

UNIT 27 ENVIRONMENT

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27.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit deals with an important and so far quite neglected theme in political science, namely; environment movements in contemporary India. After reading this unit you should be able to:

- understand historical relationship between man and the nature, emergence of ecopolitics and debate on development and sustainability;

- learn about the major issues addressed by the environment movements in form of the role of the state, judiciary, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), people, political parties, local bodies and legislations; and,
- outline the sources of conflicts of interest and narrate the processes of mobilization of victims of various environmental destruction by two case studies.

27.1 INTRODUCTION

Environment consists of physical, chemical and biological conditions which influence life on earth. Environment is not only a mere existence of natural elements like air, water and forests. It is essentially made up of both nature and man-made conditions. Any imbalance in environment, caused either by nature or man, has positive or negative impact on all forms of life on earth. Man's limitless ability to alter environment has two major consequences. One of them is on himself and the other is on all non-human components of environment be they air, water, soil, forests or animals.

In all societies, be they democratic or authoritarian, a decline in the quality of environment has occurred due to man's mindless and greedy use of natural resources. A major conflict of interests has developed between those who wish to continue the plunder of nature and those who are opposed to it. A voice is being now raised for saner use of natural resources in a manner that does not destroy the environment but preserves it at the same time. Broadly speaking, all efforts in this direction of protecting environment through legislation or otherwise fall in the ambit of environment movement. It can be seen that this is a vast and complex task. Environment movement is about firstly making the victims of the plunder aware and conscientised and then lead them to preventive and protective collective actions. How this is done and with what degree of success or failure is discussed here.

27.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

27.2.1 Man-Nature Relationship

Man is one of the many species on earth. He is a major actor and component in the environment. Nature has its own ways to create and maintain balance among its various components. However, man has been mindlessly exploiting natural resources for development and generating prosperity in the last centuries with the growth of industrialisation. This has created an imbalance. In other words, the process of development brought about by the industrial revolution has depleted the resources faster than the natural replenishing capacity of the environment. Hence, the resulting of crisis of the environment. In order to overcome the limitation, man has adverse consequences on the environment. For instance, vehicles of various kinds are invented to increase the speed of transportation and movement. The adverse effect is poisonous emissions from vehicles causing greenhouse effect in biosphere.

27.2.2 Emergence of Eco-politics

The term eco-politics is of recent origin. Eco-politics is about interrelationship and mutual connection between environmental and political issues. Earlier, the ecological issues were paid attention only if they concerned national defense or collective security such as nuclear fall out or oil scarcity. Over the time, the focus has got extended to issues of development. Ecopolitics pleads for a value-based regulations regarding the use of natural resources in a manner that on one hand it prevents narrow unilateral exploitation and on the other hand, ensues equitable distribution of fruits of development.

In the third world or developing countries, conflict on the issue of development takes a different form. Here the divide is between those who wish to protect the environment at all cost and those who are committed to development at any cost. This does not mean that the environmentalists are as such against development but plead for an eco-friendly development. They prefer alternative or sustainable development. Eco-politics results in the process of determining the preferred path of development.

27.2.3 Debate on Development and Sustainability

Development is an extremely nebulous, deceptive and therefore ambiguous concept. It is usually associated with modernisation, industrialisation, urbanisation, science and technology. It essentially connotes change, growth and progress. Industrial revolution epitomized this view of development, resulting in a grave error so far as environmental interests are concerned.

After second world war, colonialism ended and new nations were born. In order to increase productivity, large industries were set up by employing capital and resource-intensive technology. Unfortunately, this approach resulted in increasing inequalities, poverty and environmental crisis. The Report of the South Commission (1992:38) has observed that, "Inequalities tended to widen, as the economy grew and became more industrialized... the gap in income, knowledge and power was growing and large segments of the population experienced no significant improvement in their standard of living...". The blind faith in ideology of development through this type of industrialisation caused a huge resource depletion and pollution. The goal of human welfare and meeting basic needs of the people could not be attained by this model of development.

