Chapter V
Region as Capital and Community

5.1 Background

There are five thematic categories that have been identified for analysis and interpretation in this chapter. The categories are River Water Disputes, Communication Infrastructure, Food Policy, Prohibition and Allocation of Planning Projects. The thematic categories chosen have direct relevance to capital and indirect consequence to community formation in the region. More importantly, capital and community supplement and complement each other and reside inside the plastic idea of development. Capital is employed in the larger sense with an "emphasis on the 'resource' that is created by the organization of large numbers of people". Among other things, the idea of community also connotes the emergence of a community that "rests on a complex division of labor in which relationships of complementarity bind people together". Historically, Karnataka's medieval tradition offers such a vision of contractual society.

The thematic categories constitute region through the encoding of the core category 'development'. The objective of the exercise is to render the argumentative strategies and rhetorical devices as generated within and outside the form and content of the editorials. The editorials of DH frame Karnataka as a politico-economic region rather than as a cultural-historical region. DH seeks to establish a historical familiarity through the selective invocation of development as constitutive of the organizing principle of the early twentieth century Princely State of Mysore. However, it needs to be stressed that this acquires resonance only in the context of its overlap with the post-Independent Nehruvian idea of development.

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1 John Harris Politics and Social Capital Leftword Delhi 2002:4
2 Ibid
3 The strong presence of Jainas (in the eleventh and twelfth century and their practice of a kind of protestant ethic, Basava (in the twelfth and thirteenth century) and his attitude towards work and dignity of labor, Tippan's contribution to the building of a strong modern state, all are suggestive of an ethos wherein the organisation of members of a society is made (at least theoretically) possible on non-ascriptive basis.
The intermeshing of history with space, of succession with simultaneity, has been frequently referred to in the analysis to follow in this chapter. Notwithstanding the intermeshing, a spatial explanation has been preferred to a historical analysis of the region. This is due to the fact that certain conjunctural features like competitive electoral politics of India's federal and regional polities, the instituting of a planned approach towards economy, the interaction between a top down economy and a bottom up democracy, the exclusionary character of economy and the inclusionary (at least of a rhetorical kind) character of politics were responsible for the production and reproduction of the region called Karnataka during the years 1956-83.

In other words, it is in this fashion that the 'region' registers itself in the editorials of DH. In fact, the Daily prefers to carry the message and become the medium for the technocratic, elite-driven economy and society. The newspaper acquiesces in and acquires a self-assumed moral spark in the discharge of its responsibility of imagining the region.

Space, Ideology and Region

Prior to re-organisation of states, the basis for the plurality of the nation and the composite ethos of constituent units in general and Mysore in particular lay in the competition for more resource allocation and accumulation of capital. The material basis for Kannada-Kannadiga-Karnataka far outweighed the cultural or moral basis for such a construction. The ideology of development as identified in the editorials provides the link between the abstract space and the concrete place known as Karnataka.

Region is a socially produced space like nation. The instrumentality of the space is constantly made visible and invisible in the Daily's imagination of region. It is pronouncedly made visible during tensions between the Central Government and the state Government or regional governments - but rarely so between sub-regions. In its plea for

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4 The discipline of Development Communication in its initial intellectual journey viewed the role of media as one of providing a conduit for purveying exogenously constructed messages to non-Western audiences. Unlike the contemporary anti-modernity critique, this study assumes modernity is corrigible and it is irreversible. This idea is developed in Javeed Alam's interesting book *India Living With Modernity*, 1999
adequate federal transfers, the daily invokes the idea of plurality but at the level of sub-regional transfers the idea of a homogenous community is largely maintained.

If space is inclusive of concrete and abstract space\(^5\), the ideology of development and planning focused not only on modifying the physical landscape but also engineered, in the memorable phrase of Berger\(^6\), certain ‘ways of seeing’. It was precisely with such a framework that Nehru chose to address the building of dams and industries as ‘modern temples of India’.

Though there is an intense editorial engagement with ‘region building activities’ like Sharavthy Valley project, Vijayanagara Steel Plant or Mangalore Deep Sea Harbour, there is an absence of any sacral meanings attached to it. For DH, accumulation and productivity provide the glue for suturing the community. It seeks no further legitimizing and meta-sanctification for affirming this community. Human rationality in the form of science, technology, bureaucracy and the idea of notional equality inform the edifice of DHs region.

It is possible to identify chronologically and qualitatively two phases in the ideology of development. The pre-seventies and the post-seventies form two phases in the ideology of development. In the pre-seventies, the ideology concentrated on the autonomous development of the Nation per se and the latter phase revealed a tendency towards the autonomous development of the Region. Qualitatively, in the first phase, the issue was growth and productivity, in the second phase, the issue veered towards social distribution of goods. Though the Daily empathizes with technocratic elite driven development, occasionally and significantly, it also speaks of an egalitarian order.\(^7\)

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\(^5\) The idea of abstract space and concrete place has been borrowed from Foucault’s notion of Heterotopia. Satish Deshpande applies this idea ingenuously in the Indian context. See his, Hegemonic Spatial Strategies: The Nation-Space and Hindu Communalism in Twentieth-Century India, Public Culture 1998, Vol 10 (2): 249-283

\(^6\) Ibid

\(^7\) HariKumar, who took over as the Managing Editor in the mid seventies was publicly sympathetic to issues concerning the marginalized. But even as early as 1951, the U.S information Agency had classified DH as a “Communist Front” See T.J.S. George, Joseph Pothen’s India: A Biography Sanchar Publishing House New Delhi 1992.
Gender specific and to some extent caste specific notions of development do not surface in the editorial discourse.

