CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER-I

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In many states it has been observed that though the developmental efforts have increased in every successive plan period, it is the developed areas which have relatively gained more. But from the viewpoint of balanced regional development, if such a process continues for long the regional disparities may grow wider. Viewed in this context, the identification of economically backward areas becomes essential, so that the nature and extent of such backwardness can be studied and development potentialities examined. This will enable the Geo-economic planners to formulate appropriate development plans. With this objective the present researcher has undertaken a study on the three backward districts of Western Orissa (Kalahandi, Bolangir and Phulbani) and suggested the possible lines on which their development could be planned.

1.1. SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The subject matter of the study in the present work is "WESTERN ORISSA : A Geo-economic Analysis". Geo-economic Analysis is a multiple phenomena. The processes of Geo-economic analysis are mainly associated with the local geo-physical elements, the local resource inventories, their exploitations and their potential assessment
in order to reduce inter-regional and intra-regional disparities of geo-economic activities of the study region. The present study discusses various aspects such as physical elements, irrigation, agriculture, minerals, industries, power and transport. It examines the technical feasibility of developing the various available resources in these districts consistent with economic costs. However, this assessment reveals that these are neither based on rich natural resources nor does the region provide any locational advantages for heavy industries. This appraisal suggests that the economy of these districts would continue to depend on agriculture for a long time to come.

In the field of agriculture, since the irrigation expansion possibilities are limited, the bulk of agricultural land in these districts depends on rain. The present practice under rainfed conditions is to take only one crop during the year. However, for improvement in agriculture, it is essential that suitable second crops should be introduced in this area. For this purpose, it is necessary that a detailed soil survey should be undertaken so that nutritional characteristics of the various soils may be determined and the crops suitable for this area may be chosen. It is also necessary to conduct research for evolving a suitable variety of early paddy for the kharif season so that it could be harvested in time thereby making a second crop feasible. If this is done, it will be possible to bring about a distinct improvement in agriculture in this region.
The practice of shifting cultivation by the tribal population in the region, particularly in Phulbani district, is quite wasteful, and it is necessary that the Government should induce the tribal population to settle down for permanent cultivation in a phased manner.

The scope of large industries is limited. However, the suitable strategy for a backward region like this would be to develop medium and small industries in selected market towns. This would help in bringing about a closer integration of the adjoining rural areas with the urban areas.

Like other backward regions in the country, this region too is characterised by inadequate transport facilities. The quality of roads serving the region is extremely poor; there are many missing links and many crossings are unbridged. At the same time the road development in this area is very expensive on the account of hilly terrain, full of rivers streams etc. Therefore it is necessary that the development of roads has to be very selective so that the minimum needs of this area may be met and special attention may be paid to areas where development potential exists.

It is hoped that with implementation of the suggestions made in the present thesis, these areas would be lifted from their age old backwardness and enable them to gradually fall in the line with the other parts of the state.
1.2 EARLIER STUDIES:

The magnitude and strategy of geo-economic development differ from country to country and from region to region reflecting the varying geo-physical entity, political philosophy, resource endowments, organisational set up, economic pursuits and stages of economic growth and development. Geo-economic analysis therefore, evokes great interest among geographers, economists and other social scientists in one way or other. The present study focussing the geo-economic problems and prospects of the three districts of Western Orissa largely based on the wide-spread field study, survey of literatures, available statistics from various Government and non-government records and data bank. On the other hand, district gazetteers of Kalahandi¹ Balangir² and Phulbani³ also help in pointing out combined facts and figures, with the detailed information. There are dependable and relevant facts revealing the physical, cultural, social, economical and historical conditions.

After independence, when the economic problems, specially concerned with resource utilisation in India, were being faced by Indian Economists, Planners, Technocrats etc. some empirical works in the study of resource utilisation and Geo-economic development was also done by Geographers like Sinha (1957)⁴ Karennavar (1967)⁵, Pradhan (1980)⁶, Vijayaraj (1974)⁷, Kalgaokar (1981)⁸, Mahato (1980)⁹, Mitra (1967)¹⁰, Rao (1982)¹¹, Har Prasad (1975)¹², Hussain (1938)¹³, Singh (1971)¹⁴ in this area or part of it. The systematic and relevant aspect, which are considered to be useful for the present study, are applied for the purpose.
The studies done by geographers in the field of geo-economic analysis of various regions can be very well realised from the book on "Trends in Geographical Research in India" edited by Sinha (1986). From the analysis of above mentioned book it is found that the number of research papers published in the field of geo-economic analysis of regions through 17 leading Indian Geographical Journals since 1926 to 1986 have accounted for 1227 representing 21.8% of the total geographical research paper published in India during the same period. Similarly another survey conducted by Sinha (1983) on "Progress of Geographical Research in India: Approved thesis in Indian Universities" reveals that the number of approved Ph.D thesis of 38 Indian Universities in the field of Geo-economic study have accounted for 97 representing 16.48% of the total approved doctoral theses in Geography by the end of 1983.

