Chapter IX

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF DEVELOPMENT
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The spatial patterns of development and under-development borne out by the previous study in Chapter VIII can be properly appreciated by attempting an evaluation of the process of decision-making in the allocation of resources for development and in locating the developmental activity in space. These questions are related to the larger issues such as the political complexion in the state, stability or unstability in the political set-up, availability of development funds, centre-state relations, national priorities in development and the availability of development funds to the nation at large. If all conditions were met, the ultimate outcome will depend on the strategy of regional development. The political economy of development thus emerges as having an important bearing on the direction and rate of development.

Locationally the Chenab Basin in Doda district had had an initial disadvantage of having no common border with any of the neighbouring countries. This single factor has deviced the region of an opportunity of inviting development resources for defence preparation and other allied matters. The fall-out effect of such influx of resources is not insignificant. The roads are developed and the inflow of armed personnel and materials creates demands for a variety of goods within the region. Its
location has also been a disadvantage in another way. Lying away from the hub of political power the region has not properly manipulated the instruments of political decision-making located at the state capital. Not withstanding these factors, the peculiarly unique political history of the state of Jammu and Kashmir since its accession to India has not favoured any consistent developmental activity in the whole state, not to say of the region under study.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to evaluate critically the planning objectives and policies adopted to put the region on the road to development. However, much to the detriment of the region, free market forces have operated, sometimes in close liaison with official policies, and at others working at cross purposes with the official policies to denude the region of its natural and other resources. They have hastened the process of accumulation of these gains in the hands of a few privileged sections of population, much to the disadvantage of the poor masses living within conditions of stagnation in social and economic spheres.

IX.1 OBJECTIVES OF PLANNING IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR:

The main object before any state is the welfare of its people. The welfare of the people and the peaceful living conditions can be achieved through the removal
of poverty, disease and ignorance. For a poor state like Jammu and Kashmir it is an uphill task to provide a good quality of life to her people. The only way to provide the people a life free of all these evils is by social and economic advancement which would lead to the building up of a technologically mature society and hence a social order which would provide equal opportunities to all.

The history of planning in India since Independence is linked with that of the broad national goals. The Planning Commission of India which was established to assess the country's material capital and human resources and to formulate a plan for their most effective and balanced utilization has acted as the main body entrusted with planning responsibility. In the constitution of India the basic objectives were set forth as "the directive principles of state policy" which were accepted by the state. These directive principles were:

"The state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effect-

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ively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall be ensured;

"That the state shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing - (a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood; (b) that the ownership and control of material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; (c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."²

It was in 1954 that the government of India adopted a socialist pattern of society which laid stress on:

(i) building a rapidly expanding and technologically progressive economy, and

(ii) a social order based on justice and equal opportunity, through democratic means.

² Government of India, Planning Commission, Third Five Year Plan, 1961, pp. 3-4.
IX.1.1 Planned Development:

Immediately after partition of India the state of Jammu and Kashmir experienced an influx of refugees which added to the misery of the people further. The state had a very poor industrial base usually consisting of the village industry. The pressure of population on land increased abruptly. The state was committed to provide equal rights to one and all and raising the level of the people. This needed the rebuilding of rural economy, to pave for the industrial progress, removal of illiteracy by increasing educational facilities, provide health and other social amenities to the people. How could it be achieved? It was only through planning that these targets could be achieved. Planned development is the only means for securing speedy growth rate, reconstruction of institutions of economic and social life and tuning the energies of people to the tasks of development. The fundamental objective envisaged by the state is to provide sound foundation for sustained economic growth to increase opportunities for gainful employment and improving the standard of living. In the planned development schemes agriculture is given the top priority and agricultural production targets have been set to achieve self sufficiency in food.³

As the economy expands the opportunities of growth increase for private as well as public sector. In the pattern of development as envisaged by the Five Year Plans village and small scale industries have a crucial role to play in the development of the state. Similarly the role of horticulture and tourism along with power and irrigation is crucial.

It is conceded that under the prevailing conditions of the development process in the state it is not possible to eliminate the spatial disparities in the levels of development. Nevertheless, it has been one of the major objectives of the state plans to reduce the spatial disparities in levels of development.4

The planning objectives may broadly be summarized as follows:

(i) building a socialist society;
(ii) equalising opportunities to all;
(iii) balancing the distribution of economic power;
(iv) minimising disparities in income; and
(v) minimising regional disparities.