The editorials imagine Karnataka in opposition to the Maharastrians, Andhras, Tamils and North Indians in the post-Independent scenario. The neighbors emerge as communities not only in the context of their capacity to bargain for better resources but also invest them productively and efficiently.

The tension between the nation and the region and sub-regions within the regions are also played out in the editorials. Though the integration of national economy with regional economy is stressed, the Daily's emphasis has been primarily on integrating the sub-regional economies with the regional economy. From extracting iron ore in Hospet and gold in Kolar, to carting coffee from Malnad, to building steel and fertilizer plants in Bellary and Mangalore, the idea is to increase the scale of economy via integrating the sub-regional economies.

Food, water and liquor, all three associated with food policy, river water disputes and prohibition respectively belong to lower order needs of the members of the regional community. While food policy deals with meeting the survival needs of its citizenry, exploiting water resources and liquor marketing are editorially treated as directly leading to economic assets for the nation and the state.

Two kinds of problems relating to food are brought to the notice of DH readers. One is related to the pre-green revolution period in the mid-sixties and the other to the post-green revolution period. The former issue is treated as a problem concerning low agricultural production and the latter concerns the issue of growth with social justice.

In the editorials, river water disputes centre on issues of law, technology, foreign reserves and perceived iniquitous allocation of capital from Planning Commission for building dams across its major rivers. The daily does suggest that hydel power generation leads to quick profits and growth of industry and agriculture.
On the issue of prohibition, DH categorically rejects the idea that drinking needs to be perceived as a moral problem. On the other hand, it holds the view that loss incurred due to prohibition may dilute the welfare measures of the central/regional Governments and thereby cause moral degradation of the national and regional community.

Communication infrastructure included roads for the most interior part of the region, railways to the coffee rich Malnad region, airport for Hubli and better aircraft for Bangalore. Steel plants, fertiliser plants and power projects of both hydel and atomic energy were advocated in the daily for the economic growth of the region.

Communication infrastructure and allocations of mainly industrial, and power projects have been implicitly perceived in the newspaper as facilitating not only capital formation but also a kind of organic solidarity based on a new division of labor. The editorials subtly work out a relationship between people, and materials that region comes to represent a domain of interdependence rather than self-expression. Increased industrialization and communication between people of the region connotes the emergence of an urban, industrial workforce and a new type of community formation.

The order of the analysis in this chapter is as follows: Section 5.2 analyses the thematic category Industrial and Infrastructure Projects. The Food Policy has been dealt with in Section 5.3 followed by River Water Disputes in Section 5.4. Similarly Section 5.5 and 5.6 deal with Communication Infrastructure and Prohibition respectively.

5.2 Industrial Projects

DH associates certain mysticism to the generation of electric power in the region. By constantly imbuing the story with the pioneering efforts of the Princely State of Mysore in this area of power generation, the editorials not only take pride but also tend to associate Mysoreans with some esoteric craft used for building dams and generating power. The newspaper frequently derides the Central agencies for depriving the region of
applying this liminal knowledge to power its own economy and society. The changing equation between Delhi and Bangalore is constantly wrapped up in this narrative. From a perceived confrontationist posture of the Centre towards Bangalore during Veerandra Patil regime, to bonhomie like Delhi’s attitude towards Urs regime, the mood keeps vacillating.

In a 1958 editorial, an appeal is made to the Central Government to salvage the construction of Sharavathy Valley Project. The Daily informs the reader that the project may not be completed due to lack of foreign exchange reserves. The editorial endorses the Chief Minister Nijilingappa’s plea for more central assistance “to carry out the ‘core’ of the Second Five Year Plan”. The newspaper points out that the “power needs of the state have enormously increased after the formation of the enlarged state,” suggesting that there was only a marginal deficit prior to re-organisation.

The contradictory pulls of the overlapping central institutional agencies, between the powerful Planning Commission and the Finance Commission are also brought out in the editorial. The editorial remarks: “It would appear that while the Union Finance Ministry is throwing a wet blanket, over the entire scheme, the Planning Commission is urging the states to step up their internal resources”. Though both are funding agencies, the Planning Commission is invested with the task of providing architecture for the economy whereas the Finance Commission is allowed to play the role of structural engineers. While the editorial reinforces the enthusiasm for participating in the proposed large-scale industrial programme drawn out in the Second Five Year Plan, it is sore over the indifferent attitude of the Centre towards the Shravathy Valley project.

In an editorial displaying empathy with the Congress (O) Mysore Chief Minister Veerandra Patil’s opposition to the ruling Indira Congress (R) Government decision to

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8 DH 12 Dec, 1958
9 Since the command economy was a closed economy, foreign reserves were not made easily available to the state building activities like dams which needed foreign machines and know-how.
10 The Second Five Year Plan marked the turning point in giving the command economy a particular slant, popularly referred to as Mahalanobis model. It laid emphasis on heavy industrialization programme with foreign technology and capital.
take over power projects costing over Rs 200 crores, the Daily claimed that Mysore has the “requisite capacity to work giant projects as efficiently as the Centre claims it can”.\footnote{DH 4/6/1970}

It is important to note that the newspaper attaches efficiency to Central administration and fails to explore other connotations of the word efficiency. The Daily is remarkably silent on the corruption charges leveled against his predecessor’s Government (Nijilingappa) in the execution of the Shravathy Valley Project.

The editorial also situates the comment of the Mysore Chief Minister in the larger political and development context. It implicitly recognizes the decline of the Congressress system, the growth of regional parties and the changing federal contours. In retrieving the history of hydel projects for the purpose of explaining the changing scenario of development, the Daily ran the narrative as follows:

In the early years of freedom, the Damodar Valley and the Bhakra Nangal Projects and also the Thungabhadra Project in the South, each of which concerned more than one state and entailed an outlay far in excess of what one state could bear, were executed under a Central authority. But the Nagarjuna Sagar project in AP, though by means a modest one, is being executed by the state government itself.

