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## RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEMS AN – EVALUATION

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**Abstract:** The independent India, at the age of about 60 years is shining with its economic growth marked at 9.2% for the second quarter of 2011-12. However, at this desirable and worth appreciating growth rate, its basic sector (agriculture) is still limping with a mere 1.7% for the same period. Notwithstanding the fact that the main stream economy still depends heavily on the rural economy with its contribution of about 50% to the GDP while the contribution of agriculture per se is only 21%, it is a pity that the economy marks an un-bridgeable chasm between is an economy of 23 to 30 percent which is impregnable by the economic, political and administrative processes of India.

**Keyword:** Rural Infrastructure, Evaluation, economic growth, economy.

### INTRODUCTION:

The participation of the whole of rural India in the economic process can trigger a growth process which could be the fastest in the world for about the next half a century. According to some estimate (Kamat, 2006) the GDP will grow to 28 trillion US \$ by 2050 and India's GDP would surpass France by 2020, and Germany and UK by 2025. For the growth of the economy to this miraculous proportion, the rural economy has to play a very vital role and this role can only be through a well conceived design and appropriate growth inducements. Some foresee a tremendous transformation of the economy, society and polity (Kamat, 2006; APJ Abdul Kalam 2006) going on. According to K.V. Kamat, India is passing through a transformation of growth for about 22-24 years. "Two countries Japan in mid 50's and China some 19 years ago underwent transformation growth. We have entered the transformation stage three years ago and we have a long way to go." According to APJ Abdul Kalam. "India is well on its way to become a knowledge power, and there are all round growth in all sectors of the economy namely the agriculture, manufacturing and services. Today, we have an opportunity to take the leadership in the knowledge revolution. Knowledge revolution is indeed the foundation for leading India into a Developed Nation. For this, the time is ripe because of the ascending trajectory of the economy, availability of great institutions for capacity building of the human resources, abundant bio-diversity, and other natural resources and above all, our 540 million youth who are determined to make the nation prosperous, happy and a safe place to live well before 2020". The knowledge revolution visualized should not limit itself to a skewed population causing what is termed as the 'digital divide'. It should permeate into all sections, strata, sectors and economies there by integrating the whole nation as one inter linked unit of growth despite of its several layers leading to similar growth rates within an acceptable range.

### THE SOCIETAL GRID – TECHNOLOGY TO SOCIETY

The former President of India APJ Abdul Kalam (2006) stated : "Development of technologies and their convergence have significant influence on the society in terms of knowledge, health care, governance and economic development. To maximize the synergy between the various components of education, healthcare, e-governance, and rural development, we need to establish connectivity among them. These connectivity will certainly bring seamless access and information flow among the various domains leading to maximization of GDP and productivity, hence, there is need for establishing the GRIDs namely knowledge Grid, healthcare grid, e-governance grid and the PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) grid. This interconnecting grid will be known as the societal grid. Knowledge sharing, knowledge utilization and knowledge re-use is very vital by all constituents of the society for promoting non-linear growth".

### RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The intellectuals and practitioners do see a great opportunity ahead of the country in triggering rural development and interconnecting the rural development for the overall growth of the economy and the knowledge base is going to be the bottom line. The use of technological developments be they in the field of information technology, bio-technology, nano-technology or any other emerging technological fields – will provide the infrastructure for the various dimensions of rural growth and development. There will be a paradigm change in respect of approach to the rural development issues. However, no concern for the rural development in India can be addressed in a conceptual vacuum. A recent attempt by a rural development volunteering agency has developed an interesting model

styled as the Rural Infrastructure and Services Common. The model is built on the age old adage of “people are poor because they are poor” and the Nurksian dictum of the “vicious circle of poverty”. The model attempts to break the vicious circle of low equilibrium development trap of poor infrastructure – lack of services – low incomes – inability to pay for infrastructure through the coordinated agency which would provide various services like Market Information and Access, agricultural, banking, government, educational, health and entertainment and the strengthening of infrastructure like power, telecom, building, water, sanitation, air conditioning security etc. The features of the rural infrastructure and services common will be in terms of focal point for bi-directional flow of information and material, demand and supply aggregation, urbanization of rural India, trade between rural and urban areas and integration with national and global economy. This model perceives the challenge of developing the 600 million strong rural population as a formidable challenge, nevertheless a great opportunity. In the currently operating market oriented economy of India, the model assumes the basic premise that markets can be “enabled” or made far more efficient in Rural India. Realistically, it assumes that rural and local development should match the skills, resources, capabilities and infrastructure of rural India and its local markets is the first stepping stone to participation in the national and global economies. One of the fundamental calculation of the model is that all investment should be in critical mass chunks (minimum economic size) in scale and diversity, and allows for the use of the resources by the highest economic use. It also assumes to be practical in terms of providing most rural Indians with access to facilities they need rather than spreading them into individual villages in uneconomic sizes and at exorbitant rates. It is felt by many (Kamat, 2006) that rural development in India cannot take place through the old methods and efforts and corporatisation of the rural areas is the strategy for rural development.

#### ANEVALUATION

The rural development in India is undoubtedly a function of the rural infrastructure. The debate about directly Productive Activities and Social Over Head Capital is very old in the literature of economic development and growth. But actions for breaking the “vicious circle” have to emerge from different quarters. The economic model that induces the various corporate interests for intervention will act as a catalyst to kick off a “virtuous circle” of introduction of efficient modern technology and aggregation of demand to create markets and to improve product diversity, competitiveness and productivity that increases incomes and thus the ability of users to pay for services. It is visualized that this sort of arrangement will create a mechanism that would reduce production costs, transaction costs, improvement in information and knowledge thereby improving the functions of market.

In any truly market oriented operation, the economic models have a role to play and they will bring results too. The Indian society in the rural areas still require changes before an economic model can show results. The corporate investments in the rural areas can generate income and the

resultant growth, but what happens when situations like Singur in West Bengal and Noida emerge? Can an agricultural land with triple cropping be converted to industrial land without considering the economic merits and political exigencies? In a situation where farmers are committing suicides without appropriate prices for their products and without agencies to support them during financial needs, will only the economic model work? Are we holding on to the “old trickling down theory”.

To cause rural development? Does India provide the appropriate ground for spearheading a Grameen Bank movement of the type put in operation by the Nobel Laureate Mohammed Yunus? Why cannot the Amul model of Kurien be a national movement or the Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal of Francis Thekkekara which set up 43,000 self help group in Maharashtra Villages spread like wild fire building a socio-economic infrastructure for rural development? Even the Information Technology grid has its own difficulties in spreading in India.

#### CONCLUSION

The rural development in India or any where else depends on the rural population and its ability to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, habits and values of the rural population. While the physical infrastructure requires large financial capital, the human development can be calibrated through an appropriate mix of actions of the local and federal governments, corporate houses and non-governmental organizations. Much commitment has to be shown for uplifting the rural sector through a B2B (Back to basics) policy for building the appropriate psyche of development which is the basic infrastructure for rural development in any environment.

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