

• ***Problems of Governance* Ronald D. Brunner**

Brunner has brought out several issues that have emerged over a period of time in development that can be broadly categorized as problems arising from types and structures of governance. The reading assigned for this week, though dealt with problems in natural resource governance, but is equally relevant in larger development context.

Brunner has highlighted some of the issues, which *inter-alia* include multitude of institutions with often conflicting mandates, lack participatory processes in the formulation of policy, almost exclusion of certain interest groups, conflicting interests of state and federal agencies, structure of governance which does not recognize the role of local communities in formulating policies at local levels.

Brunner argues for striving for arriving at a common ground to resolve the issues amicably. The author discusses the problems in agreeing on the common interest and the inherence conflicts with special interests. Although, I don't fully agree with the author's arguments regarding what constitutes common interests, the notion of democratically resolving the issues is acceptable, as long as the genuine interests and aspirations of the minority and other socially marginal groups are taken care of adequately.

Yes, I very well can relate to the issues raised to my own experience in India. Much of colonial bureaucratic structures are still present today despite over half a century of independence. The issues are more visible in natural resource sector where the problems raised in the reading are also valid in Indian context. Most noteworthy is the problem of state denying access to local communities to forest, which traditionally relied on forests virtually all their needs in the name of conservation. The traditional community structures like *van-panchayats* (village forest councils), which used to formulate resource policy at local community level, are being dismantled with newer more complicated state control through a web of federal and state government agencies. The new conservation program, though called *joint forest management*, hardly has any "joint" element it as local communities are literally excluded from policy making processes.