During the plan period, an emphasis has been laid to bring about overall development in the sectors of economy, particularly agriculture, animal husbandry, and to provide social amenities such as education and health facilities and develop adequate infrastructure.

**IX.2 IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING ON DODA DISTRICT:**

The rapid economic development in Doda district has been obstructed by the following factors:

(i) Constraints posed by the physiographic conditions,

(ii) Climate,

(iii) Poor accessibility,

(iv) Lack of adequate financial resources to build up infrastructural facilities necessary for overall growth, and

(v) Low level of technology.

The region is characterized by rough terrain and a high degree of slope over and above a severe type of climate during winter. The physical and climate constraints have retarded the development of a transport network in the region. The lower level of technology has hindered the production process and hence restricted the industrialisation process lowering the level of economic development.
IX.2.2 Irrigation:

As the district is entirely mountainous the major sources of irrigation are 'khuls' which are fed by the small perennial streams. The district had only 19,439 acres of area under irrigation in 1978-79. Irrigated area has increased by 6.3 per cent from 1968-69 to 1978-79. The government is paying due attention to the construction of canals (khuls). The major canals recommended during the 4th Five Year Plan could not be taken up in time due to the financial difficulties. These were taken up during 5th plan period these were Kastigarh canal, Doda-Desa canal, Pranoo canal and Shiva canal. Two important canal projects have been undertaken to be completed during the 6th plan period, viz., Shiva canal and Darab canal. For the year 1979-80 an amount of Rs. 38.42 lakhs were spent on irrigation schemes. This increased to Rs. 39.10 lakh during the year 1980-81.

IX.2.3 Animal Husbandry:

A sound system of diversified agriculture must have well developed animal husbandry. The integration of agriculture with animal husbandry is essential for the optimum utilisation of the farm bye-products, maintenance

of soil fertility, fuller employment of agriculturists throughout the year and increase in rural income.

Livestock has a prominent position among the resources of the district. The suitable climatic conditions and availability of highland pastures and poor agriculture have led to livestock herding. On the other hand, livestock rearing has remained the traditional occupation of the people in the region. Bhals, Bhuals, Gadis, Gujjars and Bakerwals have kept the tradition alive even today. The process of development does not sum to have changed these communities. The official statistics show an continual increase in allocation of funds in the sector. The resources have increased from Rs. 7.1 lakhs in 1977-78 to Rs. 10.35 lakhs in 1980-81.

IX.2.4 Forests:

Doda is the richest district of Jammu and Kashmir in forest wealth. The forest area of the district accounts for more than 28 per cent of the total forest revenue of the state. About 25 per cent of the total forest revenue of the state comes from this district. The revenue is collected mostly from the forest lessees through whom the extraction of timber takes place. Although the income from forest resources has increased during the previous
the end of year 1980 the whole district was put on the Chenavi grid except 6 villages of Bhaderwah valley which are still getting power supply from Sartingal power house.

In the field of rural electrification some progress has been made. In 1961 only 3 villages in the district were electrified. The number increased to 6 in 1963 and to 7 in 1965. At the end of 1971 the number of electrified villages increased to 23 in the district. During the Fifth Plan period the number increased to 290 and the targets for complete rural electrification have been set for the sixth Five Year Plan. According to 1980-81 annual plan an amount of Rs. 57.99 lakhs were allocated for power development in the district. Apart from the local resources, the central government has also approved the Dool Hasti hydro-power project. This project as estimated, will start functioning after five years and would generate 5,000 kilowatts of power in the first phase.

IX.2.6 Village and Small Scale Industry:

There is no formal industrial sector in the district; some small scale processing units do exist. They are based on agriculture and lumbering. The district has all along remained a supplier of raw materials for indus-
tries outside the area. The benefits of this trade have so far accrued to a class of traders and contractors. Whatever small scale units are existing in the district they continue to be underdeveloped.

An attempt has been made in the plan period to improve the situation. The investment in the small scale industry in 1973-74 was Rs. 19.18 lakhs which increased to Rs. 27.24 lakhs in 1975-76. The investment in industry as compared to other districts of the state is very poor.

