Contents

Resilient Infrastructure In India

Resilient infrastructure in India is a critical component of sustainable development and economic growth, particularly in the face of increasing urbanization, climate change impacts, and natural disasters. Here are detailed notes on resilient infrastructure in India:

1. **Definition**:

    Resilient infrastructure refers to the ability of infrastructure systems to withstand and quickly recover from natural disasters, climate change impacts, and other shocks or stresses while continuing to provide essential services to communities. It involves designing, building, and managing infrastructure in a way that enhances its capacity to adapt and remain functional under adverse conditions.

2. **Importance of Resilient Infrastructure**:

    Resilient infrastructure is of paramount importance in India due to various reasons:

a. **Mitigating Economic Losses**: Resilient infrastructure helps mitigate economic losses caused by disruptions. India's economy heavily depends on its infrastructure networks for transportation, communication, energy, and water supply. Any interruption in these services due to natural disasters, climate change impacts, or other hazards can lead to significant economic losses. Resilient infrastructure ensures the continuity of essential services, minimizes downtime, and protects economic assets, thereby safeguarding the country's economic stability and growth.

b. **Protecting Lives and Livelihoods**: Resilient infrastructure is essential for protecting the lives and livelihoods of millions of people across India. Infrastructure failures during disasters can result in loss of life, displacement of communities, and destruction of property. By building infrastructure that is designed to withstand hazards and recover quickly from disruptions, India can reduce the human toll of disasters and enhance the resilience of its communities.

c. **Enhancing Climate Adaptation**: India is increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events. Resilient infrastructure helps the country adapt to these changes by minimizing the risks and maximizing the opportunities associated with a changing climate. Climate-resilient infrastructure, such as flood-resistant buildings, drought-tolerant water systems, and renewable energy sources, can help India build a more sustainable and climate-resilient future.

d. **Promoting Sustainable Development**: Resilient infrastructure is integral to promoting sustainable development in India. By incorporating principles of sustainability, equity, and inclusivity into infrastructure planning and development, India can ensure that its infrastructure projects contribute to long-term environmental, social, and economic sustainability. Sustainable infrastructure enhances resource efficiency, reduces environmental degradation, and supports inclusive growth, thereby fostering a more resilient and equitable society.

e. **Supporting Urbanization and Industrialization**: India is undergoing rapid urbanization and industrialization, with millions of people moving to cities in search of better opportunities. Resilient infrastructure is crucial for supporting this urban transition by providing essential services, reducing congestion, and enhancing the quality of life for urban residents. Well-planned and resilient infrastructure projects can also attract investment, stimulate economic growth, and create employment opportunities, thereby driving India's urban and industrial development.

f. **Fostering Innovation and Technological Advancement**: Building resilient infrastructure in India requires innovation, research, and technological advancement. By investing in cutting-edge technologies, materials, and engineering practices, India can develop infrastructure solutions that are better able to withstand hazards and adapt to changing conditions. This fosters a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, stimulates economic competitiveness, and positions India as a global leader in resilient infrastructure development.

3. **Challenges Faced by India**:

Following are the challenges faced by India in building resilient infrastructure:

a. **Vulnerability to Natural Disasters**: India is highly susceptible to a variety of natural disasters, including floods, cyclones, earthquakes, and landslides. These events can cause widespread damage to infrastructure, disrupt essential services, and hamper economic development. Building infrastructure resilient to such hazards requires significant planning, investment, and implementation capacity.

b. **Rapid Urbanization**: India is undergoing rapid urbanization, with millions of people moving to cities in search of better opportunities. This places immense pressure on existing infrastructure, leading to congestion, inadequate services, and increased vulnerability to disasters. Developing resilient infrastructure in urban areas requires addressing challenges such as unplanned growth, poor land-use planning, and inadequate infrastructure provision.

c. **Aging Infrastructure**: Much of India's infrastructure is aging and in need of modernization and maintenance. Older infrastructure may not meet current resilience standards, making it more susceptible to damage from natural disasters or climate change impacts. Retrofitting or replacing aging infrastructure poses significant logistical and financial challenges, especially in densely populated urban areas.

d. **Limited Resources**: India faces constraints in terms of financial resources, technical expertise, and institutional capacity for building resilient infrastructure. Competing priorities,

budgetary constraints, and bureaucratic hurdles often limit investments in infrastructure resilience, particularly in rural and marginalized areas. Mobilizing resources from both domestic and international sources is essential to address this challenge.