In this editorial piece, the hegemony of the Central authority is understood to have had relevance at one moment but appears to have less relevance in the post-Nehruvian period. At a deeper level, the Daily appears to argue for the need to pluralize and decentralize planning and development.

It is precisely against this background that the editorial endorses and makes a forceful plea for Mysore’s bid to construct the giant Kalinadi project. It adduces several reasons including a claim to history, knowledge and commerce. It reads:

Mysore is known to be a pioneer in implementing hydro-electric projects, and Mysorean engineers are employed in responsible
positions in most of the major projects in the country. Hence, Mr Patil is on firm grounds in demanding that major power projects in the state, particularly the Kalinadi project, should be in the state sector. Another valid reason adduced by the Chief Minister is that power projects are paying proposition and that investments in them yield quick returns.

The editorial assumes that the reader shares its past awareness that the first Hydel project, the Shivasumudram project which was undertaken by the Mysore State to provide power for the Kolar Gold fields along with electrifying the cities of Bangalore and Mysore in the late nineteenth century itself. It is important to point out that previous arguments for more power generation were focused on its likely impact on increasing the agricultural and industrial growth. But this observation of Veerandra Patil about conceiving power per se as a commodity to be marketed for profits appears considerably novel in the late sixties.

An editorial\(^{13}\) characterizing the new turn\(^{14}\) in Karnataka-Delhi relationship in the early seventies termed the Urs-India tie as "luck favoring Mysore". The editorial apart from displaying a self-congratulatory mood on the successful completion of the giant Kalinadi project also makes a case for financial assistance from the Centre for installing a supposedly expensive Atomic Energy Plant in Karnataka. This editorial is made on the occasion of the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi inaugurating the Kalinadi project.

The demand is not made on the basis of the needs of Karnataka alone but also the nation as a whole and the needs of the Southern region in particular. In another reiterating the demand for an Atomic Energy Plant, it adduces other reasons including the

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12 The first Hydel Project constructed by Dewan Seshadri during the last decade of eighteenth century.
13 DH October 31 1961
14 It was a period when Urs was busy dislodging the dominant castes namely the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas and emerging as the champion of the masses. Also, Indira Gandhi actively supported Urs because he hailed from a non-dominant caste.
lack of coal reserves in Karnataka and its over-dependence on hydel projects that are based on erratic monsoon.¹⁵

Is Karnataka a Part of the Steel Map of India?

Giant hydel projects and steel plants illuminated the idea and reality of Nehruvian India. Regions were vying with each other for insertion into this economic geography of India till the late sixties. It is against this background that the editorials demand steel plants for South India initially and specifically for the region later. The Daily premises its demand on the fact that the Princely State of Mysore had already put the region onto the steel map and that the Hospet-Bellary region has fine quality of unexploited ore, there is no lack of power and water resources.¹⁶

An editorial titled ‘Steel Plants in South’ registers a gentle protest for non-inclusion of the South into the economic geography of Nehruvian India.¹⁷ In the same piece, the debate over prioritizing political geography over economic geography is hinted at.

In displaying empathy with its neighbor, “Madras has set its heart on the Salem Steel plant” it pushes its own case by stating, “Mysore, with its rich deposits both in the Hospet-Bellary region and elsewhere is pressing its claim for a steel plant”. In the early sixties, DH followed the argumentative strategy of blurring the regional identities and positing the same, as a homogenous “South”. The issue was posed as North versus South India.

Not being satisfied with the “tantalizing promises of planners” and suspicious of the inclusion of Bellary-Hospet project being chosen for the fourth Five Year Plan, the editorial expresses apprehension “in view of the forceful demand from Goa for a steel plant, Mysore’s claim is in danger of being overlooked”. The editorial reflecting the

¹⁵ DH August 11, 1973
¹⁶ The native Mysore State established the first large scale steel plant in the 1900s, the Bhadraavthi Iron and Steel Works.
¹⁷ DH 31 July 1963
collective unconscious of the region was responding like the Greek mythological character 'Tantalus'.

Investing power and authority in the institution of planning and planners, the editorial is quick to point out the vulnerability of the authority to political pressure. The daily implicitly recognizes the fact that Goa had just become Independent and its people required to be ordained as the national citizenry of the Indian Union. It was furnishing political subjectivity to Goans, by making Goa a part of economic geography.

In an editorial commenting on a slanging match between the Janata ruled Central Government and Urs ruled Congress at the state over the reported reservation of the Minister towards the construction of the Mangalore Steel plant, the Daily openly sided with Devaraj Urs. It not only opposed the views of the minister but also launched a personal attack on him and the Janata Dal Party. The attack read:

Before more damage is done to the credibility of the Janata Government particularly in South India, it must come out with a clear statement that execution of neither of the steel plants will be delayed on account of prejudices of individual ministers

The passage seems to make three points. One, the Janata led Central Government has no electoral mandate to modify or alter the development policy in South India. Two, the Central Government should not display a vindictive attitude towards non-Janata ruling states especially Karnataka. Three, a perception that there is no team spirit and there are too many idiosyncratic ministers in the Central cabinet.

This editorial is written in a context, wherein at the national level, the institution of planning had lost its prestige and power and at the regional level, Urs was experimenting a very decentralized approach towards planning. It was argued that planning should evolve from the people, á la Jayprakash approach rather than from above.

18 DH 1 May 1978
Kolar Gold Fields

The editorials on Kolar Gold Fields (hereafter referred to as KGF) deal with issues that relate to resuscitating the economically ailing gold mines at Kolar district in Karnataka state. The once famous mines that used to fetch a royalty of 7.25 lakhs in the late nineteenth century and in 1905 that emerged as the largest employer of contract labor in Princely Mysore State was facing its days of decline. Apart from being nostalgic, the Daily puts forward pragmatic proposals for revamping the administrative structure, alternative investments and rehabilitation of labor.