The first Industrial Development Plan in Doda district was initiated during 1975-76. This plan had a target of 490 new industrial units to be established which was supposed to generate a direct employment for 2,868 persons. A total investment of Rs. 209.49 lakhs was proposed.

An industrial development plan has been prepared for the period of five years, i.e., 1975-76 to 1979-80.

A perusal of Appendix XII reveals that the industrial development plan, although ambitions, was to a large extent unrealistic. It prepared an inventory of industries without giving due attention to the inter-industry linkages and without raising important questions,
such as specialized skills for employment in the industrial units, marketing of the products and inter-dependence of region specific production cycles. These weaknesses were surfaced during its implementation. A report on the achievements reveals that despite the investment of envisaged allocation of resources only 30-40 per cent of targets were achieved. By the end of 1979, only 145 new units were opened as against the target of 490 units. The plan, therefore, failed to make an impact on the region and did not produce an impetus for industrial development.

IX.2.7 Manufacturing Industry:

There are absolutely no large or medium scale industrial units in the region either in public or private sector. In fact there has been, in the past, some proposals to exploit the forest resources and use of coniferous wood in pulp-making plant. This could not materialise because of the absence of infrastructure. Similarly an attempt was made by some private parties to set up brewery plants at Batote. However, lack of electric power supply and other factors did not enable the project to be implemented. The establishment of such units is possible in future in view of the following factors:
(i) The region has a large potential for forest-based industries

(ii) Presence of some of the major minerals in sizeable quantities

(iii) Enormous hydel power potential of the Chenab river.

Roads, being the only means of transportation of men and materials, assume considerable importance in the economic set up of the district. At the end of the Fourth Five Year Plan the total road length in the district was 255 kilometres. This figure reached 400 kilometres (metalled) towards the end of Fifth Five Year Plan.

A number of roads are under construction which would help in opening the region to the adjacent areas, *e.g.*, Bhaderwah-Chamba road with a length of 80 kilometres, Bhaderwah-Bani-Basohli road with a length of 100 kilometres and 144 kilometre Kishtwar-Chhatru-Synthan pass road.

A sum of Rs. 140 lakhs had been utilized for the development of roads during the year 1980-81 and the priority still lies with the development of this sector.

**IX.2.8 Social Infrastructure**:

The district is one of the most backward district of the state. Hilly terrain, fragmented holdings and
limited irrigational facilities have rendered the agricultural pursuits less remunerative. But the economy is still predominantly agricultural with 76 per cent of the labour force engaged in it. Inadequacy of infra-structural facilities such as power, communication, finance, educational facilities, and medical facilities has directly or indirectly resulted in poor performance on the economic front including agriculture.

During the year 1980-81 Rs. 39.29 lakhs were allocated for education; Rs. 91 lakhs for water supply; Rs. 3.5 and 3.1 lakhs respectively for urban development and housing; and Rs. 0.50 lakhs on nutrition programme.

IX.3 A CRITIQUE:

The above account of the progress of planned development in the region and the pattern of resource allocations made so far leads to the conclusion that there has been a significant gap between what was desirable and what has been done. The strategy adopted so far to overcome the overriding constraints on balanced regional development and regenerative self-economy has been grossly inadequate and may be termed as window dressing only. There is no evidence to show that a systematic attempt was made within the official circles to evaluate the real regional needs and identify the causes of backward-
ness and then develop accordingly an integrated plan for development. A striking feature of the above survey is that the strategies were piece-meal in nature, thoroughly disintegrated and even irrational. Evidently, which the statistic on the allocation of resources are highly publicised, no critical appraisal of the development performance is ever attempted. Perhaps the announced plans were meant for political consumption and for satisfying the political opposition within the region. Similarly, there was a vast gap between what was envisaged and what was implemented.

The investment policy has inevitably led to the emergence of a class of beneficiaries, strikingly different from the masses. These groups are imounded most of the gains of development, however scanty they were. The class-structure of development mechanisms can be evaluated by citing the example of the forest leasing policy of the state. The policy has neither cared to check the present system of exploitation of forest resources nor corrected the distortions introduced by the outflow of these resources.

