A Study of Rehabilitation Process in Post Super Cyclone in Odisha in Post super cyclone Odisha.

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Abstract:
Natural calamities in general and cyclone in particular have been all-time and regular unwanted events in the climatic realm of odisha. The super cyclone of 1999 followed by several cyclones in last two decades has affected very badly the economic and social paradigm of odisha. The aftermath situation of super cyclone left the state in a devastating condition inviting politics of poverty and reconstruction to take place.The effect of super cyclone taught the administrative mechanism of the state to remain alert to handle the situation during cyclone and post cyclone period which appeared to be very challenging. The word poverty is very much related to the situation of any natural calamities and both are related in a juxtaposing way. Calamites breed politics and politics create poverty. Though poverty is an economic term but it has got a vital political consequence. In a wider perspective occurrence of natural calamities break the back bone of state pushing the state back into twenty years in its structural conditions. In this work a sincere effort has been made to evaluate the post super cyclone situation in odisha touching upon the effect of the same in socio economic and political condition of people mostly occupying the lowest rung of the ladder. The reconstructive measures taken by the administrative mechanism to uplift the standard of people in badly affected districts are main focus of this paper.
Key words: Poverty, Reconstruction, super cyclone, climate, calamities, administrative mechanism.

I.   Introduction:

A natural calamity has diversified repercussions like social, economic and political. The super cyclone of 1999 in odisha had trembled the backbone of the social structure, economic paradigm and political lexicon of odisha by its most catastrophic damage. The severity of the super cyclone of 29th Oct 1999 was perhaps one of the most ravaging natural disasters that mankind has ever experienced in modern times. [1]The death and destruction that it left in its trial was not only an appalling shock to the whole world but was also a traumatic experience that will continue to haunt the people of odisha for generation to come. However the aftermath situation of super cyclone leads to politics of poverty in the discourse of rehabilitation and reconstruction paving the way to create opportunities for petty politicians to grab the share from the poor and badly affected people.

As it has been observed that the increasing numbers of humanitarian disaster erodes the coping ability of poor people and also undermine their ability to escape poverty. When disasters strike poor people often lose their assets on which their survival depends. At the same time their limited resource, lack of access to education and health services can increase their expose to risk. For example many poor people's livelihood completely depends on agriculture. But a natural calamity can destroy it in a blink of eyes.

In this work an observational effort has been put to realise and to reflect the terrible condition of the rural poor and people of coastal region of odisha those who were very badly affected by the super cyclone. The magnitude of human and material loss is impossible to imagine. The super cyclone left the affected area with uncountable problems which even after passing of twenty years not been regained. The thrust of the paper is to observe the magnitude of loss and preparedness of administrative mechanism with an objective to evaluate the steps and rehabilitation measures under taken by the government and its application side. In this context some suggestion are being put in the form of recommendation for the administration to learn and apply in to practice while facing calamities in future.

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[1] Mahapatra, N Bishnu, "Politics in Post-Cyclone Orissa", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Mumbai April 15, 2000.

The super cyclone ravaged the odisha coast on 29th and 30th of October 1999 devastated 12 districts viz Jagatsingh Pur, Kendrapara, Cuttack,Puri, Khurda, Nayagada, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Mayurbanjh, Keonjhar and Dhenkanal. Despite various reconstructive measures undertaken by the government as immediately after the super cyclone with a perpetual process of rebuilding the state still date after passing of more than twenty years the human suffering is still not minimised up to a expected volume. Human and material lose caused by the calamity was huge and needs many more years to get back to its original shape.

