



Industrial Development in India: Trends, Problems and prospects

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Abstract: *Before the First plan, industrial development in India was confined largely to the consumer goods sector, the important industries being cotton textiles, sugar, salt, soap, paper and leather goods, Thus the industrial structure exhibited the features of an underdeveloped economy. Industries manufacturing coal, cement, steel, power, non-ferrous metals, chemicals etc. were also established but their production was small. As far as the capital goods sector was concerned, only a small beginning was made. On the whole, while consumer goods industries were well-established, producer goods industries lagged considerably behind.*

Key Words: industrial development, confined, consumer, textiles, structure, exhibited, features .

The first plan did not envisage any large-scale programmes of industrialisation. Only Rs. 55 crore out of the total expenditure of Rs. 1960 crore in the First Plan was spent on industry and minerals. The Second Plan accorded top priority to programmes of industrialisation which would be clear from the fact that the expenditure on industry and minerals was increased to Rs. 938 crore under this plan which was 20.1 percent of the total expenditure of Rs. 4672 crore. Based on Mahalanobis Model the Second Plan set out to establish basic and capital goods industries on a large-scale so that a strong base for industrial development in the future could be built. Three steel plants of one million tonnes ingot capacity each were set up in the public sector.

Third plan also emphasised the establishment of basic capital and producer goods industries. Expenditure on industry in the Third plan was 1726 crore which was 20.1 per cent of the total expenditure of Rs. 8577 crore under the plan. The structure of industrial development was further nurtured in the Fourth and Fifth Plans with minor changes. The expenditure on industry was hiked to 22.8 per cent in the Fifth Plan. The Sixth Plan emphasised optimum utilisation of existing capacities and improvement of productivity and enhancement of manufacturing capacity. Of the total

expenditure of Rs. 109,292 crore under the Sixth plan, the share of the industrial sector was Rs. 15,002 crore which comes to 13.7 percent. During this period, industrial and trade policies were substantially liberalised.

Objectives for the industrial sector in the Seventh Plan were kept as follows: (i) to ensure adequate supply of wage goods at reasonable prices, (ii) to maximise the utilisation of the existing facilities through restructuring and upgradation of technology, (iii) to concentrate on development of industries with large domestic market and export potential. (iv) to usher on development of industries with large domestic market and export potential. (v) to usher in 'sunrise' industries with high growth potential and relevance to our needs, and to evolve an integrated policy towards self-reliance in strategic fields and open up avenues for employment. The overall outlay envisaged in the Seventh Plan for industrial and mineral programmes in the public sector was Rs. 22,416 crore. Industrial production was targeted to grow at the rate of 8.7 percent per annum. The actual average rate of growth during the Seventh Plan was 8.5 percent per annum. As far as the Eighth Plan is concerned, the overall outlay for industrial and mineral programmes in the public sector was kept at Rs. 40,588 crore. This is only 9.3 percent of the total outlay of Rs. 434,100



crore in the Plan. The Ninth Plan envisages an industrial growth of 8.2 per cent per annum. Policies advocated to achieve this growth rate are (i) ensuring adequate availability and requisite quality of infrastructure' (ii) adoption of special measures to promote the development of industries in backward areas, (iii) introducing a special package for the industrial development of the North Eastern States; (iv) reviewing the working of Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (or BIFR) and bringing about necessary changes to make it an effective instrument of reviving sick industrial units, (v) initiating steps to close down potentially unrevivable public units, (vi) promoting production and productivity in the small-scale industries through technological upgradation and (vii) adoption of a cluster approach in the unorganised sector for provision of training, upgradation of skills and improvement in tool kits, equipment and production techniques to increase production and income levels of artisans and workers.

TRENDS IN INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION-Industrial development during the plan period can be divided into the following four phases: Phase I (1951-56): Building up of Strong Industrial Base: Phase I laid the basis for industrial development in the future. The Second plan based on Mahalanobis Model, emphasised the development of capital goods industries and basic industries. Accordingly, huge investments were made in industries like iron and steel, heavy engineering and machine building industries. The same pattern of investment was continued in the Third Plan as well. As a result there occurred a noticeable acceleration in the compound growth rate of industrial production over the first three plan periods up to 1965 from 5.7 percent in the First Plan to 7.2 percent in the second plan and further to 9.0 percent per annum in the First plan to 13.1 percent per annum in the Second Plan and further to 9.6 percent per annum in the Third Plan.

