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Q5(a)

Analyze the idea of developmental planning in India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Visions of Social Change in India

Visions of Social Change in India: Idea of development planning and mixed economy; Constitution, law and social change; Education and social change.

Core demand of the question

- Analyze the idea of developmental planning in India
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Planning was directed modernization through the state.

It delivered industry and **Green Revolution** gains unevenly.

Class and caste shaped who benefited.

Displacement was built into big projects.

The idea survives after 1991 in a market-friendly form.

Introduction

Developmental planning in India was the state's attempt to modernize economy and society by design: **Five-Year Plans**, mixed economy, and a promise of growth with justice. Sociologically it is a heterogenous state project that tradition and inequality recast on the ground.

Body**The idea**

- Planning treated poverty, industry, and agrarian change as problems the Centre could sequence, from community development to **Green Revolution** targets.
- **Yogendra Singh** would read it as modernization of tradition through a legal-rational state, not as a copy of Soviet society.

Social content

- **A. R. Desai** saw planning as a bourgeois path that strengthened rich peasants and capital more than labour.
- Caste and region decided who entered IITs, factories, and irrigated belts, so the plan was never a caste-blind machine.
- Displacement of Adivasis for dams showed planning as a national good that local people paid for.

After the Plans

- Liberalisation did not end the idea; it changed the planner from licence-permit to infrastructure and welfare schemes.

- **The idea remains:** the state still claims to steer development, now with markets as partners.

Flow diagram

Five-Year planning -> Growth irrigation industry
Five-Year planning -> Uneven caste class
Five-Year planning -> Displacement
Liberalisation -> Planning as infrastructure welfare

Conclusion

Developmental planning in India is a state theory of directed change. It modernized industry and irrigation unevenly, reproduced class-caste advantage, and still shapes how the republic talks about the future.

Facts & figures

Five-Year Plans

The institutional form of Nehruvian developmental planning.

Green Revolution

A planned agrarian technology package with regional class effects.

A. R. Desai

Read planning as incomplete bourgeois development, not socialism for the poor.

Yogendra Singh

State-led change as heterogenetic modernization of tradition.

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