An attempt has been made to study the leasing policy and identify the region background of the forest lessees involved in the extraction of timber in order to throw light on the underlying social questions.
IX.3.1 Leasing Policy:

Leasing policy of the state is not simple at all. The divisional forest officer sends his estimate for minimum price of timber, in a 'compartment' to the conservator of the circle. It is then notified in the government gazette and earnest money is demanded from the lessees interested to participate in auction which takes place at circle headquarters in the presence of conservator of the forest circle. When the compartment is notified the lessees start visiting the compartment, estimate the existing population of the trees above 30 centimetres of G.B.H. on which the assessment of the volume of stock is based. After the auction the real hurdle starts. The lessee gets the sanction orders from the conservator and approaches the divisional forest officer. If the divisional forest officer is not busy with other important works he accompanies the lessee to the leased compartment and identifies the trees to be felled depending upon the G.B.H., the minimum being 30 centimetres. All such trees which are above this girth are marked with 'moos'.

7. A forest compartment is leased out for a period ranging between 5 to 10 years. The period of lease can be less depending upon the location of the compartment and the quantity to be extracted. Further the time of the lease can be extending depending upon the weather conditions.


9. 'Moos' is the identification number of the divisional forest officer kept under safe custody of the D.F.D. concerned.
felling a tree this identification mark is not to be destroyed until final clearance from the compartment. Anybody cutting an unmarked tree is penalised for unlawful felling. Each forest lessee is allotted a property mark usually the starting letters of his name. This property mark is noted in the forest check-posts all over and also sent to river transportation booms to avoid malpractices. After making logs the property mark is carved on both the ends of the logs and then it is thrown into the stream or river or gullies for transportation to nodel points. The material transported by trucks is checked at all the checkposts whether the identification is true or not whether the person has got the permission to transport it or not. The permission for transporting timber is renewed every year.

In case of minor forest products the licence is issued to the contractors and it is seen that no body except the licenced persons take the goods out of the region.

The above procedure adopted in leasing out the forest compartments, makes it clear that the state deals with the forest wealth on a commercial basis. Maximization of gains seems to be the main objective. There is ample scope for manipulation on the part of the lessees within the existing administrative procedure.
Secondly, the highest bidder may be anybody. This investigation reveals that they are mostly enterprising foresters and by and large drawn from outside the region.

IX.3.2 Regional Background of the Lessees:

The main drawback in the current leasing policy is the control of outsiders on forestry. Most of the lessees belong to the various business classes who have no interest in the development of the region rather they are interested in maximising their own gains. A little more than 95 per cent of the lessees holding the leases in the region have their base outside the region (outside Doda district) (Table IX.1). Only 4.8 per cent of

TABLE IX.1

Regional Background of the Lessees 1974-75

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Station or headquarter of lessees</th>
<th>Percentage of the total lessees working in the region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Inside the region</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Jammu Tawi</td>
<td>29.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Srinagar</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Anantnag</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Udhampur</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Pathankot</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Jullunder</td>
<td>4.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Amritsar</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Hoshiarpur</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>New Delhi</td>
<td>12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Simla</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual Administration of all divisions.
the total forest lessees belonged to the region during 1978. The Punjabi business classes have a long standing in the forest extraction. Before 1964 there had been no railway line in the state and Pathankot was the only railhead. At that time the whole timber extraction was controlled by the lessees of Punjab, barring a few exceptions. With the extension of railway system to Jammu the Punjabi forest lessees lost their grip to some extent and the business classes from within the state started taking interest in the trade. As a result of this change one finds that even the local people who had been serving as extraction agents of the lessees are now taking the trade into their own hands but due to the lack of capital are unable to compete with the established firms.

Even at present the bulk of the lessees are the residents of Jammu or Kashmir. The lessees who have their base outside the state account for more than 46 per cent of the total lessees working in the region, Jammu region accounts for more than 36 per cent of them, whereas Kashmir accounts a little more than 12 per cent of these lessees. The outside lessees have their headquarters at New Delhi, Simla, Hoshiarpur, Amritsar, Jullundur or Pathankot. As many as 12.2 per cent of the total lessees in the region have their base in Delhi, 4.8 per cent are from
Simla, 12.2 per cent have their base in Hoshiarpur, 7.3 per cent belong to Amritsar, while Jullundur and Pathankot account for 4.87 per cent each.