Developing countries consist of poor and the powerless. All efforts for speedy economic development through industrialisation in these countries have given more and more power to the financial and political elites. Degradation of environment has occurred due to both chronic poverty and uneven industrialisation. The general situation is such that the elites pay only lip service to environmental values and actually go on ecological rampaging. Even if they value environment they are often unwilling to part with the profits. Their stock defence and ready excuse is contained in their argument about lack of financial viability and absence of viable technical know-how to clean up (or keep clean the environment). The debate should actually be focused on the social or environmental cost of production versus mindless plunder of ecology for never ending profits for few. This debate remains unresolved mainly because of an informal alliance between the financial industrial and political-bureaucratic elites. The political system is usually repressive of general and particularly environmental dissent. It is often expressed as well as put down violently. Protests to safeguard the environment are often viewed and

dismissed by the elite interest. Thus, the situation in developing countries are sensitive and crucial. Such issues as land degradation, desertification, deforestation and pollution of air, water and soil by industries either remain ignored or inadequately and nominally attended. All in all, the poverty, resulting degradation and insensitive political system make the matters worse. A ray of hope lies in emergence of positive ecopolitics by green parties and groups in Europe and micro environment movements by environmental organizations in the developing countries. This leads us logically to explore the relationship between the civil society, state and ecopolitics.

27.3 MAJOR ISSUES

As is clear from the discussion in the previous section, the environment movement has thrown up various issues regarding vital inter-domain relationships between the victims and redressal systems existing in a society. Those who are adversely affected by the environmental problems and are protesting and resisting against a repressive alliance of vested interests need to be paid attention to understand the dynamics of environment movement. First and foremost major issue is pertaining to the nature and role of the state. Judicial option and intervention is second major issue discussed here. The third issue is regarding the debate between environment versus livelihood.

27.3.1 Role of the State

In order to understand what role state has played, we must understand theoretical conception and contemporary context of state. One understanding of state is that it is a neutral space or impartial agency for resolving the conflicts of interest which occur in market and civil society. However, Indian state's performance for last five decades provides contrary evidences. The Indian state has failed to play its role and hence the civil society has to fill the void. Let us first explore the contemporary status of the state. Ever since the ending of cold war, collapse of communism and triumph of advancing capitalism, most nation-states are ruthlessly overrun. There has been an upsurge in global democratic aspirations as a result of the collapse of communism. The forces of free market are linking national economies with global economic systems. Globalisation of

politics and economy is taking place. The state is being caught in this process and is under pressures from within and without.

It is found that the state or its counterpart in form of a local municipal body have acted in a biased manner in the issue of environmental pollution. The issue of environmental protection is split in two camps. One side is the 'iron triangle' of elitist domination in form of 'bureaucrats-industrialists-politicians' and on the other are the powerless victims of pollution and environmental degradation. Studies have shown that, instead of operating as a mediating and balancing agency, the state functions as a party to the issue against the interests of the people. If we see the history of legislation on pollution, we find that first of all nobody is ready to accept the existence of this issue. The people who are the victims of air or water pollution are left in cold with burden of proof on their shoulders. Whether it is US Steel Mill in Gary Indiana or factories and industries in Vapi, Ankleshwar, Nandesari and Baroda in Gujarat, when people go to complain about the impact of pollution in form of holes in the clothes and kitchen vessels or deaths of buffaloes or elephants by drinking polluted water, released stealthily in the nearby open spaces, village ponds, ravines and rivers, the polluting industries' first reaction is there is no such problem. When potato and banana growing farmers of villages in Baroda region of Gujarat complained about crop-destruction due to air pollution, the polluting industry instantly disowned and disclaimed the responsibility.

The impact of pollution is first felt by the people but the 'iron-triangle' usually opposes its existence. People are ultimately, left with no other option but to launch a movement first to make an issue of the problem. It is the suffering people who find themselves in a strange powerless and helpless situation. Organised existing public power, in form of state and its related structures, do not help them. Hence, they launch a movement to exert power resources in their favour by compelling the state first to recognise the existence of issue and then make and implement preventive laws on pollution. The iron-triangle does not stop here but enters the next arena of implementation of legislated policies and laws. It weakens and nullifies the effect by diluting it. People's struggle continues even at this stage. Violation of pollution laws was not at all dealt with firmly until about the Bhopal gas disaster occurred.