The study of poverty often influenced the researchers since the inception of the term. This is a context where the calamity and its terrible effect has been linked with emergence of poverty regards to the people suffered very badly due to the devastating super cyclone. It is doubt less that the disaster of a high magnitude of super cyclone (1999) unparalleled in living memory .Poverty is related not only to the economic aspect of human life but also socio-psychological and political aspects of human well being with the poor section of the society occupying the lowest rung of the ladder. The phenomenon of poverty cannot be explained in terms of simple cause and effect as human beings are not a homogenous group. Each one is different from other human being. Self-interest, self-security, self-protection are considered to be supreme. Hence, one's self interest clashes or compliments the other's self interest and adds up to create politics. Domination, exploitation or subjugation, collaboration, co-operation or alliances among these diverse self-interest group, etc, exist in society, which is an integral to political action. In broad framework of cutting across nations, race, gender, language, castes, etc, politics of poverty exists. Hence, poverty is said to be a political issue. Poverty is sometime a result of political choices and there is a view that politics creates poverty and exacerbates its problems. Therefore, it may be considered often that poverty is not just a condition but also a trap.

Poverty: The Concept

According to Martine Rein "poverty can be defined as subsistence, inequality and externality". He says subsistence is concerned with the minimum provision needed to maintain health and working capacity. Inequality is concerned with relative position of the income groups to each other. Externality is concerned with the social consequences of poverty for the rest of the society rather than in terms of the needs of the poor[i]. Rowntree classifies poverty as primary and secondary. He distinguished the former as a situation in which families find their total earnings insufficient to obtain the minimum necessities for the maintenance of mere physical efficiency. In the latter, their earnings would be sufficient for the maintenance of mere physical efficiency only. Poverty can also be classified as absolute poverty and relative poverty. Viewed as absolute poverty it is sheer deprivation or non-fulfilment of bare minimum needs of existence of food, shelter, health or education. But relative poverty is the contrast between the subsistence living of the many and the affluence or comparative affluence of the few or the disparity between the sub-human living standards of vast number of population and the living standards of the small fractions of the fortunate So poverty in human term is little to eat and wear and in economic term is inability to attain a minimal standard of living.

The attack on poverty has been sharpened and strengthened by restructuring and revamping the anti-poverty strategy with the thrust on improving incomes and the level of living of the poorest of the poor. For instance, in 1986, Government of India made an announcement of the 20 point programme to meet the challenge of poverty. It said, "The war on poverty is our first priority. Our goal is to remove poverty and create fuller employment"[ii]. The Government of India also formulated policies and programmes for eradication of poverty. Some specific schemes aimed at helping certain specifically categories of the poor section of rural community were included as part of our national plan.

A Glimpse of Super cyclone 1999:

The North Indian Ocean is said to be most cyclone prone regions[iii]. Cyclone is an atmospheric closed circulation rotating Counter-Clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere. According to Indian Meteorological Department a mild cyclone storm's velocity is 62-87 kmph, the very severe storm's velocity is 118-220 kmph and the velocity of super cyclone storm is 221 kmph and above.

The super cyclone hit the coast of Orissa on 29th October 1999 morning around 10.00 hours (IST), near Saharabedi, a village lying about 1.5 km from the sea-coast in Ersama Block, Jagatsinghpar district with a wind speed around 260 kmph, and a storm surge of about 10m. After crossing the coast, the system moved north-westward and remained stationary as a super cyclone for about six hours.

The storm brought in heavy rainfall averaging 600 mm in six days causing flash floods that breached highways, railway track embankments, culverts etc. and submerged and inundated vast tracts of land in many districts. Relief and rescue teams struggled to reach victims even week after the events. The super cyclone affected 15 million people in 12 districts and caused the death about 20,000 persons and over 4 lakh cattle. The loss to property crops and plankton communication and transportation network was colossal, the value of which is estimated to over 10,000 crores.

Understanding the Damage caused by the super cyclone:

Climatically, odisha falls in the tropical climatic zone. The south –west monsoons and the retreating north-east monsoons preponderantly determine the climatic conditions. Odisha falls in a cyclonic zone. The late monsoon symptoms often cumulate cyclonic developments in the Bay of Bengal. The wind become violent as it moves towards the northwest and lashes the whole of northeast coastal belt of the state. Cyclone in odisha occurred in 1823, 1831, 1932, 1842, 1948,1874, 1885, 1887, 1890, 1936, 1942,1967,1968,1971 and 1999. Amongst these the severity, of the super cyclone 0f 29 October of 1999 was most devastating. It affected about 97 blocks, 12 districts, the state capital and Cuttack city, 28 NACs, besides affecting around 125.9 lakh people and causing devastation in about 1200 kames. The super cyclone claimed as much life and property as 1846 Grampanchyats in the state and 14000 villages and wards and 1650086 households were severely affected.

