

The world's largest rainforest spans over 9 countries and covers 45 percent of the area in South America. The 2019 forest fires of Amazon brought the issue to the mainstream where the fire extended from Brazil, Paraguay, Bolivia to Peru. The consistent increase in the forest fires was observed by Brazil's National Institute for Space Research (Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais, INPE). The INPE finds were drawn in June and July of 2019, the issue was only brought into the mainstream in August. INPE reported there were 75,000 fires in the Amazon and a leap of 80% from the previous year was recorded.

The extreme form of deforestation in Brazil happened during the 1980s where 156,000 square miles of area was cut down for resources. With results in arable lands for crops, this helped Brazil to meet its global commodities demand. Not only by Agro-Industrial growth but also for cattle rearing farms, which increased its production of Soybeans and Beef for the Global Market. Environmental and Tribal Life has been a steep cost to pay for its model of development. Deforestation for the 'development' was a global phenomenon from Madagascar in Africa to Indonesia and these regions are in consistent reach of the forest fires in recent times. Brazil's mass deforestation started in the early 60s for alleviation from poverty, where the government offered generous subsidies and free lands in the forest. In response to that mass migration followed from the northeast dry shrublands and due to it the slash and burn agriculture and other cattle rearing activities by deforestation began but not until the 1980s that the scientist because to systematically check on the deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon with satellite imaging

The politics around the ecology that exists in the world-system until the middle of 80s was because of the evolution of capitalism. Expansion of European capitalism to colonize the rest of the globe was a process which began in what Wallerstein calls 'long 16th century'. This allowed them to not only exploit the resources but also occupied them. According to Wallerstein, "Historical capitalism involved... the widespread commodification of processes- not merely exchange processes, but production processes-that had been previously been conducted other than via the market. And, in the course of seeking to accumulate more and more capital, capitalists have sought to commodify more and more of these social processes in all spheres of economic life."

In capitalism the natural resources does not have a specific price for itself, it only gets value when it becomes a commodity. This view came to be true due to industrialization, the goods production was on a large scale. This implied that the colonizers craved for the natural resources and markets of the colonized. It meant that 'Third world' countries need to be 'developed' the same as European countries. The rainforest region was defined as

“underdeveloped” regions that needed to be ‘developed’. The western countries used the International Banks and Monetary systems to promote and finance their model of development.



Image source: VICTOR MORIYAMA/AFP/Getty Images

Large part of the 20th century there were attempts to economically integrate the Amazon. There has been enormous extractivism of natural resources that got major changes in the environmental conditions. Amazon has been thrust into Agro-businesses causing large spread land cover changes. Number of Wide-scaled drivers of environmental changes are working together and interacting in non-linear ways, like Land use change and deforestation which induces a high number of extreme climatic events and of course, forest fires. Largely the deforestation and other changes in the Amazon are in response to the global economy and demand for growth in other industries. The current model of development in the Amazon for more than of last century was deforestation for Agriculture, Cattle ranching, construction of Dams, Road, Railway etc., is leading for more ecological imbalances hence forest fires.

The dominant explanation of development emerged with the start of capitalism in the 18th century. Herbert Spencer's doctrine of development as a basic notion of society emerged during the Industrial Revolution. He proposed that survival of fittest in the marketplace, and gave rise to the concept of social Darwinism. One of the key points of his concept was Human dominance over nature, this idea led to industrial progress. Human's supremacy over resources fit into this concept easily and the extermination of the Global South with indigenous people and Colonization were justified. Development is defined as the industrial, technological and economic growth which is its basic aim. Neo-liberal capitalism is radicalizing the idea by coming up of a fantasy world of development in which everyone is in a perpetual state of happiness and limitless growth, This critical idea needs to be dominated by understanding that this is a drive for man-made extinction and global crisis in fantasizing of relentless economic growth and development that gets happiness.

Raul Prebisch in developmental economics and dependency theory comes up with Liberal Reformist ideas, assumptions of his theory comes from a Marxist understanding of the world order with Centre and Periphery. He problematizes the idea of the Globalization based Liberal order of Democracies and the chain of exploitation from the Centre to the Periphery. His ideas are critical on the supply and demand chain model of how the Periphery is overly reliant on the Centre for its survival which eventually leads to the fall of the economy. He proposes ways out of the problem by Taxing on exports, Import substitute Industrialization (ISI) and regional integration.