27.3.2 Role of Judiciary

The environment movement in India has essentially passed through three phases. In the first phase which was the longest phase, legislative hurdles were crossed. That is to say, opposition, obstruction or dilution of pollution laws was done while being framed in legislatures. In the second phase, opposition to implementation of already made anti-pollution laws was experienced. Here also the iron-triangle operated in favour of the polluters rather than in protecting the interests of the victims of pollution. In the current phase, as a final recourse to redressal of their grievances against those polluting and jeopardizing the increasingly fragile ecosystem, doors of the judiciary are knocked. Eminent legal scholar Upendra Baxi (1991) has observed that, “the growth of environmental jurisprudence in India is a very recent phenomenon. And even now it is confined to a few activist judges, lawyers, law academics and active citizens”. Baxi has argued that this is so mainly because “the Constitution itself is environment-blind”. The chapter on rights in the Constitution does not explicitly state about protecting the citizens from air and water pollution, deforestation, destruction of wild life and displacements of habitats. Much later 42nd Amendment to the Constitution has added a provision vide Article 48-A instructing the state to make efforts for protecting and improving the environment, forests and wild life. Article 51-A is about the fundamental duty of the citizens “to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wild life...” The absence of environmental concerns in the Constitution is due to its obsession with development.

These provisions have improved the prospects of judicial intervention considerably. It has encouraged environmental litigation by the victims of pollution or of environmental degradation. However, from 1950-84, neither the state nor the civil society was concerned about systematic and organised degradation and destruction of the environment while pursuing the policy of generating prosperity through massive industrialisation. Judicial activism rose in response to this neglect. In Ratlam Municipal Corporation case, Mr. Justice Krishna Iyer gave a new, progressive and environment-friendly interpretation. He stated that Constitution is “a remedial weapon of versatile use”. He further recognised that people’s struggle for “social justice” includes environmental justice and “the remedial weapon” must be available to them. Anti-power

project stirred by Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad to protect the fragile Silent Valley ecosystem in 1979 was facilitated by this landmark judicial intervention by Justice Iyer.

The apex courts at the state and central level are flooded with petitions seeking protection of environment. This is a major achievement of enlightened judicial process. "Creative interpretations and rulings by the courts in various cases seeking environmental justice or compensation have expanded the scope and role of judiciary in this issue. For instance, in Shri Ram Fertilizer case the court created "an idea of absolute liability" of manufacturer of hazardous substances, raw material, processes or products, lest any damages are caused to the people or workers.

27.3.3 Environment versus Livelihood

Environmental degradation is the result of a vicious circle in which most societies are so badly caught. It is argued that development is undertaken to remove poverty and improve the quality of life of the people. But the mode of development that is followed has turned out to be environmentally disastrous. Instead of reducing poverty, it has increased inequality, deprivation, marginalisation and caused extensive environmental degradation. The growth and expansion of market-driven development strategy, be it socialist or capitalist, is not able "to solve the very problem it creates" (Shiva; 1991:342). Management of forest is another area where primacy of growth and basic needs outweigh environmental concerns. The industrialists, politicians and forest bureaucrats have forged a nexus to consume forests without any restraint.

Heavy industrialization is another potent source of pollution and threat to environment. Unchecked industrialization has released toxic gases, chemicals, effluents and hazardous substances into air, water and soil. Another dimension of this issue pertains to the occupational hazards on the health and safety of the workers of some specific industries such as chemical, petrochemical, pharmaceutical, pesticides and fertilizer. The workers and the local population are found to be suffering from cancer, respiratory diseases, infertility, corrosion of fingers, toes and holes in the nose (wall separating the nostrils). There is a decline in livelihood prospects from fishing, agricultural and horticultural activities. Such widespread impact has generated anguish among the victims and people's movements were launched.

