Chapter VII
MEANS OF COMMUNICATION AND THE MARKET

For the rural development with a view to ensure a decent standard of life, especially for the weaker section of the society residing in rural areas, transport deserves the first priority. It fulfils the basic objective of rural development. It increases productivity by ensuring cheap delivery of inputs and increases marketability of perishable surpluses. It brings urban centres nearer to villages and extend urban facility such as banking, technical, educational and medical ones to the villages. It becomes easier for villagers to reach urban centres daily as skilled, unskilled and landless labourers. The milkman, vegetable and fruit growers, poultry and fishery producers of marginal nature, generally reach urban centres and come back by evening. The students from distant villages daily visit cities for education and patients for better treatment. Thus development in means of communication has reduced the physical distance and has brought them close together. It has decentralised the cities else urban problems would have been more than the present ones. Really the rapid change that has taken place in the rural life in the eastern Uttar Pradesh is the result of recent development in road transport and electricity.

Sathiaon Block has urban centres in all directions. In the north the municipal town Mubarakpur is within the boundary, in the west Azamgarh, the district headquarters is situated only at a distance of two kilometer from the Block boundary and in the east is situated Mohammadabad in Mau district. These towns are inter connected with roads, all traversing through the territory that falls within the boundary of the Sathiaon Block. The Block enjoys the facilities of both the means of communication i.e. the rail and road transport (Fig. no. 35).

1. THE RAIL TRANSPORT:

Sathiaon is a station on Railway line, recently changed into broad gauge from meter gauge, that runs between Mau and Shahganj junctions. It started functioning in 1905 as meter gauge and till recent time it provided very little facilities to the locality as on its two ends were the broad gauge railway lines and due to loading and unloading difficulties the businessmen did not prefered it. The railway line lost its importance day by day
since Bhatni - Varanasi section was converted into broad gauge. As a consequence the total trade and traffic was on roads.

The entire picture of traffic flow will change and it will provide an alternate route between Chhapra and Lucknow via Shahganj. It will have direct trains from the industrial towns of the east situated in Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Assam on one hand and on the other from industrial town of the west like Kanpur, Ghaziabad and Delhi. It is sure that this will change the communicational pattern and encourage the capitalists to start industries at Sathiaon. The frequency of trains will increase and the economy will grow in future. Sathiaon is a gateway to Mubarakpur, the greatest centre manufacturing Banarasi brocade sarees and improving status of Sathiaon as the communicational centre will help in the growth of Mubarakpur and the industry located there. It will improve the economy of rural people and improve their living conditions.

2. THE ROAD TRANSPORT:

On account of inadequate facilities of rail transport the total trade and traffic depends on roads. The main road that passes through Sathiaon is Lucknow - Ballia road between Azamgarh and Mau. The road has been recently widened keeping in view the highly increased traffic on it. Running for 15 kilometer in the Block area it connects the Sathiaon with Lucknow, Kanpur, Delhi and other towns in the west. In the east at Mau it connects national highway, which leads to the various places in the country. The buses are directly available for distant towns like Delhi and Calcutta. Azamgarh, one of the largest govt. Roadways bus stations lies at a distance of ten kilometer on this road. Sathiaon and Mubarakpur are connected with road. The distance between these two places is only three kilometers.

Sathiaon and Mubarakpur both are communicational centres in the area. Sathiaon, besides being a station on N.E. Railway, has road connection with Azamgarh in the west, Gorakhpur via Mubarakpur and Jianpur in the north, Mau in the east and Ghazipur and Varanasi via Jahanaganj on Azamgarh - Ghazipur road. It was its communicational location that it was selected as a suitable site for sugarcane factory. It is growing fast as town and service centre. It has Block office, hospital, veterinary hospital, degree college, intercollege, schools, cinema, a cotton
mill and market. In evening thousand of persons gather here to fulfil their requirements.

Mubarakpur, well known for silk handloom industry, has road connections with Azamgarh in the west and Mohammadabad in the east. It is situated on the road, running between Sathiaon and Gorakhpur via Jianpur on Azamgarh - Gorakhpur road. Off all the roads that connect Mubarakpur, Sathiaon road is most important. The raw material used in silk industry is brought by this road and it brings maximum traders for manufactured goods. It is used for bringing foodgrains and other consumable articles as trucks prefer to ply on it. It is the busiest road and it has maximum traffic flow.

Shahgarh is the third communicational centre of the Block. Situated at the third kilometer from the district headquarters on Azamgarh - Mau road. It has road connections with Mubarakpur and Samenda and Chhatwara on Azamgarh Ghazipur road. The road running between Shahgarh and Belnadeah (Chhatwara) is to be developed as ring road for Azamgarh city.

Besides these main roads there are village roads, which connect important villages to these roads. For these village roads land was acquired during consolidation as chack roads and they were constructed under three main schemes - 1. Nehru Rojgar Yojana, 2. Sugar mill welfare scheme and 3. Ambedkar gram Yojana. Under Nehru Rojagar Yojana the village roads are paved with bricks (Kharanja). Under sugar mill welfare scheme the roads are constructed within 10 kilometers from its centre for the welfare of the cane growers. 37 kilometer road has been constructed so far under this scheme. The main roads are Kashipur, Sardarpur, Lohara and Shahgarh Samenda road. In 1995 Uttar Pradesh Government selected some villages as 'Ambedkar Gram'. One of the measures adopted for their rapid development was their connection with main roads on priority basis. 5 villages were selected from the block and they were connected with main roads by pitch roads before June 1996.

