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ODISHA ASSEMBLY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES



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Green laws impeding Growth but not protecting environment

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Sri R.P Gupta, author of the book “**Turn-Around India**” and CMD of Shiva cement told that current environment laws in the country are illogical and not serving the purpose of environment protection in the true sense. Therefore it needs total re-writing. Environmental damage is mainly due to Greenhouse gases (GHG) emission causing global warming and climate change. Its impact is not localized but globalized. India’s per capita GHG emission is barely 1.43 T as against 18.31 T in North America, 8.01 T in European Union and 10.73 T by OECD members and World average of 4.74 T. Therefore primary responsibility should remain with these developed countries which are big damager to global environment.

We must not compromise on growth & development on the environment plea till “Per capita income” matches with developed countries. Thereafter we can join global mission for reducing emission. Similar strategies were adopted by other countries during their development phase. Industry’s share of GHG emission in India is barely 21.7% as against 17.6% from agro and 10.2% from domestic sector. Hence it is not logical focusing on industry and mines alone. Rather mines are least emitter, he added.

He asserted that current environment law is not addressing the core issue of GHG emission. Rather it deals with non-core issues such as CSR, workers’ health, land rehabilitation, water management, wild-life etc. which are governed by separate laws. Its focus is only on industry which has 21.7% share of GHG emission. Hence this law should be totally re-written which has created a big hurdle in India’s growth story. Particularly, public consent for this purpose has no sound logic. In most places such meeting is hijacked by group of person with vested interest. Rather project shifting is a big economic loss to local public in most cases. Yes- plantation should be certainly insisted as it absorbs GHG to some extent.

On top of it, we are delaying the environmental approval. The result- core sector of infrastructure industries recorded a dismal growth of 2.3% in May 2013 as against 7.2% in the previous year. It will drag over all industrial growth below 2%. Most of the services (nearly two-third) are the bi-product of industrial activities. Therefore it will make a dent on the growth of service sector as well.

He further asserted that current pollution laws are reasonably OK. We should not inter mix with environment law. Pollution must be controlled since it affects health of local inhabitants. Industry sector has controlled pollution to a large extent through investment. But civic bodies are not investing and are currently biggest polluters. Other pollution sources are agriculture and domestic activities. All such sources should be simultaneously targeted which will provide a true solution. Unless we take logical steps we will continue to suffer with low growth and without actual protection to environment or controlling pollution, he asserted.

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