It is observed from the survey that highest number of studies in the field under discussion have been conducted in Bihar, followed by Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and so on. However, studies in the field remained in a neglected stage in Orissa except very few contributions made by Sinha (1971), Tripathy (1978), and Sahu (1982). It is specially noticed that the work on Western Orissa is totally absent. The attempt of this work will be a pioneering effort in to this region.

1.3 SELECTION OF THE STUDY REGION:

Western Orissa comprising of three districts spreading along the western border from the centre of the state is considered to
be a single homogeneous region due to its higher percentage of tribal population, cultural similarities, level of backwardness, geo-physical similarities.

The reason for selecting Western Orissa (three districts—Kalahandi-Bolangir-Phulbani) to undertake the study is due to the researcher's familiarity with the region both rural and urban as he has served in these three districts for over twelve years in the capacity of a faculty member in geography depts. of various colleges of the region. Various geo-economic surveys have been designed, organised and conducted by the present researcher through his students. The findings of those field work inspired him to start the work in a big way with a specific goal.

Other considerations for choosing this region for study are outlined below:

* The absence of any research work on this region.
* The interesting ratio of tribal population and striking geo-physical conditions of the region.
* Level of backwardness of the districts of the region.
* Vast resource potential of the region specifically mineral and forest resources.

It is true that the resources of this region were not developed and utilised to the benefit of man over the past long ages of history. But after the Independence, with the commissioning of Hirakud Multipurpose Project and subsequent development projects, some part of this region is exposed to the processes of economic development.
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The resource planning and regionalisation of the three districts of Western Orissa, with a particular geographical bias, had not been tried, although, the region possesses powerful natural resources. Therefore, in the present study the imbalances are likely to be noted in resource utilisation and geo-economic planning. Observing the problems of coordination of resources and geo-physical conditions in Western Orissa, the study can successfully be aimed at the following objectives:

* To interpret the existing physiographical, and cultural elements.
* To bring out the existing infrastructure in various areal units of this region by means of suitable quantitative techniques.
* To highlight the resource potential and their regional disparities.
* To highlight a systematic as well as coherent picture of the trend of growth and development as a whole.
* To identify the existing problems which not only stand as the bottleneck in the process of regional development but also responsible for the level of regional disparity within the study region.
* To assess the development potentiality in the various sectors in this region by means of systematic and through study of existing facilities along with their problems and prospects.
* To suggest suitable and appropriate measures along with policy matters and strategies not only for the removal of the existing constraints but also for creation of an ideal situation for the balanced regional development.
1.5 DATA BASE:

The present study is based on data collected from secondary sources of which most of them are published and some are unpublished. The greater uses of unpublished data in the present context can be attributed to the non-availability of published data for a backward region of Orissa like Western Orissa. Primary data have been collected from the extensive field work carried out in different case studies on various aspects of study.

As regards the important sources of published data, the investigator has taken the help of various published documents made available by Directorate of Census, Bureau of Statistic and Economics, District Statistical Offices of Kalahandi, Balangir, and Phulbani, Department of Planning and Co-ordination and Department of Agriculture and co-operation and Department of Industries of Government of Orissa at the state level and National Libraries, National Archives, National Sample Survey, National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi and Jawaharlal Nehru University Library, New Delhi at the national level.