This discussion shows that developing societies are really caught in choiceless and helpless situation. The market-centered and sensitive strategy of economic development has left us with little scope of amendments. Any alteration in strategy to save the one can

maim or kill the other. If livelihood is generated, environment is threatened and if environment is protected, livelihood is threatened. This is a strange predicament. The environment movement in India reflects this predicament and dilemma amply.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i) Use the Space below for you answers.

ii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of unit.

1) What do you mean by environment movement?

2) How do the environmentalists view the development?

3) What is the “iron-triangle” and what is its relationship with the environment movement?

4) Comment on the role of judiciary in the environment movement.

27.4 NATURE OF ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENTS

We saw that the reasons for the changes in man-nature relationships are not to be traced too far. It has become clear that quiet, widespread depletion and degradation of natural resources is the result of pushing nature far beyond its carrying capacity by mindless consumption. The forest communities to some extent and people in general have over-exploited natural resources. The former have no other choice. Somehow ecological degradation is viewed as destined and cutting trees for fuel, shelter or income, over-grazing or over-farming in fragile eco-areas goes on undeterred or unchallenged. Grounds for struggles are multiple.

Harsh Sethi has divided environmental responses into three types of struggles. In the first type, the struggle addresses the issue of rights of different social strata and communities over using resources. This type of struggle does not question the development model or the acts of redefining man-nature relations. In the second type, we find environmental response which struggles for legal corrections and policy shifts in resource use. At the centre lies concern about destruction and depletion of renewable and non-renewable resources. The normative basis of dominant development model remain unchallenged. The third variety of response is substantive and fundamental to the issue. It invokes ecological dimension. It aims at rejecting the dominant development model and redefine man's relationship with the nature. However, it must be stated that the environment struggles do not maintain typological purity once launched. These struggles have resulted centering around different natural resources such as air, wastes, land, forest or sea. Accordingly, they can be referred to as forest-based struggles, land use struggles, anti-big dam struggles, anti-pollution struggles and struggles against destruction of marine resources.

Harsh Sethi) has done an analysis of these struggles by focusing on the participants or actors of the struggles, strategies of intervention, issues raised and focused and finally impact or outcome of struggle in terms of grievance-redressal, policy changes effected and conscientization. It is found that unlike other struggles, in ecological struggles fairly representative section of society is involved as participants. However, the most adversely affected people constitute the base of the struggle. For example, deforestation stretches

the work hours of women in collecting fuel wood and water longer, the tribals lose benefits of forest produce, the fisherman in Goa and Kerala suffer from excessive trawling. The victims are so dispersed and marginalised that for effective raising of voices and redressal of grievances, they require a chain of actors from more vocal and experienced realms of voluntary organisations, media, professionals like scientists, researchers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, technologists, human right groups, sympathetic and concerned policy-makers and bureaucrats. Each of these actors add strength, vigour, guidance and direction to struggle.

By way of organisational and interventionist strategy, it has become imperative for environment movements that not only to strengthen and hold together the victim-folks in solidarity but also make holes in the opposite camp by skillfully raising doubts about possible benefits being outweighed by collective harm and so on. Most struggles are raised against development projects and therefore, they are likely to be fought back as anti-people, anti-national, anti-development, anti-progress and so on. This is usually countered by careful and systematic analysis of issues at stake and propagation of correct, data-based campaign material in actual resource-use. The limitation of this strategy is that when the issue goes beyond local limit, the original victim-actors are left behind and either the middle class professionals, media or voluntary agency leaders come to the fore. The leadership role and power shifts from local hands to mediating actors. Harsh Sethi has observed this is good strategically but bad ethically. Another aspect of this process is internationalisation of local or national issues as strategy which can harm the movement. In most cases, the central issues of environment movements revolve around fixing tolerance limits on carrying capacity of environment or cost-benefit ratios. Most struggles are of reformist nature. These issues have concomitantly raised interesting interconnections between ecology and feminism as well as ecology and human rights. The most significant issue raised by the movement is about our understanding or theory of knowledge. The present development model is nurtured on the myth of universal, objective and value-free notion of science. What was held as true universal knowledge for long time is today challenged. Science is increasingly viewed as partisan, parochial and ideological. These movements have also raised the issue of redefining our understanding of market, society, state, science and nature. The issue of preserving diversity and plurality in society and nature is well-raised by environment movements.