The road density is the highest in Sathiaon and the lowest in Sonpar and Gunjarpar Nyay Panchayats. The isolated location of Sonpan and Gunjarpar is the chief cause of it, as the river Tons surrounds these Nyay Panchayats from the west - the north and the east. Since long it was the main hurdle in the construction of road towards the north. However the bridge on river Tons in village Gunjarpar was constructed in 1981 and the area
found its exit towards the north throughout the year. Most of the villages are within less than an hour reach from the urban centres or service centres situated in or out side the block area. The students, the skilled and unskilled labourers, the perishable article producers and finished goods-buyers are in a position to reach urban centres in time. Azamgarh-Mau road is one of the busiest roads of the district, where frequency of buses is the highest. Many buses run between Mubarakpur and Mau via Sathiaon and Mau has train connections with all over the country. Due to communicational facilities stockists of Banarasi sarees visit Mubarakpur from all over the country.

THE MARKETING SYSTEM:

The markets of Sathiaon Block have two types of commodities - one it imports and the other it exports. The study of foregoing chapters show that agriculture, despite innovation and improvements has failed to fulfil agriculture based requirements of the people i.e. foodgrains, including pulses, vegetables and fruits. The population has increased rapidly during past forty years and the foodgrain shortage has increased in thousands of Quintals. Besides agricultural products it imports finished goods like cloth, cosmetics, coocking oil, spices, hardware and other things of daily use from out side. The Block exports products and byproducts of Sathiaon Sugar Mill i.e. sugarcane and molasses and vogases. The export that brings utmost money to the farmers is the Banarasi brocade sarees. All the money earned by the inhabitants is only enough to purchase the daily required commodities (Fig. No. 36).

There is a good marketing system for the distribution of imports and collection of exports in Sathiaon Block. Apart from govt. fair price shops, the marketing system includes weekly bazars, village shops, retail dealers at service centres and Mubarakpur based whole dealers, who import these commodities from out side and sell them to small shopkeepers. Fig. No. 36 shows eleven weekly markets - Bind Mathia, Chiurahi, Ibrahimpur, Karpia, Amaon, Sathiaon, Kasba Sarai, Samenda and Shahgarh. On these places local population meets once or twice a week to purchase foodgrains and other imported materials of daily use and sell agricultural surpluses like vegetables, meat, oil seeds and small agricultural implements.

Every big village has one or two shops, where small quantity of
foodgrains, pulses, spices, tea, soap, oil and other things of daily domestic use are sold. These commodities are available even on barter system too against the agricultural surpluses during harvesting seasons. Thus, these shops do the dual work of distribution and collection.

There are three service centres - Sathiaon, Ibrahimpur and Shahgarh, Sathiaon, the biggest of all has 74 shops ranging from medical hall to tea stall. Every afternoon the local producers gather here to sell their perishable agricultural products like vegetables and purchase the imported things for their daily use. The market starts new tea stalls including 'Dhaba' hotels during winters, the crushing season of sugarcane. Ibrahimpur and Shahgarh are small centres but each has not less than a dozen shops. Shahgarh is under the shadow of Azamgarh city, the district headquarters and falling in its catchment area, the people prefer to do purchasing at Azamgarh.

The municipal town Mubarakpur is the centre for all economic activities in the Block. It has whole sale and retail distribution shops for imported articles. It also serves as collection centre for agricultural products as small village traders supply them on marginal profit. Amilo, the second largest town has a few distribution shops and due to its location within one kilometer from Mubarakpur people prefer to purchase necessary articles from Mubarakpur.

Most important of all the collection and distribution trades is the collection trade of woven Banarasi brocade sarees. There are three collection centres for it i.e. Mubarakpur, Amilo and Ibrahimpur, all located in the northern part of the block. But sarees collected at Ibrahimpur and Amilo reach Mubarakpur for their final processing before enroute to Varanasi, calcutta and other importing towns in India. A hand loom plant weaves a saree within three or four days and the weavers due to their small capital visit Mubarakpur with their woven sarees daily afternoon.

It is strange that these collection shops, mostly occupied by traders from Varanasi, are opened after 1 P.M. and remain in working till 10 P.M. in the night. The collection market looks overcrowded after 4 P.M. Most of the business is operated by 'Dalals' (middlemen). The business daily reaches the magnitude of one crore of rupees.

With the sale of brocade sarees the purchase of raw materials begins with the money earned. The chief raw material silk is imported by
whole sellers from Banglore and Malda (west - Bengal) and is sold to the 
weavers after dying in different shades by local ' Rangrez' (Dyers). Though 
the Government supplies the silk on subsidised rates but some Muslim 
influential persons of non-weavers community purchase it and poor helpless 
weavers purchase it at higher rates, which reduces the profit margin. Besides 
purchasing silk and Zari threads, imported from outside, the weavers also 
purchase some spares for their handlooms. The remaining money is used 
to buy consumer’s goods and provisions. This cycle of purchase, sale and 
production goes round the year.

Besides handloom products Sathiaon sugar Mill supplies most 
of its sugar products on government instructions to Bengal, Bihar, Maharastra 
and other parts of U.P.. The factory also exports its byproducts i.e. molasses 
and vogases by the distillaries of Trans-Ghaghara plain and vogases by 
sizing mills of Mau for fuel and paper and straw board factory at Faizabad 
for raw materials.

References.

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