In an editorial recounting the Central Government’s suggestion to take over the enterprise from the Mysore Government, the Daily added, “it would be much better if the management is entrusted to an autonomous corporation instead of the mines being run as a Departmental affair”. The newspaper tends to associate bureaucracy as slightly inimical to capital and is hinting at softening the hold of Indian State on movement of capital. On the issue of uneconomic production costs, the editorial mooted the idea:

**The Centre in fairness could have either made good the loss suffered by the Undertaking in selling the gold at nearly half the market price, or allowed the concern to secure the best price ruling in the market.**

Since the editorial appeared in 1961 and immediately after the Second Five Year Plan, the reader is made to rethink on the Nehruvian policy of a regulated economy, its negative consequences for state enterprises like KGF and hazard of restraining the free play of economic forces. The ‘market price’ that the editorial refers to pertains to international market price and the inability of the enterprise to sell the product at that price due to the closed-ness of the Nehruvian economy. Its attitude towards the closed economy is not one of being idealistic but very pragmatic. It is in this sense that it

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19 See Janaki Nair *Miners and Millhands Work, Culture and Politics in Princely Mysore* Sage 1998:20
"Between 1886 and 1894, royalty from gold mining paid to the Mysore Government rose from Rs 50,000 to Rs 7.25 lakhs"

20 Ibid
"Employment in mining peaked in 1905, when as many as 35,000 people were engaged in gold mining…"

21 DH August 5, 1961
suggests that the Central Government can be a bit pliant by making “good the loss suffered by the undertaking in selling gold at nearly half the market price”.

An editorial headlined “New Industries for KGF” encapsulates a dialogue between capital and labor with DH arrogating to itself the power to mediate on behalf of the two actors.²² It is made in the context of the then Finance Minister, Morarji Desai’s threat to close the mines due to the exorbitant production costs involved and the supposedly hostile response of the Trade Union’s representing a “18000 labor force”. It requests the minister to consider the proposition:

Since some of the rich seams are reserved for a rainy day, it may be possible to prolong the life of at least some of the mines at KGF by a couple of decades through a switch over to concentrated and highly mechanised mining...This seems unavoidable even if it means some additional capital expenditure and retrenchment.

On the other hand, it advises the intransigent Trade Unions at KGF that they “would do well to reconcile themselves to this very practical idea instead of following an unhelpful, short sighted and suicidal policy”. In this connection, it endorses the Mysore Chief Minister’s plan of persuading “the Centre to set up the proposed heavy earth moving machinery-manufacturing plant at KGF” to relocate the workers.

5.3 Food Policy

The sixties have been recognized as the decade of growing concern over food production and organization of agriculture. Agricultural production and organization were seen as important for directly assisting economic growth and indirectly for arresting agrarian unrest.

The Second Five Year Plan considered to be a blueprint for laying the foundations of society and economy failed to accord due prominence to agriculture. With

²² DH June 19, 1963
the added situation of droughts across the country, the nation experienced severe food
carcity in the mid-sixties.

C.Subramaniam, the food minister in Shastri's cabinet evolved a policy of
increasing agricultural production without altering the distribution of land ownership.
More subsidies to the rural sector in the area of power, fertilizer and high yielding variety
of seeds along with a substantial increase in the procurement prices were also being
discussed .The dismal failure on the food front resulted in a shift in the agrarian strategy
of the Central Government. From trying to bring land reforms in the 1950s, the strategy
changed to technological reform in the mid-sixties. The introduction of high yielding
varieties of seeds and the phenomenal production of wheat, maize and other crops came
to be described as India's Green Revolution.

The Nehruvian model of economy based on capital-intensive industrialization
with an expanding bureaucracy converted the problem of food crisis into a technocratic
one. It suggested a national food policy and a more managerial approach to production
and distribution of food. The Jatti Government in Karnataka had a proposal to take over
retail outlets in order to combat hoarding and other unfair trading practices.

Politically, the mid-sixties are considered to be very important. The fissures in the
nation begin to appear as the Congress party moves from being a movement to becoming
just another political party. The consensus for the Indian State from the society shrinks,
irrespective of whether this process is addressed as lack of relative autonomy or relative
anarchy.23

While the population of Karnataka grew from 19 million in 1951 to 24 million in
1971, the range of estimated poverty among the population on the basis of consumption
extended from 50% to 60% of the population in 1971.24 Interestingly, 'the production of

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23 Dipankar Gupta prefers to use relative anarchy to relative autonomy in order to depict the performance of
the Indian State. See his "Theory Against Practice: A Critique of the "Theories" of the Capitalist State with
Special reference to India in Ghanishyam Shah Ed Capitalist Development, Popular Prakashan 1990:172
24 National Sample Survey (NSS) covering the period July 1970 to June 1971.
food grains in Karnataka increased from 35.4 lakh tonnes in 1965-66 to 62.7 lakh tonnes in 1974-75, a rise of 80% compared with that of 40% for the whole of India during the same period.25 Dandekar and Rath showed that nearly 27% of the rural population and 57% of the urban population in Karnataka were lying below poverty line in Karnataka between 1960 and 1970.26

This remarkable success is attributed to the planned effort of the state government to increase the area under irrigation, provide subsidized power for pumpsets and fertilizers along with incentives for consuming more high yielding varieties of seeds. Almost all Chief Ministers of Karnataka from the late fifties to the early seventies hailed from the dominant Lingayat community and James Manor, a keen observer of Karnataka politics has referred to this phase in Karnataka politics as ‘Lingayat Raj’.27 A major land reform legislation was enacted in 1961 and till the arrival of Devaraj Urs as Chief Minister, the distribution of land remained unattended.

