution.*

Introduction

Cultural development is a historical process. Our ancestors learnt many things from their predecessors. With the passage of time they also added to it from their own experience and gave up those which they did not consider useful. We in turn have learnt many things from our ancestors. As time goes we continue to add new thoughts, new ideas to those already existent and sometimes we give up some which we don't consider useful any more. This is how culture is transmitted and carried forward from generation to next generation. The culture we inherit from our predecessors is called our cultural heritage. i.e. 'Old order changed yielding place to new', as observed by the learned poet Lord Alfred Tennyson of 18th Century.

This heritage exists at various levels. Humanity as a whole has inherited a culture which may be called human heritage. A nation also inherits a culture which may be termed as national cultural heritage. Cultural heritage includes all those aspects or values of culture transmitted to human beings by their ancestors from generation to generation. They are cherished, protected and maintained by them with unbroken continuity and they feel proud of it. A few examples would be helpful in clarifying the concept of heritage. The Taj Mahal, Jain caves at Khandagiri and Udayagiri, Bhubaneswar, Sun Temple Konarak, Jagannath Temple, Puri, Lingaraja Temple, Bhubaneswar, Red Fort of Agra, Delhi's Qutub Minar, Mysore Palace, Jain Temple of Dilwara (Rajasthan) Nizamuddin Aulia's Dargah, Golden Temple of Amritsar, Gurudwara Sisganj of Delhi, Sanchi Stupa, Christian Church in Goa, India Gate etc., are all important places of our heritage and are being protected by all means.

Besides the architectural creations, monuments, material artifacts, the intellectual achievements, philosophy, treasures of knowledge, scientific inventions and discoveries are also the part of heritage. In Indian context the contributions of Baudhayana, Aryabhata, Bhaskaracharya in the field of Mathematics, Astronomy and Astrology; Varahmihir in the field of Physics; Nagarjuna in the field of Chemistry, Susruta and Charak in the field of Medicines and Patanjali in the field of Yoga are profound treasures of Indian Cultural heritage. Culture is liable to change, but our heritage does not. We individuals, belonging to a culture or a particular group, may acquire or borrow certain cultural traits of other communities/cultures, but our belongingness to Indian cultural heritage will remain unchanged. Our Indian cultural heritage will bind us together e.g. Indian literature and scriptures namely Vedas, Upanishads Gita and

Yoga System etc. have contributed a lot by way of providing right knowledge, right action, behavior and practices as complementary to the development of civilization.

India is the only country with the largest and most diverse mixture of tradition and culture. The fascinating nation is so enticing where the exotic monuments and enchanting destinations speak volumes about the tradition and culture of Indian people. India is home to many of the finest cultural symbols of the world which includes temples, churches, mosques, forts, performing arts, classical dances, sculptures, paintings, architecture, literature etc., Some of the prestigious and spectacular World Heritage Sites in India are the Hampi, Khajuraho, caves of Ajanta and Ellora, Konark Sun Temple, Taj Mahal, and Brihadeswara Temple in Tanjore.

The culture of India is one of the oldest in the world which is rich and diverse. Culture is everything in a particular society and Indian culture is no easy composite of varying styles and influences. Indian culture was moulded throughout various eras of history. It is a medley of amazing diversities and startling contradictions, but above all, it represents the multifaceted aspects of India as a whole. India is the birthplace of renowned religions such as Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism, which have a strong prevalence and influence not only over India, but also the whole world. India has managed to preserve its culture and traditions through the ages, all the while absorbing customs, traditions and ideas from both invaders and immigrants. Many cultural practices, languages, customs and dances are examples of this comingling over centuries. Thus, Indian culture is a composite mixture of varying styles and influences. It would not be an exaggeration to note that all diverse in nature encompass to form the culture of India. Very few countries in the world have such an ancient and diverse culture as India.

India's cultural history of several thousand years shows that the subtle but strong thread of unity which runs through the infinite multiplicity of its life, was not woven by stress or pressure of power groups, but the vision of seers, the vigil of saints, the speculation of philosophers and the imagination of poets and artists, and that these are the only means which can be used to make this national unity wider, stronger, and more lasting.