The super cyclone unprecedented in its sweep and ferocity killed 9885 people. Besides causing destruction on a gigantic scale, the super cyclone traumatized millions of people who survived its wrath. Over 15 million people were affected by this super cyclone. Houses were destroyed, infrastructure ravaged, environment denuded, livelihood imperilled and economy shattered.

Saline inundation with tidal waves rising above 10 meters at many places let most of the drinking water sources polluted and dysfunctional for so many days. About 4.45 lakh livestock perished and paddy crops in 13 lakh hectares damaged. There was no house left undamaged in Jagsinghpur and Kendrapara districts. Over 1.6 million homes were damaged or destroyed in the supper cyclone. A vast area of green cover consisting of an estimated 9 million tress was destroyed.

Thousands of hectares' of paddy crop and other arable land were destroyed. Due to salination caused by the tidal wave, much of the agricultural land was rendered infertile. the loss of paddy sugarcane , vegetables, coconut trees and betel leaf- all important cash and subsistence crops caused severe economic difficulties for the population as well as limiting the availability of food. Water sources including tube wells, open wells and village ponds were contaminated by sea water and animal and human carcasses. Many artisans and semi skilled workers lost their tools and workshops. Fishing industry was badly affected with loss of boat and nets.

Over 17000 schools were damaged or destroyed. Many of those which survived were turned into temporary shelters of the people who lost their homes. Most of the schools and their equipments were lost in the super cyclone. Many children suffered from trauma psycho social conditions.

Post Super Cyclone Reconstruction and Rehabilitation: An Assessment

Post super cyclone reconstruction and rehabilitation is a challenging task which invites a lot of effort to bring the devastating system back in to normalcy. The aftermath situation of1999 super cyclone was very hard to deal with. The administration had to face difficulties in reaching at the victims. Nevertheless the government has done much to recuperate from the colossal damage caused by the super cyclone 1999. With more than 5 lakh concrete dwelling units provided, a number of cyclone shelter built, embankment reinforced , 400 agro service centre set up to support farm-based livelihood, more than 5000 primary schools and 900 high school building constructed, and with emergency communication system strengthened. There is a strong hope and confidence among the distressed and they look forward to a brighter tomorrow.

The emergent relief programme under taken by the government just after the super cyclone gave a picture of administrative effectiveness. Collectors of all cyclone affected districts provided emergent relief up to a period of 15 days as par need and free kitchen or seven days and or another one week in critically affected areas. The total expenditure on emergent relief was estimated to be Rs 65 crores

As per preliminary assessment of 15, 79, 000 houses had been fully or partly collapsed or damaged. As per the provisions of Orissa Relief code an amount of Rs 3,500/ Rs2,000 / and Rs 1000 was sanctioned or fully swept away, fully collapsed and partly collapsed houses respectively.

Ex-gratia assistance to the bereaved families was the second initiated by the administration as the part of rehabilitation process. It had been decided to provide ex-gratia assistance to the next of ken o the deceased Rs 25,000/. This amount was in addition to the grant of Rs 50,000/ from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund for which a total sum o Rs 37.37 crores had already been received and released to the district collectors.

The step by the administration in providing drinking water was part of the rehabilitation programme. It was a priority on the part o administration to repair and to make the well and other source o water disinfection. For which 287 repairing teams and 149 mobile vans had been deployed in rural areas for repair o tube wells and disinfections o drinking water sources .37,985 tube wells had been repaired and disinfected. Nineteen water tankers were deployed in Jagsinghpur and Puri districts for supply o drinking water insaline inundation area.

After the relief phase was over or nearly completed reconstruction and rebuilding of odisha was top priority. The magnitude of the destruction was so massive that it was nearly difficult on the part o the administration to come back to the normalcy easily. The Odisha State Disaster Mitigation Authority (OSDMA) was initially formed to have community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) for the rehabilitation and reconstruction work in the cyclone and flood affected area. OSDMA played a key role in coordinating the

activities of various line departments, the NGOs and the community for development of a long term strategic disaster management and preparedness plan.