Several issues pertaining to food crisis receive attention in the editorials of DH. They range from providing incentives and technologies to farmers to institutional innovations like land reforms to reigning in the hoarding practices of trading communities and big farmers. An institutional innovation like land reforms is infrequently mentioned whereas urban poverty is more frequently cited. The nexus between the trading class, surplus farmers and the politicians are also discussed.

There are 8 editorials relating to food policy. It is interesting to note that they begin from 1964, at a time when the nation had not yet achieved self-sufficiency. Three editorials explicitly deal with the region per se and the others engage with discussions on Union Food policy, which in many ways has ramification for the region.

26 Ibid:216
27 James Manor Structural Changes in Karnataka Politics EPW Volume No ? 1977:1867
A few quotes from DH editorials:

- "The food deficit of the state is growing year by year. From being a marginally deficit state, Mysore is becoming a chronically deficit area"\(^{28}\)
- "Improvement of minor irrigation facilities in the Old Mysore area and the completion of major irrigation projects in the North Karnataka districts haunted by famine and scarcity deserve high priority"\(^{29}\)
- "Government must take over the wholesale trade in food grains"\(^{30}\)
- "Both inducements in the form of subsidies and inputs and threats have not made any effect on the affluent farmer"\(^{31}\)
- "If the farmers should have little to complain about this policy, the same cannot be said for urban consumers"\(^{32}\)

All the editorials without exception talk about food deficit and thereby scarcity, rise in prices and unaffordability of food grains to rural and urban consumers. This is accompanied by a growing recognition of Mysore becoming a ‘chronically deficient state’. Located in an era of planning, the crisis of food is posed as a problem to be solved, a deficit to be set right through a disembedded science, technology and reason. The editorials seem to be implicitly cognizant of Mysore’s historic affinity with this logic of development.

For augmenting food production, a number of measures ranging from improving the minor irrigation facilities in ‘the old Mysore area’ to the ‘completion of major irrigation projects in the North Karnataka districts’ to increasing the agricultural outlay to stepping the fertilizer production have been suggested in the editorials. More immediate interventions spoke of providing work for four lakh agricultural laborers and rationing of food grains to ‘the salariat class and workers.'
The editorials sneer at the official rhetoric of the political executives (Prime Minister, Chief Minister, Union Minister, Planning Commission) by terming them as futile ‘empty boasts’ and ‘brave words’ that cannot feed ‘the hungry stomachs’. Of course, a gleeful headline ‘Welcome Changes’\textsuperscript{33} (March 9, 1965) displays appreciation for the then Union Food Minister Subramanian’s, bold initiative with regard to raising food production through subsidizing inputs in agriculture. The same edit complains of lesser allocation of grains to Mysore from the Central stocks and Mysore’s consequent inability to reign in food prices. Also, it castigates the ‘antisocial mercantile class’ and the ‘powerful farmers lobby’ who are both responsible for scarcity, hoarding and price rise. The state agreeing to pay higher procurement prices to ‘a small group of affluent farmers’ is perceived as yielding to their lobbying tactics at the ‘cost of ignoring the salariat and the workers’.

The editorials on this theme, both spatialize and historicise the region. The Daily historicises the region by lamenting that the ‘marginally deficit’ Mysore state is becoming a ‘chronically deficit’ region. In portraying North Karnataka districts as ‘haunted by famine and scarcity’, it offers the ‘old Mysore region’ as relatively free from such constraints. It de-agglomerates the regional community as ‘a small group of affluent farmers’, ‘the rapacious mercantile community’, ‘salariat and the workers’ and the ‘rural poor’. It tends to foreground the ‘salariat and the workers’ and demands the regulation of patronage to ‘the farmers’ lobby’. It asks for punitive measures against the ‘antisocial mercantile class’ and seeks to articulate the need for activating the ‘defunct public distribution’.

At the level of inter-regions, the Daily chides the ‘surplus states’ to exercise restraint on its patronage to the farmers’ lobby and the mercantile community. Interestingly, these admonitions are tempered with the fact that the groups cited above are sources for the Congress party funds and thereby the political class is implicated. The edits also plead with the Centre to evolve a ‘national food policy’ and to declare the

\textsuperscript{33} DH March 9, 1965
entire country as a single food zone. It appears that the region is not unduly perturbed about forsaking its autonomy for the purpose of filling its belly.

Controlling prices and raising food production are two measures consistently articulated in the analysis of food policy of either the Central Government or the State Government. Controlling prices includes regulation of procurement of grains and delivery through the public distribution system. The Centre’s self acclaimed role of ‘being a supplier of last resort’ and the deficit State’s argument that the Center needs to also ensure ‘its proper distribution’ by insisting that the surplus states should not give in to blandishments of the affluent farmers provide contradictory positions on the same theme.

5.4 Riparian Disputes

This section deals with DH’s understanding of the sharing of river waters between the states. During the period of study (1958-1983), two major river water disputes appear prominently in its editorials: The triangular conflict between Andhra, Maharasthra and Karnataka over the sharing of the Krishna and Godavari rivers and the largely bilateral dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka over the sharing of Cauvery waters. While the Cauvery row has a history spanning long years, the Krishna-Godavari conflict may be located within the post-colonial period. Both the conflicts emerge prior to the Reorganisation of States. Chronologically, DH addresses the Krishna-Godavari conflict up to the late 1960s and the Cauvery disputes from then onwards to the early 1980s.