Analysing and understanding the impact of movement forms important aspect of the study. The environment movements have by and large remained “diverse and scattered”. Their overall impact is uneven. Alongwith failures there have been successes too. The Silent Valley movement’s impact was positive, successful and trend setting. The Doon Valley environment movement was partly successful. But at many other places, though, the movements are launched, intensified but not successful. Bhopal Gas disaster successfully drew the attention of the nation and the world but it has not succeeded in preventing hazardous products and processes (IPT; 1999). Despite the persistence of struggles, thousands of people are displaced yearly due to large development projects. On the other hand, the movement has made a major contribution to give centrality and public space to the cause of environment protection. This is a historic achievement as never before so much concern, awareness, involvement and participation was witnessed. The government has made many policies on forests, wildlife, wastelands, water, air and soil conservation. But there is a wide gap between the rising concern and actual action by the state. Interestingly, no political party, trade union or peasant organizations have made this to be their issue. The environment movements remain exposed to the dangers of gaps between concern/thought and action; fragmented, co-optation, manipulation and distortion by government and vested interests.

27.5 TWO CASE STUDIES

With a view to understanding the structural and functional aspects of the environment movements two case studies are presented here. These case studies will provide a brief account of genesis, issues, organization, ideology, leadership, mobilization, impact and outcome of environment movements in India.

27.5.1 Silent Valley Movement

This movement originated in Kerala. It is one of the earliest landmarks in the recent history of environment movements in the direction of preserving environment by people’s own struggle and agitation in India. The reasons for its origin lie in Kerala Government’s proposal to build a dam on the Kuntipuzha river in early 1970s. The government’s concern was to generate prosperity for the state through increased industrialisation. This was not happening because of shortage of electricity in the state.

The prime aim in building the dam was to generate power for industries. The construction of dam was to cover 77 sq.kms. as catchment area. As a consequence, India's richest tropical forest, known as Silent Valley was to be flooded and submerged. It is interesting to note that unlike in most such cases, there was no problem of displacement and rehabilitation of the people as the dam was to be constructed at a location where there was no human settlement. In this sense the Silent Valley movement was the first purely and primarily fought environment movement. The odds against the movement were heavy. The state government of Kerala was in total control of the issue as all the political parties and industrial lobby were in full support of the scheme and backed the government.

Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP), an already existing, active, progressive local people's science movement group took up the challenge and steered the movement right from its infancy to maturing into a potent people's power. The KSSP successfully mobilized local opinion against the dam and managed to rope in environmental experts like botanists, zoologists of international repute like Salim Ali, well known economists and engineers. This move strengthened the KSSP's argument and position vis-a-vis government's technical teams. It forcefully presented its argument against the scheme on the grounds of adverse environmental consequences on "a rare ecosystem, rich in biological and genetic diversity". The KSSP went a step ahead as a strategy and argued that the required electricity could be generated easily by setting up thermal power stations in dispersed locations as well as by improving the power transmission systems. The KSSP was able to give this controversy the status of a genuine public debate far beyond the state. National attention was drawn. It was stretched to international arena by involving World Wildlife Fund and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. These global bodies had joined the issue of the movement on the grounds of protecting the lion-tailed macaque which is the rare breed of monkey, habitant of Silent Valley. This struggle lasted quite long. Furious debates, persistent campaigns and constant relentless lobbying through the media, parliament and expert committees made dropping the idea of dam in Silent Valley possible. Besides, the KSSP won the region the status of "national biosphere". As a result of this successful movement, the scope for challenging environmentally unviable development policies, projects and schemes increased. This movement was preventive in nature, in the sense that it was launched unlike in many other cases, much before the project was executed

and its impact on environment could be felt. The project was successfully opposed at embryonic stage itself. This shows existence of already well-conscientised and informed non-political bodies like KSSP which could get activated much before the damages are caused. This case study also shows that environment movements require mobilisation, involvement and orchestration of diverse mix of actors (individual and institutional) stretching from experts to lay and local to global.

