INTRODUCTION

“The fact that there are vast areas of the country which have remained backward over the years is both the challenge and opportunity.” Sixth Five year Plan 1980-85.

Balanced regional growth is necessary for the harmonious development of a nation. Unless it is achieved, a nation can not be said to be developed in real sense. Right from the period of independence achieving balanced growth for the whole country had been the aim and challenge before the leaders and the Planning commission.

The co-existence of relatively developed and economically depressed states and even regions within the states is known as Regional imbalance.

India has completed 66 years of independence. Yet achieving economic balance among the states and the regions within the states appears to be still a distant dream. India occupies only 2.4 percent of the world surface area but supports the population of little above one billion, which is 16.7 percent of the total world population.

The disparities across the states and regions of India is enormous with respect to infrastructure, education, geography, culture, industry and employment. Some states have picked up the faster speed of development whereas some areas are developing at a very slow pace.

There are numerous reasons for this disparity. The planning commission has made the efforts to bring about balanced growth through various five year plans but the outcome is far from Satisfactory.

The disparity present in the country is in the various forms.

a. The disparity in the per capita income/GDP of the states.
b. The disparity of the infrastructure.
c. The disparity in education & human development.
d. The disparity in industrial development.
e. The disparity in employment opportunity.
f. The disparity in health facilities.
The aim of the research is to look into the factors responsible for it and strive to look for solutions to bring about some sense of uniformity especially under the forces of globalization and rapidly developing electronic media.

The differential performance across the states has begun to raise important policy questions within India. To what extent the differences are the result of global economic forces acting upon Indian economy. Whether economic liberalization and market reforms are tend to make rich region rich and poor region deprive of economic development especially which is very visible in the IT sector and educational sector.

The indicators of disparity

1. Net state domestic product (NSDP)
2. Per capita Net State Domestic Products.
3. Trends in investment and financial assistance.
4. Infrastructure disparities.
5. Social Infrastructure and human development.

Economic disparity is easily visible in the country by the fact that 40-50% of the populations in Bihar and Orissa live below the poverty line while states such as Delhi and Punjab exhibit very low poverty ratios.

There are in total 7 states of India which are lagging behind in the race of economic growth namely Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

Annual growth rates of different states between 1999 and 2008 strongly reveals economic disparities in the country as per the data Gujarat (8.8%), Haryana (8.7%), or Delhi (7.4%) were much ahead in the race as compared to Bihar (5.1%), Uttar Pradesh (4.4%), or Madhya Pradesh (3.5%).

Economic disparity in India can be compared by the fact that growth rates of the states of the single country varies to the greater extent. Rural Orissa (43%) and rural Bihar (40%) stands in the list of states with the poorest growth rates in the world while rural areas of other states of the same country India, lies well among the middle-income countries as rural Haryana
though the Indian Govt. is constantly trying to improve the economic status of different states by implying different policies and programs yet the issue is of major concern. The five-year plans introduced by the Indian Govt. have proved to be useful in reducing regional disparities. Five years plan emphasized on encouraging industrial development in the interior regions, but industries still tend to concentrate around urban areas and port cities while on other hand, union and state governments of backward regions are putting their efforts to bring the country under the state of economic equality rather than economic disparity.

**Efforts taken by the government to bring about the uniformity in the economic growth of the country.**

To spread the benefits of economic growth effort have been made to reduce the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor.

Apart from direct and indirect taxes following steps have been taken.

**Public distribution system** and its impact on poverty.

The main purpose of Public distribution system (PDS) in India was to act as a price support Programme for the consumer during the periods of food shortages of 1960s. Thus it acted as an instrument of price stabilization. The basic aim was to provide essential commodities such as rice, wheat, sugar, edible oil and kerosene at subsidized prices.

Radhakrishna report studied the decline in the poverty as a result of PDS subsidies. Taking India as a whole, the impact of all consumer subsidies on poverty was moderate; subsidies were estimated to have reduced poverty by 1.6 percent points in rural areas and 1.7 points in urban areas. About 12 million person (9 million in rural areas and 3 million in urban areas) may have moved out of poverty in 1986-87.

**Special Economic zones** - Special Economic zones (SEZs) denote geographical areas which enjoy special privilege as compared with non-SEZ areas in country. The main motivating
forces for setting up SEZs came from the ministry of commerce with the view to boost export and economic activities by attracting both Indian and foreign corporate to undertake investment in these areas.

Policy was introduced in April 2000 to provide internationally competitive and hassle-free environment for exporter.

**Action programme for the unorganized sector**- The National commission for enterprises in the unorganized sector was the first initiative taken by the central government to study in depth the problems of unorganized sector and recommend measures to improve the state of affair in this sector which provides employment to 93% of work force. It ensured the minimum conditions of the work, which included number of working hours, wages, insurance, provident fund, health, and medical facilities.

In India, the Centre has launched several flagship programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Rural Health Mission and the National Rural Livelihood Mission to protect the poor from the ill-effects of income deprivation and inequality. But most programmes have not been able to obtain the desired result.

Continuous earnest efforts are needed for the upliftment of lower income group. Growth and growth efforts should really be inclusive. If India has to reduce economic inequality it will have to radically change the mindset and approach of the people and provide universal health care, quality education, food security and social protection to all. Education and up-skilling of labour force are utmost necessary to build a developed country. The time has come when every flourishing corporate-house, industry and institute adopt a region, school or health centre for the development as a part of social responsibility. Here also government need to play vital role by making it compulsory and motivate them by giving exemption.

Governments must monitor the fair pay practices by private contractors. Trade unions can be strengthened by providing easy and fast legal help to protect the rights of the worker as a key instrument for reversing the trend. A serious thought can be given to the possibilities of inheritance taxes, taxes on amounts received in bequests, gifts and transferring.

**Recent developments**-
SSA and RTE.

FOOD SECURITY BILL & LAND ACQUISITION.