Inside the state 9.7 per cent of the forest lessees belong to Srinagar, 2.4 per cent to Anantnag, 7.3 per cent are from Udhampur and 29.26 per cent have their headquarters in Jammu city. It can be noticed that the bulk of the forest lessees come from the south and southwest with their bases too far away from the region and the distances between their base and the region are so large that one cannot think of any benefit from them to the local people.

Recently the Jammu and Kashmir government has taken a healthy decision to nationalise the forests whereby the extraction of timber, which should be conducted by the forest department with a separate wing called department of lumbering. But here too there is ample scope for bureaucratic malpractices. 10

10. During the year 1929-30 ten thousand scants were fished out of the region unlawfully by a forest lessee with the conveyance of the officials. Luckily or unluckily the material was intercepted with the help of an informer. The case is in the court. But then very many of such cases are not intercepted. Furthermore the unhealthy politics enters at this juncture to save the culprits as these dare-devils belong to the ruling classes.
Undoubtedly, the export of timber from the region will continue to be the main trade activity. However, if the lessees are drawn from within the region, the benefits thus accrued may contribute to the process of capital accumulation within the region and pave the way for their meaningful investment on industrial projects. The investment of surplus within the region will thus strike a new balance in region development.

IX.4 A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT PLANS:

An attempt has been made here to evaluate critically the strategies adopted towards the planned development of the different sectors of the regional economy.

IX.4.1 Agriculture:

The knowledge index of the people, who are engaged in agriculture is poor and nothing is done to improve the knowledge index of the peasantry. It is only in the vicinity of urban areas that the farmer are better informed. It is only in the affluent valleys of Bhaderwah and Banihal, river terraces of Bhela and Assar, that agricultural activity has some elements of commercialization. Elsewhere it is entirely subsistence agriculture throughout the region. It is a reflection on the state of affairs that the agricultural demonstration farm in Paddar which is trying to cultivate zeera and morchela escu-
lenta for cultivation has not produced any results even though two decades have passed. In Neeru valley the Sartingal agriculture farm is trying to improve the Himalayan maize but the work is still in the preliminary stage. It has been observed that some of the schemes introduced so far are good but they fail at the level of implementation.

IX.4.2 Irrigation:

During the year 1979-80 an amount of Rs. 65.72 lakhs was allocated for the development of irrigation. The allocation was reduced to Rs. 39.1 lakhs in 1980-81. Whatsoever may be the allocation, the implementation is again unsatisfactory. For example, the irrigation projects in hand at present in order of importance are as follows:

- Shiv Canal - Bhaderwah-Doda
- Darab Canal - Bhaderwah
- Mohala Canal - Doda
- Duligam Canal - Ramban
- Thakrai Canal - Kishtwar
- Lopara Canal - Kishtwar
- Togord Canal - Kishtwar

Let us take up first the Bhela canal which was completed long back during 1971. Immediately after it
was rejuvenated by the irrigation agency, the water seepage started. Villagers checked the leakage of their own for an year or so but after that the whole mountain-side started sliding. Now the condition is such that every year a lot of money is officially spent on maintenance but the situation remains the same, i.e., the water-flow continues for a week or so and then the canal slides with the moving slip. This situation is continuing for the last 8 years.

Other projects, such as Shiva canal project, Kishtwar canal and Mohala canal Projects have doubtful viability and may not achieve the desirable goals. The topographical and geological conditions have not been taken into account before taking up the projects. It may be suggested that instead of making such canals, it would have been much better if they had gone for smaller canals from various smaller streams to irrigate the inter-fluvial lands. A lift irrigation scheme would have been much easier to handle, would not have much time and would have involved much less expenditure.

IX.4.3 Sheep Husbandry:

According fo the plan outlay Rs. 21.0 lakhs were allotted for the development of sheep husbandry and Rs. 5.7 lakhs for the development of co-operation schemes. One
has to say that since sheep husbandry is one of the leading factors in the development of the region, it should have been given much more attention. Sheep development centres can be strengthened with qualified staff and acquiring better breed. Although the department of sheep husbandry is doing its best but there is still a gap between the herdsmen and the officials. Moreover most of the advanced centres are located in urban centres which is ridiculous. In fact none of the sheep breeding centres should be located below an altitude of 6,000 feet. The centres and offices should move to Bhalessa, Marwa, Paddar, Desa, Pogal, Sanasar, Moh-Mangat etc. instead of Bhaderwah, Doda, Kishtwar and Thathri if they went to render useful service to the people.