27.5.2 Chipko Movement

This movement was basically concerned with preservation and protection of forests. It was an environmental movement for maintaining the ecological balance in the sub-Himalayan region of Uttar Pradesh. Four districts of Uttarkashi, Chamoli, Tehri and Pauri form Garhwal division and cover a total area of 27,000 sq.kms. and about 14 lakhs population. It is interesting to note that due to migratory nature of labour there are more females than males in this area. Employment is very low in this region. There are 97 per cent working women as cultivators while only 72 percent men are cultivators. Males work in army and hence women are left behind to manage land, livestock and household. Chipko is also interpreted as feminist movement because of this. This movement originated in the Dasohli Gram Swarajya Mandal in Gopeshwar of Chamoli district. The movement was initiated by Gandhian Sarvodaya workers. The Sarvodaya workers were active in this area for about 13 years through various rural reconstruction work.

The movement began on 24 April 1973. There was a historical conflict of interests over forest and timber rights in this area between local villagers and Sarvodaya workers on one hand and timber contractors and forest bureaucrats on the other. The contractors were able to exert more influence over forest bureaucracy and local politicians to corner the forest benefits. Previous to Chipko mobilisation, stirrings against government's forest policy and department had taken place in this region too. The forest department rejected Sarvodaya workers' demand for 10 ash trees per annum for its farm tools workshop set up with the support from Khadi Gramodyog Commission. But it allotted 300 ash trees to the Simon Company for manufacturing sports goods like tennis rackets etc. The primacy thus was accorded to tennis rackets over the self-subsisting needs of the poor cultivator's ploughs. The cutting of these 300 trees by Company agent was started in March 1973. Sarvodaya workers and 100 other villagers marched from the nearby areas to Gopeshwar.

As a result of this resistance by the villagers, the company men beat retreat. In order to appease the protesters, the forest department showed readiness to concede one ash tree to Sarvodaya workers, if they let the Simon Company cut trees of its original quota. The temptation was raised to two, three, five and ten ash trees of full quota but it was rejected. The Simon's quota was cancelled but re-allotted in Phata Forest in other part of the district. In June 1973, another local leader organized resistance and launched Chipko movement. The trees were guarded by the village upto end December when permit will automatically lose its validity.

Sunderlal Bahuguna of Uttarkhand Sarvodaya Mandal, based in Tehri Garhwal, began his long march of 120 days on foot to spread the ideology of Chipko movement to entire region of Himalayas. What made this movement instantly popular is a decade old history of flash floods in this region. Mountain slopes were bared of forest covers by clear-cutting of trees, causing quick rushing of water. Road-building activity in this region also caused land-slides. Some mobilisation activities were already initiated before the Chipko was launched. The flood relief work had brought the Sarvodaya workers and the flood-marooned people together into a dialogical relationship regarding the environmental degradation, disasters and conservation. This strengthened environment agenda of the movement. In 1974, C.P. Bhatt re-launched Chipko struggle in Reni forest area. He appealed women to hug the trees in case they come to cut them. An attempt to cut 2500 auctioned trees in Reni forest near Alaknanda river, was foiled by woman leader Gaura Devi in village Lata. A band of about 30 women led by her saved the trees by risking their lives. As a result of this persistence by the Chipko protesters, a government ban was imposed on tree-cutting in Reni for ten years. Whenever need arose, these women intermittently came out to save the trees at Gopeshwar in 1975, Bhynder valley in January 1978, Parsari in 1979 and at Dongri Paintoli in February 1980. Thus, the Chipko demonstrations, protests and resistance became frequent in this region.