e. **Climate Change Impacts**: Climate change exacerbates existing vulnerabilities and poses additional challenges to infrastructure resilience. Rising temperatures, changing precipitation patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events increase the risk of infrastructure damage and disruption. Adapting infrastructure to climate change requires incorporating resilience measures into planning, design, and construction processes.

f. **Complex Governance Structures**: India's complex governance structures involve multiple layers of government, bureaucratic procedures, and regulatory frameworks, which can hinder effective coordination and decision-making for resilient infrastructure development. Streamlining governance processes, enhancing inter-agency collaboration, and promoting decentralized decision-making can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of resilience efforts.

g. **Socioeconomic Disparities**: Socioeconomic disparities exacerbate vulnerabilities to disasters and climate change impacts, with marginalized communities often bearing the brunt of infrastructure deficiencies. Building resilient infrastructure requires addressing social inequalities, ensuring equitable access to services, and empowering vulnerable communities to participate in decision-making processes.

h. **Lack of Awareness and Capacity**: There is often a lack of awareness and capacity among stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector entities, communities, and the general public, regarding the importance of resilient infrastructure and the measures needed to enhance it. Investing in education, training, and awareness-raising initiatives can build capacity and foster a culture of resilience at all levels of society.

4. **Initiatives and Strategies**:

a. **National Disaster Management Plan**: India has formulated a comprehensive National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) aimed at enhancing the resilience of infrastructure and communities to disasters.

b. **Climate Resilient Infrastructure Services:** Various initiatives promote the development of climate-resilient infrastructure services, including water supply, sanitation, and energy, to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

c. **Smart Cities Mission**: The Smart Cities Mission focuses on developing resilient urban infrastructure by integrating technology, data-driven decision-making, and participatory planning processes.

d. **Green Infrastructure**: Promoting green infrastructure solutions such as green roofs, permeable pavements, and urban green spaces can enhance resilience while providing additional environmental benefits.

e. **Risk-Informed Development Planning**: Integrating risk assessment and risk reduction measures into development planning processes helps identify vulnerabilities and prioritize investments in resilient infrastructure.

5. **Examples of Resilient Infrastructure Projects**:

   a. **Flood Management Infrastructure**: Construction of flood embankments, drainage systems, and reservoirs to mitigate the impacts of floods in vulnerable regions.

   b. **Seismic Retrofitting of Building**s: Strengthening existing structures against earthquakes through retrofitting measures such as adding shear walls, braces, and base isolators.

   c. **Renewable Energy Infrastructure**: Investing in renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power reduces dependence on fossil fuels and enhances energy security and resilience.

   d. **Coastal Protection Infrastructure:** Building seawalls, groynes, and beach nourishment projects to protect coastal communities from erosion and storm surges.

6. **Way Forward**:

   a. **Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks:** Enforcing building codes, land-use regulations, and environmental standards can enhance the resilience of infrastructure against natural hazards.

   b. **Investing in Research and Innovation**: Promoting research and innovation in resilient infrastructure technologies and practices can lead to cost-effective solutions tailored to India's specific needs.

   c. **Enhancing Public-Private Partnerships**: Collaborating with the private sector can mobilize additional resources and expertise for developing and maintaining resilient infrastructure projects.

   d. **Building Community Resilience**: Engaging local communities in the planning, implementation, and maintenance of infrastructure projects fosters ownership and resilience at the grassroots level.

Building resilient infrastructure in India is imperative for sustainable development, economic prosperity, and the well-being of its citizens. By adopting a multi-faceted approach that integrates risk-informed planning, technological innovation, and community participation, India can address its infrastructure challenges and emerge as a global leader in resilience-building efforts.

The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)

The Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) is a global partnership working to make infrastructure more resistant to disasters and climate change. Launched in 2019 by India, it brings together a wide range of stakeholders:

- **Countries:** National governments from around the world.

- **UN Agencies:** Organizations like the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

- **Multilateral Development Banks:** Institutions that provide loans and grants for development projects.

- **Private Sector:** Businesses with a stake in infrastructure development.

- **Academic Institutions:** Universities and research centers with expertise in relevant fields.

CDRI's goals include:

- Promoting research on disaster-resilient infrastructure.

- Sharing knowledge and best practices.

- Developing standards and financing mechanisms for resilient infrastructure projects.

- Helping countries improve their capacity to build and maintain disaster-resistant infrastructure.