To encourage the people of the region to take up sheep culture, wool collection centres should be established at various places. Woolen textile industry which exists in the form of household industry needs face-lifting. It should be reorganized scientifically to achieve optimum utilisation of this resource. For this, long term loans should be given to the people on low interest. Before that the entrepreneurs should be trained properly to handle it at the level of cottage or small scale.
IX.4.4 Animal Husbandry:

Animal husbandry also needs reorientation. These centres are not working properly. Here too the hospitals have urban orientation. These hospitals should be immediately shifted to the rural areas and strict vigilence should be kept on the doctors that they remain in the hospital. It has been noticed during the field work that numerous animals die of similar diseases in the villages without any medical aid.

IX.4.5 Power:

Another project in the early stage of execution is Dul-Hasti power project. The survey engineers are busy. The project can usher an era of economic uplift for the local people by providing hydel power. But it is not a 'multipurpose project' and it does not hold much of a promise to the dry farmers of Kishtwar. The flat land in Kishtwar has a rich potential for development. But there is no provision for irrigation.

IX.4.6 Water Supply Schemes:

More than Rs. two crores have been spent on water supply schemes during the last two years. However, not much has been achieved. The contractors are supplied with cement pipes by the department, which are to be laid in higher altitude villages such as Jalga, Tribbi, Chichora,
Bhalera and Kapra. It has been noticed that the pipes are being spread on the surface along the slopes. Can these pipes survive during the winter snow when Jai receives nearly three metres snow. Department should see that the pipes are dug inside the surface to ensure perennial supply of water.

IX.4.7 Industries:

The future of the region lies in the development of cottage and small scale industry. Handicrafts and handloom industry have remained as subsidiary household activity for ages. This industry needs scientific planning. Since the industry is seasonal hence in the first phase of the development planning the stress should be laid on its intensification during winter only because in winter the agricultural activity is almost absent due to severe climatic conditions and the people are free to utilize the time in these activities. During summer it should be voluntary. The authorities should provide incentives to the poor villagers in the form of machinery and not in the form of loans. Handloom development should be given first priority in the region. Such an important economic activity has been given very low priority in the allocation of funds as only Rs. 2.28 lakhs were allocated to handloom industry.
Chapter X

A SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The broad conclusions arrived at in the course of the study may be summarized as follows:

The present thesis analyses the man-Nature interaction in the Himalayan Chenab Basin. With the help of detailed analysis of aspects of natural environment, natural resources and the modes of economies it tries to establish the causes and consequences of backwardness in the economic and social domains.

The study shows that the region has remained underdeveloped both economically and socially. The economic set-up of the region which is dominated by activities such as forest gathering, subsistence agriculture and primitive herding simultaneously. The social under-development is reflected in the simultaneous presence of tribal or quasi tribal social order on the hill tops, skewed nature of land ownership in the valley bottoms and unbalanced structure of external trade.

The study brings into lime-light the rich natural resource potential of the Himalayan Chenab Basin. Seen in the context of this resource base, the low level of economic development emerges as the great anomaly. The
predicament of man in the Himalayan Chenab Basin is his incapacity to change the complexion of things as they are today. The existing state of affairs may be attributed to two sets of factors: natural and human. The natural factors operate as overwhelming constraints on the human options available for improving the quality of life. The cultivable land is confined to the river valleys and the natural gradient obstructs any substantial expansion. The limited land resource is further constrained by the climatic conditions which have a distinct seasonality in the distribution of heat and moisture. These factors have contributed to a generally low level of agricultural productivity. In fact, agriculture is a viable proposition in the valley bottoms only. Even today the ridge tops are supporting a typically tribal mode of economy where the activities such as forest gathering and livestock rearing dominate the scene. Agriculture in these areas is neither dependable nor productive due to the paucity of land as mentioned above.

The valley bottoms have relatively better and productive lands. In the valley bottoms of the tributaries of the Chenab the slope favours terraced cultivation. Successful agricultural practice in these areas is contingent on irrigation according to the plan suggested
by Nation. In the valley bottoms the land holdings are viable and the people are better of.