Thus, Chipko movement became a good example of people's non-violent resistance to the destruction of environment by vested interests. This movement was spontaneous as ordinary hill people had come out in huge number without the usual lead, support or guidance of any centralized organizational apparatus. This movement accorded central position to the issue of renewable resources like soil, water and trees in the lives of ordinary dependent people. Chipko rose as a voice from the distant, neglected hills.

Concern for life and livelihood, so closely linked with the environment of this region, guided the course of the movement. Chipko succeeded in saving the local forest resources from commercial exploitation by contractors and tried to bring local forest wealth under the control of local village communities. The struggle, however, could not fully succeed in preventing the “alarming depletion of forest cover” in the region which was actually responsible for causing floods, landslides, soil erosion, drying up of local water streams and other sources, fuel and fodder shortages etc. Hill women played major role in this movement and gave it the character of truly people’s environment movement.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i) Use the Space below for you answers.

iii) Check your answers with the model answers given at the end of unit.

1) Identify the types of environment movement.

2) What do you mean by internationalisation of environment issues?

3) Analyse the impact of environment movement.

27.6 LET US SUM UP

The environment movements have emerged as a result of mindless and wasteful use of resources, irrespective of the type of political regime. A new class of environmental haves and have nots have emerged. This has led the global human society to debate the theme of economic development and environmental sustainability. Peoples' movement against the environmental degradation faces opposition from the networking of the vested interests – the bureaucrats, industrialists and politicians. Nevertheless, the environment movement has been able to internationalise the environmental issues, raise the level of peoples' consciousness about environment, and impacted on the policy initiatives.

27.7 KEY WORDS

Biosphere : That part of earth and its atmosphere which is inhabited by living things/beings.

Deforestation : Destruction or removal of forests by denudation or clear-cutting.

Desertification : The formation of desert in arid and semi-arid regions from overgrazing, deforestation, poor use of land, excessive withdrawal of ground water or climatic changes.

Green House Effect : Increasingly released carbon dioxide due to burning of fossil fuels like coal and oil, tropical forests, causing holes in the ozone layer which is protecting the atmosphere of earth. Unfiltered direct heat from sun can raise the temperature on earth, melting polar ice caps and causing floods, and submergence of big cities like Calcutta, Mumbai, London, New York etc.

Ozone : Colourless gas with a chlorine - like smell, formed from Oxygen.

Pollution : Making something like air, water and soil or something impure or unnatural by adding dirt or harmful substances.

Trawling : Fishing by using big-boat like trawlers owned by rich, powerful profiteers which yield very high fish-catch, leaving little for small, local, traditionally fishing communities.

27.8 SOME USEFUL BOOKS/ARTICLES

Sethi, Harsh, "Survival and Democracy : Ecological Struggles in India" in Ponna Wignaraja (ed.), *New Social Movements in the South : Empowering the People*, New Delhi: Vistaar, 1993.

Shah, Ghanshyam, *Social Movements in India : A Review of Literature*, New Delhi: Sage, 1990.

The Indian People's Tribunal on Environment and Human Rights, *Who Bears the Cost? : Industrialization and Toxic Pollution in the Golden Corridor of Gujarat*, Mumbai, February, 1999.

27.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- 1) Efforts by the legislative bodies, concerned citizens, NGOs, judiciary, etc., to protect the environment is called as environment movement.
- 2) They are against the development. Instead, they plead for eco-friendly development.
- 3) The nexus of “bureaucrats-industrialists-politicians” is known as the “iron-triangle”. It usually opposes any move for protection of the environment.
- 4) The judiciary in India has played very positive role in protection of the environment. Through the judicial activism the judiciary has been able to contribute to fight against the environmental degradation.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

- 1) There are three kinds of environment movements. First, it addresses the issues of various strata of the society over using the natural resources; second, it questions the development model; and third, it focuses on the ecological dimension.
- 2) The linkages of the local issues of environment with the broader issue of market, society, state, science and nature denote towards the internationalisation of the environment issues.
- 3) Environment movements have been able to raise the level of peoples’ consciousness about environment. It has led to arrest the degradation of environment, internationalise the local environmental issues.