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CHAPTER - VII

SUMMING UP

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CHAPTER - VIISUMMING UP

Despite the impressive rates of growth achieved by cereals like rice, wheat and jowar during the planned economic development period 1950-85, all over the country structural and regional imabalnces in the agricultural porduction have occurred and have become serious too. Regional imbalances in respect of agricultural development and the overall economic development have been caused mainly due to the existence of drought prone areas. The year 1987-88 induced many people in the field of academics, administration and even in the voluntary organisations to undertake the study of the problems of the drought prone areas recently. The author of the present work even before the occurrence of the unprecedented drought 1987-88 concieved the idea of undertaking the present work with special reference to Bijapur district designated as drought prone district by the different commissions on agriculture and the Government of Karnataka. The study covers rather a long period of 35 years beginning from 1950-51 which coincides the beginning of the planned economic development in our country. By studying the changes in the agricultural front over this period the following results emerged from the present study.

1. Over the period the district has been subjected to the vagaries of monsoon resulting in downfalls of agricultural output affecting severely the agricultural incomes. Larger the incidence of drought the greater would be

the loss to the agricultural output and incomes as observed over the period under reference.

2. In respect of the major cereals, jowar (kharif and rabi), bajra and wheat despite the uneven compound growth rates of production during shorter periods, the trends of area, output and yield of these major cereals though worked out to be uneven, the long term growth rates seem to be positive. As such a shift in the cropping pattern did not occur over a long period. Therefore, the commercialisation of agricultural production did not take place in the district by diverting area under foodgrains to cash crops like groundnut and cotton. In the category of oilseeds to some extent the diversion of area did occur to the cultivation of sunflower but it is doubtful whether that trend will be sustained over a relatively longer period of time, owing to the changes in the relative price structure for sometime which has become almost unprofitable considering the long term growth rates of foodgrains excluding the pulse crops the area output and yield are much more satisfactory which may appear as a paradox to many.

3. The pulse did not show much progress in respect of area output and yield over the period under reference. According to some experts the pulse crops will be more suitable in drought areas as they are drought resistant. Some experiments are going on in association with ICRISAT at Agricultural Research Station Bijapur, with a view to evolving improved varieties of pulses. Though they have been successful in evolving suitable improved varieties for the district, the farmers in the district have not been accepting them. The explanation for this, that we get from experiment station is that

there is a lack of co-ordination between the scientific research agencies and the extension services of the government. This apart a separate research will be regarded as to why farmers are not extending their areas under the pulse crops and along with it new methods of cultivation evolved by the research agencies. The farmers lethargy has been confined only to this particular category of crops and therefore need not be contradictory to our observation of the farmers as most enterprising and courageous to accept the challenges posed by the droughts.

4. What conclusions we have arrived at in respect of pulse crops are more or less true in respect of oil seed crops grown in the district. The major oilseed crop that is groundnut has consistently been losing its area and yield resulting in declining trend of the output over the period. Its growth rate of yield has remained constant. Safflower is, on the contrary registering an increase in area, output and yield. The decline in the area under groundnut and other minor oilseed crops would, to some extent, be explained by the intra-category substitution of crop i.e., sunflower has in recent years, emerged as a substitute crop for the groundnut.

5. What we have mentioned in the above para with regard to the ground nut crop, the same things have been happening in respect of the major commercial crop of the district that is cotton. Unfortunately, the new varieties of the cotton have not been established in the district. The new varieties more susceptible to the instability of the climatic conditions, the output of the cotton fluctuated rather violently during the latter part of the period. A shift back to the traditional varieties of cotton has occurred and its output trend remained almost stagnant over the period.

6. Realising the severity of the impact of drought the Karnataka government took certain measures to relieve the population from the ravages of the drought. The short <sup>term</sup> measure implemented aimed at providing employment opportunities with a view to generating incomes in certain sections of the agricultural population. Simultaneously the objective of short term measures has been to create productive assets which would assure income generation in future also. But so far, unfortunately larger amounts spent on relief works did not result into the productive assets.

7. The long term measures in the form of extending the irrigation facilities to the maximum extent possible would be the only lasting solution for the sufferings of population in the district. The extension of irrigation facilities could be achieved only after the completion of U.K.P. Ghataprabha, Malaprabha, Hippargi barrage, Ramathal and Mulawad lift irrigation projects. But if one takes into account the time dimension of these projects and the allotment of the financial resources, then the prospects at least for the present generation seem to be bleak and they will be just like a mirage. However the State Government of Karnataka should be particular with regard to retaining its Krishna water rights by completing U.K.P. within the stipulated time i.e. 2000 A.D. The U.K.P. being a major project benefitting the drought hit districts, in the next two five year plans financial resources will have to be allocated in a larger proportion even at the cost of other developmental activities and also by reducing considerably non-developmental expenditures.

8. Despite the pessimistic note regarding the irrigation works and their prospects we are rather optimistic as to the beneficial effects and transforming the drought prone area into the agriculturally prosperous areas, provided they are completed within the scheduled time. Given the rich natural resources i.e. highly fertile agricultural land and labour and to some extent the entrepreneurial capability in the agricultural community, the prospect for high growth of agricultural output is relatively larger in the district, with the condition that the basic input that is water supply is assured to the thirsty land. Then, district will be a Punjab of Karnatak, which is a symbol of agricultural revolution for the whole of India.

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