Response of NGOs to cyclone:

The role played by NGOs in responding to the cyclone in the post cyclone period was very much significant. They extended their helping hand to a great extent for reconstruction and restoring the livelihood of the victims. It is pertinent to mention here that after meeting the immediate need for food and clothes NGOs turned their attention to the restoration of livelihood of the affected families. Since agriculture was the mainstay of the people in the affected areas NGOs paid attention to resumption of agricultural activities by providing agricultural equipments, tools and seed. The intervention of NGOs in restructuring the life of the victims mostly the farmers and artisans was very effective and significant.

The activities undertaken by different NGOs during and aftermath of super cyclone were multifaceted which are mainly of relief phase like, Running of community kitchen, distribution of relief materials such as food, water purification tablets, clothing, plastic sheets and tarpaulins or temporary shelters and medicines. The role played by them to control communicable diseases and disposal of corpses and animal carcasses was commendable. The intervention of NGOs in rebuilding and repairing personal houses, schools, hospitals, multipurpose community centres and other public buildings, running of health clinic , restoring drinking water and sanitation facilities , trauma counselling, repair of roads , canals and restoration of irrigation facilities were some of the most important work which could lessen the burden of government to a great extent.

Politics of poverty a reflection:

It is pertinent to put the observation here that the magnitude of real problem which has been faced by the super cyclone victim during and post super cyclone led to emergence of politics taking poverty as a point of discontent. The situation was grave due to involvement of local politicians in distributing relief because they are prone to manipulation while providing governmental assistant to victims. There was no proper recognition to their condition as a result they suffered badly from exploitation and poverty. Direct involvement of petty politicians in tracing and recognising the victims and distributing relief led to lot of manipulation and deprivation of the needy. There is standing evidence that the situation prevailing in affected areas revealed the true condition of the victims. Study says even after two decades the politics prevails in the area regarding the upliftment of the victims but there is no much change in their conditions.

Another aspect of the problem is that, politics of super cyclone and post super cyclone, which was seen in context of political situation prevailing in centre as well as in state. During super cyclone in the year 1999 BJP was ruling in centre and state was under the rule of congress. It is doubt less that the disaster of a high magnitude of super cyclone (1999) unparalleled in living memory. Just immediately after the super cyclone the reaction by central government and how central government and how prime minister did not deem it necessary to declare orissa a national disaster area, gives a different picture, that the administration of orissa collapse is obvious but does that mean that (since state was ruled by a party in opposition) the people of orissa were to be abandoned by the centre. It is indeed interesting to note that when the state was plunged in crisis the political leaders were fighting over coma and full stops. Both the government were just making an alibi to cover up their won weakness and failure instead of making the entire country come together to the rescue of affected people. Now in post super cyclone period congress rules in centre and BJP and BJD alliance rule the state. In this context the politics of super cyclone can be understood in different ways. The party which was in opposition in centre during super cyclone is now ruling the centre and congress is now in opposition in the state. The stand of opposition in state in the process of development in post super cyclone period is not clear. It is a question to be understood whether opposition was paying very scant attention towards welfare in the affected area or concentrating on encasing the political interest by launching heavy attacks on the ruling party. This shows the administrative mechanism is not willing to do what ought to be done in this context. It just does what it wants to do. Lack of real political will lead to politics without intention to serve and ultimately paved the path for sustainability of poverty without improving in the conditions of the affected people.

II. Recommendations:

After discussing the post supper cyclone effects and politics of reconstruction and rehabilitation in odisha it has been observed that the role of NGOs and government mechanism in rebuilding the state was very promising. However some recommendations appear to be vital in this regard.
● The disaster mitigation policy should address the need to remove and strengthen traditional cropping patterns and varieties that are resilient against coastal calamities.
● The policy is silent on what livelihood building capacities will be resorted to by the government or nonfarm committees and in what time frame. The recovery process is usually delayed and differential for fisher folk artisan and weavers.

