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CHAPTER

1

Professor Amartya Sen's Thoughts in Welfare Economics

C. DHANDAPANI AND G. JAYASANKAR

Professor Amartya Sen is one of the World's most important and influential intellectuals, one of its foremost thinkers. The award of the 1998 Nobel Prize for Economics to the great economist was the best thing that happened to the Nobel Prize in this field. This long-overdue award was for Sen's contributions to welfare economics and, among other things, for restoring "an ethical dimension to the discussion of vital economic problems". Prof. Amartya Sen's contributions to welfare economics, the basic theory of how societies make choices that are both fair and efficient, have become part of every graduate student's training in economic theory.

Welfare economics is closely related to social choice distribution of goods, services, benefits and poverty. Amartya Sen made several key contributions to the research on fundamental problems in welfare economics. The contribution vary from axiomatic theory of social choice, over definitions of