In the fifties and sixties, the ‘nation and its fragments’ or the Indian Union and the constituent states expressed indescribable faith in development and modernity. The fragments vied with each other to join this grand procession. It demanded a change in the Weltanschauung, a shift from a sacral to a secular geography, from the idea of rivers being considered as a medium for attaining salvation to them being considered as sources for secular redemption. The Princely State of Mysore had inaugurated such a public

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34 The idea of river Ganges in the Hindu mythology
vision in the early twentieth century itself and the name of Mokshagundam Visweharaih stands as a powerful testimony to this.

Nehru's modern temples of India included the construction of big dams. Dams were to provide power and irrigation to industry and agriculture. Both industry and agriculture in turn were to produce wealth for individuals, communities, regions and the nation at large. The regulation of desire has always been a contentious issue. The Planning Commission became the site for producing desires and restraints. The central government was constantly engaged in arbitrating between contending regions over the most desirable way of utilizing river water systems that were crisscrossing different regions. It set up whole paraphernalia of commissions, tribunals and river valley authorities to settle inter-regional disputes. There were agreements that antedated the Indian Nation state like the 1924 Agreement between the Madras Presidency and the Princely State of Mysore over the sharing of Cauvery waters.

The three major inter-state rivers namely Krishna, Godavari and Cauvery, divide the peninsular India into upper riparian states and lower riparian states. Since the idiom of riparian rights recognize lower riparian states as equal or more equal partners in the sharing of river waters with the upper riparian states, a state like Karnataka deservedly displayed anxiousness about its status as an upper riparian state throughout the first few decades of Independence. Perhaps, its anxiety is also a reflection of its uneasy relationship with very overbearing neighbours like Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharastra.

DH poses the issue of sharing Krishna-Godavari and Cauvery river waters frequently as a human problem requiring a national perspective and a technocratic solution. There are occasions when it portrays the problem as being purely economical in nature, to be viewed in a very regional sense and requiring a more deliberative, democratic solution. The sharing of Krishna-Godavari waters with Andhra Pradesh and Maharastra appears to be viewed in the former sense whereas the Cauvery conflict with Tamil Nadu seems to be more often treated in the latter manner.
The Daily appears to contest the view that it should be merely perceived as a utilitarian problem. It seems to insist that sharing of river waters need to touch upon the questions concerning equity and justice, as they are also human problems. Whether such a scheme involves a prioritizing of needs in terms of drinking water, irrigation requirements and production of power for both agriculture and industry appears less pointed in its editorials. But the daily does provide exhaustive statistical details about the large area covered by the Krishna basin in Karnataka, the dire absence of irrigated land on both sides of the banks of this river in the Karnataka region, and the iniquitous allocation of water through the various agreements and tribunals to prove the supposedly unjust nature of the sharing of waters between the three States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Maharastra and Karnataka.

While the editorials tend to privilege a national norm for resolving the issue, it also seeks to situate the sharing of waters from a perspective of a sub-regional upper riparian area, a strictly State bound concern and a geographical region spanning the entire river basin to a development of South India in general. Reasons for privileging the national perspective stems from DH considering the river water systems as national assets, essential to combat the national food deficit by harnessing the rivers for irrigation and suggesting that only the Central Government has the potential to raise resources for constructing major dams across big rivers for purposes of irrigation and generation of power.

Technocratic vs. the Political Solution

Foregrounding 'rivers' as a potential natural resource, DH tends to follow it up with a proposition that they require to be judiciously administered via specialized experts for optimum utilization of waters. The editorials tend to prefer experts like scientists and engineers to politicians to engage with the contentious issue of sharing waters between States suggesting that a supposedly technocratic solution is to be privileged over a political solution. DH identifies the areas where there is supposedly a ground for deploying technocrats. For instance, their role is perceived as crucial in areas of assessing
power and irrigation requirements for different regions, estimating the availability of the flow of waters and efficient use of waters. Given below is an extract of an editorial headlined ‘Mysore’s water resources’:

The question what exactly are the water resources remains unanswered even after twenty years of Independence. Mr N.G.K. Murty put it strongly to his fellow engineers when he said on Monday that “it is a disservice to our country to ignore any further the pressing need and prime importance of scientifically and precisely assessing the water resources of our rivers”.

This issue is of immediate interest to Mysore State because of its poor irrigation facilities – only nine per cent of the total cultivable area comes under irrigation – as contrasted with the neighbouring States of Andhra and Madras. Over 40 lakh acres of arable land in the districts of North Mysore alone are still at the mercy of erratic monsoon, a situation that can and should be remedied by existing major irrigation projects like Upper Krishna, Malaprabha and Ghataprabha.  

Apart from highlighting the need to frame the issue in a technocratic sense, the editorial points out the inter-regional disparity. It is anguished that the state’s irrigation facilities do not compare well with its neighbours. As is well known, this was the period of the Green Revolution emerging across the country. In Mysore, the dominant communities in the rural hinterland began to modernize and apply capital intensive technology to agriculture.

It may not be unfair to suggest that DH was voicing the demands of entrenched interests of the region. Alongside, it should not be missed that the nation had just gone through a food crisis in the mid-sixties. In fact, even in Mysore there was a severe drought situation and a major food crisis.

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35 DH June 6 1968
Desire vs. Restraint

In a federal polity, the allocation of resources becomes a contentious issue. Regions compete with one another for scarce resources. Rivers are interstate resources and they need to be shared. Since there is an absence of an agreed upon general principle of sharing, newspapers belonging to different regions become mouthpieces for voicing the desires and criticizing any restraint on such desires by arbitrating agencies. DH is a case in point.

DH consistently complains of an iniquitous allocation of Krishna-Godavari waters through the various treaties like the 1951 Agreement, the Gulati Commission’s recommendation (1963) and the Bachawat Award (1978). The reasons marshaled for such a disposition seems to rise from a perception that the iniquitous awards of these tribunals were less sensitive to the low percentage of irrigated land in Mysore, to the famine and drought conditions of North Karnataka which actually forms the basin of Krishna river and to the Mysore’s large possession of un-irrigated area of the Krishna basin.