● Adequate social livelihood insurance especially for nonfarm committees should prevail.

● The odisha relief code does not address long term aspects of food insecurity and impact of disaster on women, children, destitute, small farmers and non farming committees.

● The disaster mitigation policy should lay down standards of entitlements and stranded of service that must be humanitarian and based on national sphere standard for food security

●The ORC does not take into account community perspective and preparedness, a disaster mitigation policy should identify intervention that build on existing capacity and coping mechanism of the people and their institutions. The role of various community institutions in monitoring interventions by the government and other service provider should be legitimized in the disaster mitigation policy.

● Instead of looking at calamities as an adhoc event, there is a need to connect it to poverty alleviation

● Right to disaster insurance should be another area of legislative action. A proper disaster insurance policy needs to be chalked out in the state involving various insurance companies and creating a separate disaster insurance fund.

● Since disaster is a regular phenomena in the state there is an urgent need to incorporate disaster management and preparedness as a basic component o all development initiative

● In areas identified as disaster prone, the major thrust in preparing normal developmental plans and strategies should primarily focus on the reduction and elimination of impact o disasters on the people their livelihoods and infrastructure traditional knowledge and local coping mechanism should be combined with modern science, technology and in addition to that information system to facilitate the proposed planning process.

● Extremely poor and inadequate communication system in affected areas needs special attention. Roads, electricity, warring system and other form of advanced communications should be top priority.

● To initiate the process o integration of relief disaster mitigation and preparedness into normal developmental plan, it is paramount that these three components should not be treated separately

● In disaster prone areas environmental restoration and regeneration must be given the topmost priority

● The preventive and preparedness measures should be a part of normal developmental plan.

●Government officials especially at the district and block levels, panchayat members and personnel o NGOS and local organisations should be supported with training and information inputs or incorporating disaster preparedness in to all normal developmental activities.

III.   Conclusion:

The essence of this study reveals that how lack of determined political will and absence of political stake have weakened mechanism of cyclone control, rehabilitation and reconstruction process. The activities of political parties and interest groups and civil society is found to be influenced by the ongoing situation and they could be able to articulate and aggregate their interest in cyclone affected areas. However the steps taken by the state government is too many extent appear to be a good path finder for facing future disasters. After the super cyclone struck with a velocity 270kmph to 300 kmph killing more than 10000 people the state government establish the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority in 2008. Two decades since the super cyclone hit the coastal belt the state has learnt a lot from the disaster and the process to develop a better preparedness strategy is still continuing. Ever since the super cyclone 1999 the odisha government has taken vital measures to improve responses to the threat or occurrence of natural disaster in future. The lesion learnt from the super cyclone 1999 provided enough opportunity for the state mechanism to equip properly to response such kind of disaster.

There are some problems in restricting the death toll in this disaster. The most vital was lack of proper coordination and passing the core information to the people. The core information is important in minimising the death toll and economic disaster. It also increases the efficacy system in managing the disaster. During 1999 and prior to 1999 there was no proper coordination among various departments of government in the state. The effective response system is essential which was not there during this time. The generation of accurate core information and effective coordination to regulate the same for protection of the people were unavailable during super cyclone.

Further leadership is central to promote an effective response system. During the super cyclone the Odisha leadership under Congress government was proved to be very ineffective in regulating and managing the situation. Most importantly the aftermath situation of super cyclone needed strong and much effective leadership to take forward the state from untold miseries. But that was a thorough lacking in that context which led to more devastation.

However after super cyclone 1999 the odisha state has passed several disasters mostly cyclones but stood protective under the effective leadership of present Chief Minister. This is learnt from the experience that if there is proactive political leadership before, during and after the disaster the response system can be aligned with the goal of saving life. It is true that Political leadership can promote a culture of disaster preparedness. After 14 years of super cyclone when phaillin occurred in 2013 early warning, increasing interaction between state and central government, Indian metrological departments, non-governmental organisations helped in

tackling the situation. The new disaster management system interfaced with technology proved to be instrumental in rectifying the issues of coordination failure and the conservative world views evident in 1999 super cyclone.

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