
CHAPTER - SEVEN



CHAPTER VII

: THE SUMMING UP :

After having discussed thoroughly the problems and prospects of drought prone areas in general and of drought prone Solapur district in particular ,we are going to sum up the results we have arrived at in the following paras.

1) Since the beginning of the planned economic development and especially from the mid sixties , the frequency of droughts and the extent of droughts have been increasing in India. Despite the overall satisfactory growth of agricultural production ,the structural and regional imbalances have occurred all over the country.Maharashtra need not be an exception to this general observation .In Maharashtra too the structural as well as regional imbalances in respect of its agricultural development have emerged .We find an origin of regional imbalances in scarcity conditions of certain regions .Certain regions have become subject to a chronic drought situation .The main source of drought in this region has been the lack of normal rainfall and also the irrigation potential.According to some recent studies (1986-87) more than 24,000 villages have been affected by droughts covering the population of 1.56 crores ,(25 per cent of the total). The drought affected population numbering 1.56 crores being

8.2

rural ,its percentage to the total rural population of Maharashtra works out to be 38 per cent .By observing the number of years declared as drought years and also the number of population affected in every drought year ,we concluded that the droughts have become a constant feature of the Maharashtra's economy.

2) Solapur district being one of the districts identified as chronically drought prone area by both the Irrigation and Sukhatankar commissions.If we apply the definitions of drought ,given by some disciplines;we arrive at rather perplexing situation .For instance ,if we accept the Indian Meteorological Department's definition of drought that the area or district ,which receives 50 per cent or less than its normal rainfall in a year, then that year could be regarded as the drought year for that area , then Solapur district could have only two years (1952-53 and 1972-73) as drought years.This is a rather strange and totally unacceptable to a common observer .But by another definition not of drought, but of scarcity condition i.e. the area could be regarded as 'scarcity hit' area (near drought situation)when it receives 750 mm.or less annual rainfall .Solapur district's annual rainfall being 584 mm,with the exception of one or two years all the years of our study could be regarded as scarcity hit years .In a recent years because of temporal and spatial uneven distribution of rainfall , the probability of occurrence of

7.3 drought has become much more greater in the district .

3) Over the period of our study we worked out the annual compound growth rates of area, productivity and production of major cereals , pulses and other food crops for both short periods i) 1950-65 ii) 1966-85 and iii) for a longer period 1950 -1985 . Though the annual compound growth rates of major cereals like jawar and bajara worked out to be uneven during short periods , over the long periods both the major crops have lost their areas , improved their productivity slightly , and improvement in productivity being greater than the losses in their areas , production tended to increase . Another cereal crop wheat has gained in its area , productivity and consequently its output over the same period. Though rice being not an important cereal of the district , the productivity and production exhibited high growth rates despite the decline in its area. On the whole the area under all the cereals tended to decline over the period , whereas the productivity and production of cereals of the district tended to move more or less in the unison of the movement of jawar's productivity and production over the period under reference.

4) Pulse crops of the district mainly being tur and gram , tur only has revealed , the trend in respect of its area to gain , whereas in respect of its productivity and production it revealed declining and constant trend respectively.

7.4

The area under total pulses, productivity and production somehow have revealed satisfactory growth rates. The major contributory factor in the output growth of the pulses seems to have been the productivity growth rather than area growth. Clubbing together cereals and pulses categorising them as foodgrains crops, we find the output growth of foodgrains has been caused by area growth rather than productivity improvement. So therefore, despite the differences in growth rates of individual food grains crops both during short periods and long periods, we arrived at the important conclusion that because of the scarcity of rain and also inadequate irrigation facilities there seems to have been no improvement in the productivity during the period under reference.

5) In respect of cash crops -perennially irrigated: sugarcane crop and rainfed crops groundnut and partly irrigated and partly rainfed cotton -one cannot be satisfied with their productivity and production growth rates. Sugarcane cultivation is concentrated in irrigated pockets of the district especially in Malsiras taluka and western parts of Pandharpur taluka, where Nira right bank canal irrigation is available. The area under sugarcane has increased more or less with the increase in irrigation but productivity growth did never exceed the area growth. In fact productivity remained far below the area trend. The production growth rate behaved more or less in sympathy with area growth. Another cash crop

7.5

of the district -groundnut has revealed the opposite trends to those of sugarcane .The area under groundnut has declined at a high rate .It being greater than marginal improvement of yield.Groundnut production declined as a result of decline in its area ,still another major cash crop of the district cotton, has exhibited rather satisfactory growth rates in regard to its productivity and production .Over the period area under it tended to remain constant ,while productivity increased and pushed the production growth rate. Of these three ,cotton seems to have made comparatively better strides in regard to its productivity and production when compared with those of sugarcane and groundnut .Though one can be proud with regard to sugarcane cultivation and its extension over irrigated area of Maharashtra which has transformed the whole economy of Maharashtra ,we are of the view that ^{over} the long period the sugarcane cultivation in the district seems to have made no progress when judged by the standard of its productivity improvement.The expansion of the output has been the result of sugarcane area expansion alone .

6) While reviewing the measures adopted under DPAP we noticed that ,the emphasis was laid on short term measures intended to give temporary relief to the drought hit area and the people .The lot of amount is being spent on short term measures without enabling certain pockets of the district and the people to get rid of constantly impending droughts.

7.6

The long term measures which are not included in the DPAP like major irrigation projects and the research and development activities in respect of dry farming technology seems to have been rather considerably delayed . The major and medium irrigation projects which have a largest irrigation potential will have to be expedited .With a view to providing a solution of rather a permanent nature , larger budgetary resources of the government of Maharashtra will have to be allocated to ongoing irrigation projects -Ujani irrigation project , establishment of CADA and propagation of new varieties of crops evolved by the Dryland Farming Research Institute Solapur, through strengthening of extension services of the department of agriculture , the Govt. of Maharashtra .

**** *****