

Preface

Environmentalism as social resistance against industrialism emerged for the first time in Western Europe during 1960s. But in India, environmentalism became popular after the emergence of Chipko and Narmada struggle. These struggles are known as the 'environmental movements' which were initiated to assert people's rights over natural resources. The environmental movements in India put stress on the conservation of natural resources and sustainable use; but more importantly, Indian environmental movement became a 'critique of modern economic development'. The twenty-first century Indian environmental movement, organized by the civil society organizations or non-colour, non-party based local micro-movement organizations, takes radical shape denouncing the process of, the so-called, modernization, technological hegemonism, consumerism, overconsumption, industrialism and neo-liberal globalism. Under the banner of civil society organizations or micro movement organizations, the new middle class people and mostly the natural resource dependent people or the traditional communities play significant role as the vanguards for the India's environment. On the contrary, the state authority is another platform which would organize environmental movement. Through the process of legislation and implementation of environmental policies, the state authority sometime can perform its role in the management of country's natural resources. Affirmative actions on behalf of the government for the prosperity of natural resources and for the protection of environmental rights for the humans as well as non-humans can also be designated as 'movement'. It is important to note that, to assume leadership role, the state institution executes certain programmes like policy formulation, environmental regeneration, reformation of state structures etc. But the civil society organization pursues environmental direct action or radical programmes, when organizes social protest against state-sponsored developmental project or against injustice done to the natural resource dependent people. Here the

metaphors like 'green' and 'saffron' are significant, when we connect the relationship between state, civil society, environmental movement and democracy. Nodoubt, environmentalism is both a social movement by the civil society and a political movement on behalf of the government or state institution. But there is a broad difference between the will of the state and will of the people. The state sometimes concentrates on the global market system, welcomes the multinational companies and allows them to extract natural resources to produce commodities that have greater demand in the global market. Sometime the state institutions take initiatives for huge industrialization and mega dam construction, which they call development. But such initiatives cause man-nature alienation and hence, state vs. people conflict emerges with greater intensity. The anti-POSCO movement of Odisha and Tipaimukh anti-dam movement can be seen to illustrate the nature of state vs. people conflict in India on the question of environmental rights.

The research questions in the present exercise are: what is the nature of new social movements in ecological and environmental terms? Is the environmental and or ecology movement anti-development movement or the movement for the reformation of existing developmental paradigm? When and how conflicts arise between environmentalists, human rights activists, developmentalists and the movement supporters? To what extent environmental politics emanates from the tribal communities? How ecological and environmental issues are linked with anti-globalization movement in the India? What are the differences between the role of state and civil society organizations on environmental issues?