The theories of dependencies although had made a lot of structural changes in the Latin American ideas of development, The other theories came up with Post-Developmental Era (Arturo Escobar) which remains critical to the idea of development and the possibility of redefining development that rests largely with the action of social movements. Understanding of Development is noted as the power dynamics that construct the global south as 'Under-Developed' and as such, it needs to be liberated from it through adoption of liberal reforms enforced by the 'Developed' world and making them dependent on the latter. Critique of such an understanding of development contributes to the means of transforming Global South from the presumed idea of development and to reduce the dependency from the 'Developed'. This crucial understanding of the development and its critique is important for mobilizing the social movements by awareness of actions of the 'developed' and is certainly indispensable for those wanting to transform 'development'

After understanding the Dependency theory and post-developmental era it is crucial to understand the linkages that liberalization of economy has on the forest which in turn

causes ecological imbalances, therefore forest fires. Despite this, there are claims that the governments in Brazil and the Amazonian regions are selling off these lands to multinational corporations and firms which displace the indigenous population and their native methods of forest conservation and usage is completely destroyed. Then is really Liberalization of the economy the answer for the problem in the Amazon or is it the causation of the problem?

Francis Bacon's idea of understanding development and nature was different, Bacon pointed out that nature is largely known and female and the task of technology and science was to get the right kind of hierarchies and domination over it. Mary E John in her works writes about the idea to figure the priorities those working in the interface of gender and development, not limiting itself to the idea of 'pure' economics with just statistics and Empirical data but by broadening feminist understanding of the economy, making it really a work for more emancipatory and inclusive order and the one always open to everyone and has the 'reason' behind it. Slavoj Zizek mentions about the crisis in Europe talking of Waldsterben in relations to the Amazon forest fires, the news of Waldsterben burning was a popular debate and there was an analysis that within half of the century there will be no forests in Europe, but on the contrary, there are more forests in Europe than in 20th century. How did this happen? According to him, we are becoming more and more aware of the problems arising from these, "ecology of fear" and the fear of looming catastrophe is thumping in people's minds. This fear marks a developing idea in global capitalism.

The entire idea of Development in Latin American context due to Globalization is equating development with measures in terms of GDP and GNP growth. Developmentality has destroyed the natural resources base on the Earth. Development's idea should be sustainable i.e., more socially adequate and morally right. Developmentality that is only technological and industrial growth has put the world in grave problems and the nature of biosphere and civilization in question. Developmentality needs to be studied from various perspectives and narratives.

Capitalism favours the few, displaces the indigenous and radically exploits the Natural resources and the empirical data and statistics may state something but the degradation of the biosphere notes the other. The strategy applied by these neo-liberal reformists is flawed and henceforth such ideas need to be challenged. The Forest Fires of Amazon of 2019 were alarming to these ideas of what the development is based on. The critical analysis of such ideas must be encouraged, Forest Fires of Amazon, Indonesia, Africa are indicating towards the flawed system of economics and governance and these ideals need to be revised by another set of ideals based on emancipatory economics, lifting lives of the marginalized and continuously counterposing to the dreaded ideas of capitalism.



Image source: AFP

Conclusion

Drawing new alternatives and redefining development may although take time but practising of such ideals which are not limited to just the demand-supply economics but lead to a more emancipatory way of life is the ideal. This does not discount modernization but a critical negotiation between both needs to be a way forward. The native indigenous ways of conservation and critical analysis of understanding their ideals of development and growth to the modern understanding of what it is to be 'developed'. The forest fires of Amazon are directly attacked by these forms of techniques which plague the forests. The solution for the wrath of forest fires is although difficult but ways to curb the destruction can be addressed.

Zizek in his essay responds to the question on ways to get out of the crisis, He emphasizes that this 'deep mess' has no simple democratic solution but the awakening of people not only the governments should decide. He continues his argument by stating that countries need to come out of the geopolitical tactics when the planet itself is coming to an end. The blame game of the first and third world should be out and it needs to make sure that era of sovereign states is ending and a strong global agency needs to coordinate measures and such agency points in the direction of communism. Escobar Arturo enunciates to the point of Anti-development discourses that start in the present crisis of 'developed' and need to

work towards the grass-root groups. The potential for a radical change of the capitalist order and search for different ways of maintaining societies and economics and meeting needs of people and rejection of the western ideals of development in the Global South.

Response to the anthropological reasons for Forest fires in Amazon needs a wider approach and a more radical response. The model of exploitation in forms of development not only needs to be rejected but different trajectories of ideas need to be encouraged. Forest fires are one phenomenon to the huge problem of environmental degradation which results in tumultuous other problems. Although the ideas of Zizek and Escobar aims at meeting social movements in the post-developmental Era the negotiations with the governments regarding the environment and what kind of agency to be taken care needs to be articulated. Forms of capitalist developments in Amazon are clearly not favouring the health of the biosphere. The negotiation between the Traditional and the modern and learning from the conservation practices of natives need to be understood and practised.

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