

P R E F A C E

India has emerged, during the post-Independence era, as one of the leading Countries of the Third World. The present stage of economic development in the Country is in no small a measure due to the adoption of Development Planning as a vital tool for reaching the desired goals. Nevertheless, despite three decades of Planning, India still continues to face certain basic problems of development. Though India has progressed in several respects, yet the fact remains that it has not developed to the extent it ought to have developed. It is also to be conceded that the fruits of Planning have failed to reach all the sections of the Society, particularly the Weaker Sections, in an equitable manner. Consequently, a major section of the population continues to be below the poverty line. Of course, this may also be attributed to the problem of population explosion which has been afflicting the Country for long; whatever improvements are made in the Economy as a result of Planned efforts, they are offset considerably by a constant increase in the population of the Country. One of the ways by which the fruits of Development Planning can be made to really reach the masses in the Country is to adopt Area Planning or Decentralised Planning.

An attempt has been made in this Study to establish as to how Indian Planning lacks realism as it is mainly done from the top and not from the grass root level and as to how, consequently, the natural resources and other potential available in different parts of the Country are not exploited properly resulting in the twin evils of unemployment and poverty. In fact, decentralisation had never been the aim of our Planning. In the words of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru "Planning is cent per cent centralisation and nothing else. The Centralised authority responsible for planning might be big and there might be joint planning by all States for the whole of India. But decisions by such an authority should be taken in an over all way and given effect to jointly. The Central and State Governments should be looked on as part of the same living organism which had a duty to look after the Country as a whole".

But /it has been demonstrated that grass root level Planning, which is based on the resources and needs of each and every Block in the Country and helps ensure the active involvement of the people in the implementation of the Plan, would bring about a far higher level of economic prosperity for all people in the Country. A Model has been developed, in this Study, for the formulation of Block Level Plans in India and the aggregation or integration of Plans prepared on these lines for all Blocks in the Country would provide the basis for the formulation or the emergence of the National Plan. It has been suggested that Block, in India, would be the ideal Unit for the purpose of Area Planning and that Block Plans should be based on, inter-alia, data collected through a Household Survey (Census method) that should be conducted in every Block for this purpose. The Area Planning Model so conceived has been applied to Nagari Block in Chittoor District of Andhra Pradesh in India in order to establish the empirical validity of the Model.

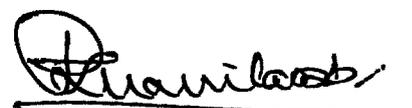
In this Study, I relied substantially on the Madras University Library, the Library of the Indian Bank, Connemara Library and a few other Libraries in Madras.

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