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Q5(b)

Discuss the emerging forms of 'inequalities' and 'acute poverty' as major challenges of social transformation in India.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Challenges of Social Transformation

Challenges of Social Transformation: Crisis of development: displacement, environmental problems and sustainability; Poverty, deprivation and inequalities; Violence against women; Caste conflicts; Ethnic conflicts, communalism, religious revivalism; Illiteracy and disparities in education.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss the emerging forms of 'inequalities' and 'acute poverty' as major challenges of social transformation in India
- Keep liberalisation, caste, and informal work in view

Revision summary

New inequalities grow around private school, health, and metro work.

Informal labour is the structure of that split.

Acute poverty remains landless, Adivasi, Dalit, and female-headed.

Illness and displacement turn poverty sharp.

Transformation must join growth to rights in land, wage, and care.

Introduction

Social transformation in India now meets new inequalities of skill, city, and private service, together with acute poverty that is no longer only a village calorie story. The challenge is dual: glittering growth and a leftover India.

Body**Emerging inequalities**

- Post-1991 private education and health split capabilities, which Sen would call unfreedom beside GDP.
- Formal cores with informal peripheries, as Breman's labour shows, create a two-speed workplace.
- Digital, English, and metro rents add a spatial class. Beteille's disharmony is now mall versus basti.

Acute poverty

- Landless Dalit and Adivasi households, displaced peasants, and female-headed families remain in depth poverty, which SECC-type counts still catch.
- Urban slum poverty is cash-poor and service-poor at once.
- **Feminization of poverty** and missing social security make illness an acute trap.

Challenge for transformation

- Sanskritization and planning-era mobility do not map these forms.
- Transformation fails if it is only a larger middle class on a caste-informal base.

Flow diagram

Liberalisation -> Private skill metro split
Land caste gender -> Acute poverty
Private skill metro split -> Challenge of transformation
Acute poverty -> Challenge of transformation

Conclusion

Emerging inequality is credential, metro, and informal dualism. Acute poverty is still caste-land-gender. Social transformation must treat both, or growth will only rearrange the queue.

Facts & figures

Socio-Economic Caste Census (SECC)

Household deprivation data that still map acute rural poverty.

Jan Breman

Informal and circular labour as the form of urban-rural inequality.

Privatised social goods

Education and health as emerging class walls.

Feminization of poverty

Women's deeper, stickier poverty as a transformation challenge.

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