Iniquitous due to History: 1951 Agreement

The 1951 Agreement was a pre-reorganised contract about sharing of Krishna waters in the Bombay-Hyderabad-Mysore region. Since Mysore did not figure as a party to the contract, the inclusion of the dry Krishna basin areas like Gulabarga, Raichur and Bellary into the enlarged Mysore state in 1956, forced the state to petition the Central Government. Even the revised allocation was found to be insubstantial and the region was prone to regular drought and famine conditions. DH is seen to be responding to such a situation.

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36 Government of India, Report of the Irrigation Commission 1972, Vol. 11, p.266 “Mysore clearly falls within the category of areas exposed to a high degree of risk from drought and famine”
38 This point can be gleaned from other sources.

Government of Mysore, Mysore State Draft Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), Bangalore, 1973, p. 238
The Daily adduces historical reasons for the unfair award of the 1951 agreement and the memorandum signed by Mysore after the re-organisation of States. The absence of the enlarged Mysore State in 1951 led to a situation where ‘the Mysore Government did not press the claim of the North Karnataka region forcefully’ as these regions were largely in the territory of the Princely State of Hyderabad before 1956. Since the Re-organisation of States took place later and more areas were added to Mysore in the arid Krishna basin, it noted with concern that, ‘The Re-organisation of the State’s boundaries in 1956 has rendered the original allocations iniquitous to the States in the upper reaches of the river’. It added later:

If in 1951, the Mysore Government did not press the claim of the North Karnataka region forcefully, it was because the region became a part of the state only in 1956. The allocation that was raised following the re-organisation (1956) was too meager (475tmcft) to meet the needs of the region.

Though the “the State has the largest area coming under the Krishna basin”, its readers are told that the allocation of waters as per the Agreement seems to have had less correspondence to this significant fact and therefore the award needs to be perceived as unfair. While DH points out that the award was not ratified by Mysore, it also considered the data on which the award was based faulty. For the daily, the agreement was both legally and technically untenable.

A Mixed Response: Gulati Commission

Since both Maharashtra and Karnataka perceived the 1951 Agreement as an iniquitous contract, the center constituted the Gulhati Commission in 1962 to arbitrate the sharing of Krishna-Godavari waters between Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Mysore state. At the same time Indo-China war cloud prevailed and an internal emergency was imposed. Under conditions of war, famine and poverty, the regional newspaper appears to sell optimism about Gulati Commission to its readers.

39 DH April 6, 1966
The irrigated area mentioned was 5.63 lakh hectares as against its potential of 33.94 lakh areas.
While looking forward to the anticipated report of the Gulati Commission, the daily prescribed and proscribed tasks for the Inter-State River Water Commission. Its proscriptions included that "it was not expected to sit in judgment over the rights and wrongs of the concerned States, 'it was not even expected to give its opinion on whether the 1951 agreement had any legal validity" and the implausibility of the Commission providing "any cut and dried formula" for sharing Krishna Godavari waters. With the headline reading 'Welcome Gesture', the editorial did generate some optimism hoping that "the report will certainly provide more reliable data and update facts' which were missing in the 1951 agreement".

Describing the "Gulati proposals as basically sound", the daily highlighted that "the constitution of river boards" formed the thrust of the Gulati report. In the same editorial, it cautioned that "the states will therefore be ill advised to jettison this report based on equitable principles". When the same edit pointed out that the Irrigation Minister Mr.K.L.Rao, deflected the issue by reporting that the Central Government lacks funds to set up river boards for all major rivers, the daily pleaded "even so, the Centre will do well to reconsider the setting up boards at least for some of the inter-state rivers like Krishna".

Ibrahim Award

The recommendations of Gulhati commission were accepted to a large extent and it came to be referred to as the Ibrahim Award, named after the then central Irrigation Minister. One of the important recommendations of the award was to connect Godavari to Krishna and in the process allow for more water to irrigate the lands in Karnataka. The Ibrahim Award is discussed by the Daily in the context of Mysore’s claim for more allocation of Krishna waters and its objection to building of the second stage of Nagarjuna Sagar project. 

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41 DH July 21, 1962  
42 ibid  
43 DH Dec 20, 1963  
44 DH Nov 7, 1967
Reacting to the announcement made by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Brahmananda Reddy that work had begun on the second stage, the newspaper sternly reminded that “the grievance of Mysore and Maharashtra was that by impounding a quantity of water far in excess of what was justly due to Andhra, their interest would suffer by lapse”. Accusing the Andhra Chief Minister of violating the Ibrahim Award, it told its readers that “Mr Reddy now trots out in justification of Andhra Pradesh’s adventure that it had laid claims for 1000 tmcft of Krishna waters against 800 tmcft allotted to it”. The Andhra Pradesh’s defense that building of the project is an effort to supplement the national food deficit in the country is looked with suspicion. Its defense is criticized thus “Andhra Pradesh seems to realize that many of its projects may not bear scrutiny which perhaps explain its posture of a national endeavour, as if food production, elsewhere in the country will not be a national effort”.

Producing a statistical account of the Ibrahim Award based on Gulati proposals; the newspaper reported an allocation of 800 tmcft for Andhra, 600 tmcft for Mysore and 400 for Maharashtra. Since the daily avers that the distribution was supposedly unjust and unfair, it pressed for a revised allocation of 1200 tmcft for Mysore. This claim is seemingly made against a background wherein the Mysore Government appears perturbed with Andhra Pradesh going ahead with the gigantic Nagajuna Sagar Project and thereby contributing to the misery of the perennially parched districts of North Karnataka.