Trade had become a very important mode that helped in the spread of Indian culture abroad. Even in very ancient times our ships could sail across the vast open seas and reach foreign shores to establish commercial ties with several countries. The literature, art and sculpture of the neighbouring countries clearly shows the influence of Indian culture and civilization. Even in places like Surinam and the Caribbean Islands that are as far as the American coast, there is evidence of ancient Indian culture. Samudra Gupta (AD 340-380) not only had a powerful army but also had a strong navy. Some inscriptions discovered in the Trans-Gangetic Peninsula and the Malaya Archipelago testifies to the activities of Indian navigators in the Gupta age. Hsuan-tsang, who visited India during the reign of Emperor Harsha (AD 606-647), has also written a

detailed description of India during those times. The Chola rulers had built a strong navy and conducted raids across the sea.

The Portuguese have noted that some merchants in India owned as many as fifty ships. According to them, it was a usual practice for the merchants to have their own ships. Certain objects belonging to the Indus Civilization found at various sites in the West prove that there were trade and cultural contacts with the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations in the third millennium BC. India also had contacts with ancient Persia, Greece and Rome which provided a great impetus to the exchange of cultural, religious and social ideas. This flourishing trade contact with the Roman Empire is confirmed by the Roman historian Pliny who deplored the drain of wealth from Rome to India.

Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.

Land Revenue Policy and Land Settlements

Since ancient times, the main source of livelihood for the people were agriculture. Hence, land tax had formed a principal source of revenue for all the emperors all over the world. In the 18th century, the main occupation of the Indian people were agriculture. During British rule, revenue from land kept on increasing, and the reasons for this were many. Earlier the British had come to trade with India. Gradually they wanted to conquer the vast territory of India for which they needed a lot of money. They also needed money for trade, projects of the company as well as for the cost of running the administration. The British carried out a number of land revenue experiments which caused hardship to cultivators. They extracted taxes from the farmers to finance their policies and war efforts. Direct and indirect means were carried out to bring about this collection of revenue for the British. This affected the lives of the people who could not meet their daily needs because they had to provide the landowners and the collectors their share in the produce. Local administration failed to provide relief and natural justice to the rural poor.

Economics Impact

The Industrial revolution has helped the English merchants accumulate a lot of capital from the countries of Asia, Africa and America. They now wanted to invest this wealth in setting up industries and trade with India. The mass production of goods through machines that we witness today was pioneered through the Industrial Revolution which occurred first in England during the late 18th and the early 19th century. This led to a massive increase in the output of finished products. The East India Company helped in financing and expanding their industrial base. During this time there was a class of manufacturers in England who benefited more from

manufacturing than trading. They were interested in having more raw materials from India as well as sending their finished goods back. Between 1793 and 1813, these British manufacturers launched a campaign against the company, its trade monopoly and the privileges it enjoyed. Ultimately, they succeeded in abolishing the East India Company's monopoly of Indian trade. With this India became an economic colony of Industrial England. Let us learn more about the economic impact on various cultural heritage.

Textile Industry and Trade Earlier,

Indian handloom had a big market in Europe. Indian textiles such as cotton, linen, silk and woolen goods already had markets in Asia and Africa. With the coming of industrialisation in England, the textile industry there made important headway. There was now a reverse of the direction of textile trade between Britain and India. There was a massive import of machine made clothes from English factories to Indian markets. This import of large amount of products manufactured by mechanical looms in England led to increase threat for the handicraft industries as the British goods were sold at a much cheaper price.

The British succeeded in selling their goods at a cheap price as foreign goods were given free entry in India without paying any duty. On the other hand, Indian handicrafts were taxed heavily when they were sent out of the country. Besides, under the pressure of its industrialists, British government often imposed a protective tariff on Indian textiles. Therefore, within a few years, India from being an exporter of clothes became an exporter of raw cotton and an importer of British clothes. This reversal made a huge impact on the Indian handloom weaving industry leading to its virtual collapse. It also created unemployment for a large community of weavers. Many of them migrated to rural areas to work on their lands as agricultural laborers. This in turn put increased pressure on the rural economy and livelihood. This process of uneven competition faced by the Indian handloom industry was later dubbed by the Indian nationalist leaders as de-industrialisation