Phase II (1965-80): Industrial Deceleration and Structural Retrogression: The

period 1965 to 1976 was marked by a sharp deceleration in industrial growth. The rate of growth fell sharply from 9.0 per cent per annum during the Third Plan to a mere 4.1 per cent per annum during the period 1965 to 1976. The last year of Phase II, i.e., 1979-80, recorded negative growth of industrial production of 1.6 per cent over the preceding year. Several explanations were offered for the phenomenon of deceleration and retrogression in the industrial sector during Phase II. Government expressed the view that exogenous factors such as the wars of 1965 AND 1971, drought conditions in some years infrastructural constraints and bottlenecks and the oil crisis of 1973 were responsible for slowdown of growth. K.N. Raj argued that low growth in the agricultural sector accounted for the slowdown of industrial growth by restricting the supply of raw materials on the one hand and by curtailing the demand for industrial goods on the other. T.N. Srinivasan argued that there was a considerable slackening of real investment in Phase II particularly in the public sector and this brought down the rate of growth in the industrial sector. Some economists like Jagdish Bhagwati blamed the wrong industrial policies, complex bureaucratic system of licensing and irrational and inefficient system of controls for industrial deceleration. Phase III (1981-1991): Period of Industrial Recovery: The period of 1980s can broadly be termed as a period of industrial recovery. The rate of industrial growth was 6.4 per cent per annum during 1981-85, 8.5 per cent per annum during the Seventh Plan and 8.3 per cent in 1990-91. This is a marked upturn from growth rates of around 4 per cent achieved during the latter half of 60s and 70s.

The main causes of industrial recovery during the 80s are as follows:

1. **New industrial policy and liberal fiscal regime:** One of the main causes of industrial recovery during the 80s was the liberalisation of industrial and trade policies by the Government. The most important changes have related to bringing down the domestic



barriers, to entry and expansion to inject a measure of competition in domestic industry, simplify the procedures and provide easier access to better technology and intermediate material imports as well as more flexibility in the use of installed capacity with a view to enabling easier supply responses to changing demand conditions. These factors operating from the supply side were helped by the pursuit of what may be termed as a liberal fiscal regimes. The important feature of liberal fiscal regime were (i) maintenance of high budgetary deficits year after year, (ii) resort to massive borrowing often at high interest rates and (iii) the encouragement of dissaving. Liberal fiscal regime helped in generating demand for manufactured goods, liberal industrial and trade policies ensured that an adequate supply response was following.

2. Contribution of the agricultural sector- Increased prosperity of large farmers in certain regions of the country helped to increase additional demand for industrial goods. The rural sector's demand for non-agricultural consumer products rose considerably from 35 percent in 1967-68 to 47 percent in 1983.

3. Growth of service sector- There was a significant increase in government expenditure on all services in the 80s. The consumption pattern of the service class is less food intensive and more oriented towards durable consumer goods. Therefore, the consumption pattern effective demand in 80s changed in favour of consumer durable goods.

4. The infrastructure factor- There was a market resurgence in infrastructure investment in the 80s. As against only 4.2 percent annum increase in infrastructure investment during 1965-66, the increase was as high as 9.7 percent per annum during 1979-8 to 1984-85. Infrastructure investment rose further by 16.0 per cent in 1985-86 and 18.3 percent in 1986-87.

Phase IV (The Period 1991-92 onwards): The year 1991 heralded a new era of economic liberalisation. Major liberalisation measures

designed to affect the performance of the industrial sector were - widespread reduction in the scope of industrial licensing, simplification of procedural rules, reductions of areas exclusively reserved for the public sector, disinvestment of equity of selected public sector, undertakings, enhancing the limit of foreign equity participation in domestic industrial undertakings, liberalisation of trade and exchange rate policies, reduction of customs and excise duties and personal and corporate income tax etc.

Prospects: As a founder- member of the World Trade Organisation, India has withdrawn all quantitative restrictions on imports. The pressure of competition will be particularly harsh on many small-scale units as they simply cannot withstand competition from resource-rich and technologically advanced multinational companies. In fact, even our large private sector companies are just pygmies compared to MNCs and many of them fear competition is going to be tough. So far as the basic goods and capital goods industries are concerned, they might receive a setback as the end-use industries will not have full access to cheaper imports. Challenges will not be easy for the end-use industries as well as they have to compete with foreign goods on both price and quality fronts.

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