Very often, most of the data published by the Bureau of Statistics and Economics, and other departments of Government of Orissa are available on the basis of the individual districts of the State. In view of this, the investigator is compelled to collect relevant data on each of the areal unit like Community Development Blocks, Police Stations, Tahasils and Sub-divisions directly from the office records of various government departments like District Industry Centre Phulbani, District Industry Centre Balangir, District Industry
Centre, Kalahandi, Directorate of Agriculture and Food Production, Orissa, Bhubaneswar, Directorate of Mining and Geology, Orissa, Bhubaneswar, Registrar of Cooperative Societies, Orissa, Bhubaneswar, Directorate of Transport Orissa, Bhubaneswar, Secretary to Government Works Department, Nirman Bhawan, Bhubaneswar, Orissa State Electricity Board, Head Office, Bhubaneswar, State Resource Centre, Bhubaneswar, District Statistical Offices, Kalahandi, Balangir, Phulbani, Bhubaneswar, Orissa Forest Development Corporation, Bhubaneswar, State Transport Authority, Orissa, Cuttack, Office of the Chief Engineer (Irrigation), Bhubaneswar, of the Government of Orissa and subsequently these collected informations are compiled, tabulated and analysed for the Western Orissa Region as a whole.

1.6 SOURCE OF MAPS AND CHARTS:

For the preparation of maps and diagrams relevant portions of various atlases e.g. Census Atlas of Orissa (1971) Adivasi Atlas of Orissa, National Atlas of National Atlas and Thematic maps Organisation (NATMO), Calcutta have been consulted. Some base maps are also collected from the district level offices of various government departments. For the interpretation of Geo-physical elements, the topographical maps of the study region published by Survey of India, have also been consulted. The maps and charts presented in the present volume interpretes the results of the data analysed in the course of investigation.

1.7 APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY:

An appropriate geo-economic planning for any region can only be formulated subject to the adoption of a basis approach and
methodology which can be able to draw inference regarding the future prospects in the development of the concerned region. The methodological considerations in geographical studies have changed from simple cartographic techniques to scientific or more quantitative approaches during the last two decades. These approaches are justified because of their utility for exact derivations and more systematic handling of the problems related to resource assessment and planning. On account of such usefulness, more stress has been laid to the quantitative application in the case studies and the fact finding interpretations and suggestions for development in the present study. The main issues are related with the following considerations:

* To adjudge the regional disparities in the distribution of resource variables and economic activities associated with them.
* To measure the agricultural production, irrigation potential in the agricultural sector.
* To enquire into the transport net work for analysing the functions and spatial integration.
* To consider locational selectivity and locational priorities of power, mineral and industries in the industrial sector.
* To assess the future needs and trends of growth.
* To arrive at appropriate suggestions for ideal resource utilisation for balanced regional development of the study region.

With the above back-ground, the investigator has gone through an extensive literature survey and formed a plan of work before going for field survey in the context of the present work. After
the completion of field survey, the investigator has rechecked his methodology and proceeded towards the assessment of future poten­tialities of the study region. Lastly, the final recommendations and development strategies in the context of the present research have been evolved from extensive literature survey had discussions with various experts in the field and the supervisor Dr. S.K. Sahu. The study is limited to the following aspects as discussed below.

1.8 ORGANISATION OF STUDY AND LIMITATION OF THE WORK:

With above mentioned objectives, scope and limitations, the entire work is outlined in the following order:

Chapter-I provides an introduction to the problem of the study along with the scope, approaches, data base and methodology to be adopted by the investigator in order to give a systematic shape to the present work.

Chapter-II presents a Geographical Framework of the study region including the location, physiography, structuring geology, drainage, soil, climate and vegetation at a glance.

Chapter-III deals with the economic framework including the level of income, demographic aspects, resource base, transport potential and orientation of the study.

Chapter-IV highlights the infrastructure of the economy of the area under study.

Chapter-V identifies the potentialities, problems and prospects of agriculture with recommendations for the future.
Chapter-VI deals with Industries of various kinds, investment patterns and future possibilities in the industrial sector.

Chapter-VII discusses the levels of economic development of the region in four time periods, i.e. 1961, 1971, 1981 & 1990 and planning regions are delineated and their problems and prospects discussed.

Chapter-VIII deals with the nature and direction of the growth of the area under study in various sectors.

Chapters-IX brings out appropriate measures and strategies not only to remove the backwardness but also to create an ideal situation for balanced development of the region in future. This chapter also reveals the findings and suggests recommendations.

REFERENCES:

2. _________, Orissa District Gazetteers, Balangir, Orissa Govt. Press, Cuttack.
3. _________, Orissa District Gazetters, Phulbani, Orissa Govt. Press, Cuttack.