Commercialisation of Agriculture

Another major economic impact of the British policies in India was the introduction of a large number of commercial crops such as tea, coffee, indigo, opium, cotton, jute, sugarcane and oilseed. Different kinds of commercial crops were introduced with different intentions. Indian opium was used to balance the trade of Chinese tea with Britain in the latter's favor. The market for opium was strictly controlled by British traders which did not leave much scope for Indian producers to reap profit. Indians were forced to produce indigo and sell it on the conditions dictated by the Britishers. Indigo was sent to England and used as a dyeing agent for cloth produced in British towns. Indigo was grown under a different system where all farmers were compelled to grow it on 3/20th part of their land. Unfortunately cultivation of Indigo left the land infertile for some years. This made the farmers reluctant to grow it. In the tea plantations

ownership changed hands quite often. The workers on these plantations worked under a lot of hardships.

Rise of the New Money-lending Class

Time bound and excessive demand of revenue by the British government forced the peasants to take loans from the moneylenders. These moneylenders often exploited the peasants by charging high interest rates. They often used unfair means like false accounting, forged signatures and thumb impressions. The new legal system and the policy introduced by the British only helped the moneylenders who were either local merchants or landlords. In most cases, the peasants failed to pay back the loan with full interest. Thus, their lands gradually passed into the hands of the money-lending class.

Rise of the New Middle Class

A major impact of the British rule in India was the beginning of a new middle class. With the rise of the British commercial interests, new opportunities opened to a small section of the Indian people. They often acted as the agents and intermediaries of the British traders and thus made huge fortunes. The new landed aristocracy, which came into being after the introduction of Permanent Settlement, also formed a part of this new class. A major section of the old landowning aristocracy lost ownership of their land and in many cases were replaced by a new class of land owners. These people got some English education and became the new elite. With the spread of British power, new job opportunities were also created. Indian society witnessed the introduction of new law courts, government officials and commercial agencies. The English educated people naturally got the necessary patronage from their colonial rulers. Thus, a new professional and service-holding middle class was also created by the British, apart from those with landed interests.

CONCLUSION

The cultural heritage of India dots a special place among the countries of the globe. With the passage of time, its significance is getting even more realized and recognized, to the extent of considering 'culture' as the mainstay of the largest democracy in the world. 'Incredible India' campaign has risen to a higher pedestal owing to the importance being given to the cultural symbols of the country. The socio-economic, political, legal, environmental and technological vibes of India are closely knitted to form part and parcel of the nation's culture- where in lies its strength and indomitable spirit. In the realm of domestic tourism too, the diverse cultural expressions have played a great role. Indian art and architecture are classic representations of aesthetic beauty and time-tested creativity. The backgrounds of artistic productions are unique to India. Several inspirational and influential factors could be attributed to art and architecture

of India. Yet, the humility and unclenched commitment to the society, which were the hallmarks of early artists, are depreciating in the 21st century. This is not at all a good sign for the cultural elation and dignity of the nation. On the basis of the pattern and direction of selective cultural adaptation that is taking place in India in the process of globalization of culture, and considering the historical features of its social structure and institutions it could be concluded that the Indian culture, whether local or national has sufficient resilience to succeed in preserving its cultural identity and also workout a successful and creative synthesis between the global and the local, regional and national levels of cultural styles, forms, and practices

Impact of tourism has added considerably to Indian economy. Tourism in India has grown in leaps and bounds over the years, with each region of India contributing something to its splendor and exuberance. It is a treasure house of cultural and traditional embellishes as reflected in its artifacts, scenic beauties of the rivers, sea and mountains, thus enabling it to gain a prestige in the international arena. As per the Travel and Tourism competitiveness Report 2009 by the World Economic Forum, India is ranked 11th in the Asia Pacific region and 62nd overall, moving up three places on the list of the world's attractive destinations. It is ranked the 14th best tourist destination for its natural resources and 24th for its cultural resources, with many World heritage sites, both natural and cultural, rich fauna, and strong creative industries in the country. India also bagged 37th rank for its air transport network. The India travel and tourism industry ranked 5th in the long- term [10-year] growth and is expected to be the second largest employer in the world by 2019.

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