



MAD- 2020

Ethics

Day 4

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Question - Though CBDR holds well on moral grounds, it does not pass the test of practicality as seen in the refusal of various countries to join the amended Kyoto Protocol. In the light of the above statements discuss if it will be prudent for developing countries to let of CBDR and opt for more pragmatic approach like opting for equal cuts in emissions.

Answer -

Introduction - CBDR is a framework within the UNFCCC; it acknowledges the **different capabilities and differing responsibilities** of individual countries in addressing climate change. The convention is divided into **Annex I and Annex II countries**, the former generally referring to **developed countries** and the latter to **developing countries**. Under the convention Annex I countries have a greater migration role than non Annex I countries. CBDR is codified under the **1997 Kyoto Protocol**, and the **Annex I country emission reductions were legally bound**.

BODY -

The main reasons due to which CBDR holds well on moral grounds are -

1. **Polluter's pay Principle** - Since developed countries have been polluting the environment much before than the developing countries, therefore they must take up the bigger share of burden in the corrective and remedial measures taken to save the environment.
2. **Accountability and Responsibility** - CBDR is in line with ensuring peaceful co- existence and Internationalism where coordinated actions of global problems are taken according to the accountability and affordability of the every nation concerned.
3. **Precautionary Principle**: The precautionary principle requires that, if there is a strong suspicion that a certain activity may have environmentally harmful consequences, it is better to control that activity now rather than to wait for incontrovertible scientific evidence. Since developed countries are more prone to losses due to biodiversity, they should follow CBDR as a precautionary measure for the same.

However, the reasons why it does not pass the test of practicality are -

1. **Narrow categorization and non-rational mandate** - Most developed countries do not reject the basic premise of differentiated responsibilities. The issue is not the differentiation between countries per se, but rather the reliance on only two (indeed anachronistic) categories: industrialized and developing countries. Developed countries are calling for all countries to be differentiated according to their economic capacity.

Environmental Ethical dilemmas involved in the above situation are -

1. **Means vs. End** - Rather than being concerned about the end to save the world environment ,today we are more concerned about the means of it, and everybody is just focusing on passing the buck and trying their best to delay the process till the very end.
2. **Equality and Equity** - To the present date we are not certain whether to follow the process of equity or equality in this race to save the world environment, developed countries are being treated as prisoners of the past whereas at present developing countries are also one of the biggest contributors to emissions which go unattended.

Therefore the most pragmatic solutions to the above environmental ethical dilemma would be -

1. **Global leadership by responsible nations** like INDIA/EU in case of efficient leadership vacuum

created by withdrawal of developed countries such as USA.

2. **Reinforcement of the idea that environment and development are not zero-sum game but rather a win-win situation** if seen through a **responsible and accountable approach**.
3. **Better Categorization of the countries** with an **improved mandate** by working on the loopholes in the present process.
4. **Developed countries** can focus on **technology transfer and credit availability to developing nations and emission cuts can be done jointly**.

Conclusion -

Developed and Developing countries should iron out differences and move from conquest to conciliation; from diatribe to dialogue and therefore triumphalism to tranquility can ensure wellbeing of human mankind.