Overall, CDRI aims to ensure that infrastructure development supports sustainable development goals by considering future climate and disaster risks

Pre Sheshan and Post Seshan era elections in Bihar

Before and after the Seshan era, elections in Bihar underwent significant changes, particularly in terms of electoral integrity, transparency, and fairness. Here's a comparison:

Pre-Seshan Era Elections in Bihar:

1. **Influence of Political Bosses**:
    - Bihar's political landscape was dominated by powerful political bosses or "dons" who wielded significant influence over electoral processes and outcomes.
    - These political bosses often controlled local-level politics through a network of patronage, coercion, and financial incentives.
2. **Corruption and Nepotism**:
    - Corruption was pervasive in pre-Seshan era elections in Bihar, with political leaders and bureaucrats exploiting their positions for personal gain.
    - Nepotism and favoritism were widespread, with electoral candidates often chosen based on familial or political connections rather than merit or public service credentials.

Caste Dynamics and Identity Politics:

1. **Caste-Based Mobilization**:

- Caste considerations played a central role in pre-Seshan era elections in Bihar. Political parties often mobilized voters along caste lines, exploiting caste identities for electoral gains.
- Caste-based alliances and electoral strategies were employed to consolidate support from particular caste groups and communities.

2. **Polarization and Fragmentation**:

- Identity politics fueled polarization and fragmentation among different caste groups in Bihar. Divisive rhetoric and communal tensions were often exploited by political parties to consolidate their electoral base.
- Fragmentation along caste lines sometimes led to violence and social unrest during elections.

Post-Seshan Era Elections in Bihar:

1. **Strengthened Electoral Institutions**:

- The tenure of T.N. Seshan as the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) brought significant reforms to the electoral process in Bihar.
- Seshan cracked down on electoral malpractices and implemented measures to strengthen electoral institutions, including the Election Commission of India (ECI) and State Election Commission (SEC).
- The ECI became more independent and empowered to enforce electoral laws and regulations impartially.

2. **Introduction of Electoral Reforms**:

- Post-Seshan era elections in Bihar witnessed the introduction of various electoral reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, fairness, and accountability.
- Measures such as voter ID cards, electronic voting machines (EVMs), and voter education campaigns were implemented to improve the electoral process.
- Stricter enforcement of election laws and regulations helped curb electoral malpractices and ensure free and fair elections.

3. **Increased Voter Participation**:

- The reforms initiated during the post-Seshan era contributed to increased voter participation and confidence in the electoral process in Bihar.
- Voter turnout improved as voters felt more assured of the integrity and fairness of elections.
- Greater awareness about electoral rights and responsibilities led to a more engaged electorate in Bihar.

4. **Decline in Electoral Violence**:

- The post-Seshan era witnessed a decline in electoral violence and intimidation in Bihar.

- Strong enforcement of law and order during elections, coupled with increased vigilance by electoral authorities, helped deter instances of violence and coercion.
- Political parties and candidates became more cautious about resorting to illegal means to influence election outcomes.

In summary, elections in Bihar underwent a transformational shift from the pre-Seshan era to the post-Seshan era, with significant improvements in electoral integrity, transparency, and fairness. The reforms initiated during the post-Seshan era contributed to a more democratic electoral process, with increased voter participation and confidence in the integrity of elections.

National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)

About National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)

- **NCBC was initially constituted by the Central Government by the National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**

- It has been accorded constitutional status through "The Constitution (One Hundred and Second Amendment) Act, 2018", whereby Article 338B has been inserted, forming a Commission for the socially and educationally backward classes to be known as the NCBC.

   o The amendment inserted Article 338B, Article 342A, and Clause 26C in Article 366.

- **Composition:** The Commission consists of a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and three other Members in the rank and pay of Secretary to the Government of India.

- The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and other Members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President by warrant under his hand and seal.

- **Functions:** It shall be the duty of the Commission

   o to investigate and monitor all matters relating to the safeguards provided for the socially and educationally backward classes under this Constitution or under any other law for the time being in force or under any order of the Government, and to evaluate the working of such safeguards;

   o to inquire into specific complaints with respect to the deprivation of rights and safeguards of the socially and educationally backward classes;

   o to participate and advise on the socio-economic development of the socially and educationally backward classes and to evaluate the progress of their development under the Union and any State;

   o to present to the President, annually and at such other times as the Commission may deem fit, reports upon the working of those safeguards;

- o to make in such reports recommendations as to the measures that should be taken by the Union or any State for the effective implementation of those safeguards and other measures for the protection, welfare, and socio-economic development of the socially and educationally backward classes;

- o to discharge such other functions in relation to the protection, welfare, and development and advancement of the socially and educationally backward classes as the President may, subject to the provisions of any law made by Parliament, by rule specify