In a way, the under-development of the region can be attributed to the politico-economic decision making. Before Independence the region remained by and large a blind alley having no transport linkages except for the Banjhal cart Road which traversed through the western sector of the region. After Independence the region has suffered from a political neglect reflected in the poor allocation of developmental funds. It is only after 1974-75 that the region has received some attention from the popular government and the developmental programmes were introduced with seriousness.

The low level of development in the region is reflected in the low level of utilization of natural resources. The mineral and forest resources remain under-utilized whereas water resources have been poorly exploited. The spatial pattern of development and under-development borne out by the previous study can be properly appreciated by attempting an evaluation of the process of decision-making in the allocation of resources for development and in locating the developmental activity in space. These questions are related to the larger
issues such as the political complexion in the state, stability or instability in the political set-up, availability of development funds, center-state relations, national priorities in development and the availability of development funds to the nation at large. If all conditions were met, the ultimate outcome will depend on the strategy of regional development. The political economy of development thus emerges as having an important bearing on the direction and rate of development.

The forest leasing policy pursued so far reflects the neo-colonial tendencies where the natural resources are siphoned out of the region, the beneficiaries of which do not belong to the region and have their bases outside.

Undoubtedly, the exports of timber from the region will continue to be the main trade activity. However, if the lessees are drawn from within the region, the benefits thus accrued may contribute to the process of capital accumulation. Within the region and pave the way for their meaningful investment on industrial projects. The investment of surplus within the region will thus strike a new balance in region's development.

With the exception to a few pockets of visible prosperity the Himalayan Chenab Basin in Jammu and Kashmir has by and large remained backward. The people living
in this area are leading an increasingly hard life. They are virtually fighting with Nature for a viable existence. Even when other hill areas of India received high priority in the wake of Chinese aggression in 1962 this region remained unaffected. The resources of the region are awaiting development programme arrived at equitable distribution of gains among the poor. The introduction of modern technology is inevitable in whatever form it may be. At the same time it is also necessary not to disturb the eco-system of the area. The natural resources should be preserved for future generations with the help of modern technology. This is necessary because without the conservation and proper utilisation of resources of the mountains the economy of the adjacent plains may also get adversely affected. In case the resources of the region remain underdeveloped the industrial development process remains at a stand-still, this in turn may result in unemployment and hence the male population would move out of the region in search of opportunities initiating an unending manpower migration process.

Since the region possesses specific ecological and socio-cultural features the blanket character of the present planning process and development schemes do not
provide much of assistance. The rural economy of the villages of the region is being disrupted and life is becoming very hard because of declining fertility of soil which has resulted due to the deforestation which also lead to the shortage of fodder and indirectly to a shortage of water. Deforestation puts impediments on soil fertility by enhancing the soil erosion and reducing water conservation in the soil. The process of deforestation is inherent in commercial exploitation of forests which are leased out to private lessees who try to get maximum timber out of the region. The process of deforestation has increased continuously after Independence. The increased commercial extraction has initiated the process of unlawful felling and grazing in the region. The fundamental task before us is to conserve the forest wealth which can be done only by involving people in the process of afforestation. At the same time such involvement may lead to the confrontation between the local people and the lessees or the government. The best way is to eradicate the practice of leasing forests to private contractors. People would be motivated to protect the forests for long run benefits. The motivation cannot come only by developing timber industries or developing agriculture only. In this case they will go for more felling, but if the development is channelised
through the development of livestock, animal husbandry and sheep husbandry then the people would definitely be motivated towards saving the forest for a perennial supply of fodder.

It may be pointed out that the future course of development should be guided by the existing gaps and deficiencies. The following suggestions may be made here regarding the strategies to be adopted in the future.

(a) Creation of regenerative self-economies:

This will be possible only if a harmony is evolved between the natural resources of the region and the territorial production patterns. This process of productive inter-linking will begin by raising an industrial base within the region for processing the forest produce; by generating hydro-electricity for these small industrial units; by strengthening agriculture in areas where it is a viable economic proposition through developing kuhls, rather than building capital-intensive canal network; by developing pastoral activity on modern lives and inducing the traditional sector to get linked to it; by encouraging horticulture on natural slopes; and by organizing the market system for forest,
pastoral and agricultural produce in a way that they are integrated from within, allow maximum circulation of the generated surplus within the primary producers and eliminate the exploitative mechanisms.

(b) Creation of dedicated planning administrative set-up which is committed to the goals of social justice as laid down in the Indian Constitution.

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