Federal Tensions as Personality Clashes

Federal tensions are asserted in the context of “Mysore being slighted by the center” because the Union Government displayed its impertinence by not having “the courtesy to acknowledge the three letters the Mysore Government had written’ with regard to the Krishna waters dispute.” While the river water disputes are generally fought between states, in this instance, the daily suggests that the conflict has a sharp Centre-

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46 DH March 23 1968
State dimension too. As the newspaper points out, this emerges due to the fact that an oppositional party at the state headed by former Congress leader Nijilingappa’s now belonging to Congress (O) has to encounter the Congress (R) Government at the Centre with Mrs Gandhi as the Prime Minister. The rift is a pointer towards this strained relationship between the two leaders too. Hence, the rift between these personalities seems to crop up as “the centre’s insolence is more difficult to understand considering that the letters were written by no less a person than Chief Minister Nijilingappa”. For the newspaper, the contentious issue of sharing waters palpably concerns not merely the federal structure but also federal actors.

For the daily, the dispute between Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka seems not only about sharing the Krishna-Godavari waters but also about each other’s objection towards building dams either in Andhra or Mysore. Accusing Andhra Pradesh for raising the crest gates of Nagarajun Sagar dam clandestinely, the newspaper casts its neighbor as striking ‘an intransigent posture’, showing “such defiance of the call of law and justice’ and practicing ‘colonialism on a small scale’.” Karnataka’s persistent objection towards the building of the gigantic dam appears to be based on considering Andhra Pradesh’s attitude as ‘intransigent’.

**Idea of a Balanced Regional Development**

Warning against an anticipated uneven development of the region and pitching for more generosity from the Central Government for optimal utilization of Krishna waters, the daily held that “considering that some of the Northern districts are backward, the Centre should for the sake of balanced regional development, extend special assistance of the Upper Krishna project”.” Here the notion of DH’s ‘balanced regional development’ is much broader than the linguistic political boundary generally known as Mysore state.

Though it is precisely for the Mysore state that the Upper Krishna project is being envisaged, the Daily for the purposes of legitimacy seeks to divide the nation into

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47DH Oct 10 1967
48DH April 4 1966
developed regions and backward regions. Further the Daily associated river water disputes to the drawing of internal boundaries based on linguistic lines: "The allocation that was raised following the re-organisation (1956) was too meager (475 tmcft) to meet the needs of the region".49

Since the Re-organisation of States took place later and more areas were added to Mysore in the arid Krishna basin, it noted with concern, "The Re-organisation of the State's boundaries in 1956 has rendered the original allocations iniquitous to the States in the upper reaches of the river". Though the "the State has the largest area coming under the Krishna basin", its readers are told that the allocation of waters as per the Agreement seems to have had less correspondence to this significant fact and therefore the award needs to be perceived as unfair.

5.5 Communication Infrastructure

The profile of a region's career is charted through time and space or in the intermeshing of both. Communication infrastructure has the potential to sally forth or rein in the pace of a region's career by altering the space-time relations. Development becomes a trope through which this career is essayed. It is another name for an altered space-time relation. The co-existence of bullock cart and Boeing aircraft allows the region to survive in several space-time relations.

This section deals with DH's concern for the career of the region through the establishment of communication infrastructure. In other words, it is DH's vision of a modified space-time relation or a notion of development that underlies the charting of the region's career.50 Two kinds of proclivities appear to surface in DH's editorial commentary on Communication infrastructure. On the one hand, it seems to have taken up the task of lobbying for capital and state capital to be precise, in order to usher in development of the enlarged Mysore state through the construction of roads, rail roads,

49 DH 6 April 1966
50 "What Marxists saw as the rise of imperialism via the internationalization of finance capital, the critical social scientists began to interpret as the time lagged diffusion of development (as capitalist modernity) to the undeveloped, traditional, not yet fully modernized parts of the world. See Edward Soja's Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory Verso 1993:33
airports and sea ports. On the other hand, it chooses to address the problem of welding the newly added areas into the old Mysore state by maximizing density of communication between various people within the region.

DH tends to perceive a possibility of effectively constituting a subject across the sub-regions for the newly formed state with better communication and transport infrastructure. Like a national railway transport in some manner facilitating the production of a national subject, the Daily indirectly seems to suggest that a well-knit regional transport may contribute towards catalyzing a regional subject. It had to implicitly take the task of imagining an economy as well as imagining a regional community. Communication infrastructure, as a necessary ingredient of a development logic, assumes such an important place in the editorials because it is suggestive of a site where both these, capital and community can be addressed.

In some received understandings of the conceptual categories capital and community, they are arraigned as contradictory elements. Capital, as per these conceptions, stands for individual good, where as community stands for public good. Also, the public good and the individual good are considered to be antagonistic to each other. These core categories seem to inform implicitly the self-understanding of the regional newspaper. In its estimate there seems to be no apparent contradiction between these categories. DH premises development to be a category that enjoins both capital and community.

It seems to suggest that investment on communication infrastructure is a necessary condition for enhancing both the material and cultural life of the region. The Daily appears to see a possibility in the forging of a sense of ‘regional-ness’ with the laying of roads and railways across the region. More importantly, it perceives that adequate infrastructure provides an opportunity for state investors or private investors to build a material edifice in the form of industrial and agricultural base for the region.
The editorials give an impression that the Mysore state that was created in 1956 had large areas that were inhospitable to the movement of capital or people. Since the economic development appears to form the character and content of the Mysore region, its thrust on one of its important constitutive elements, namely its communication infrastructure (like the laying of roads, railways, seaports and airports) is understandable. As the capital for investing in this sector seems unavailable within the region, the editorials argue for bringing pressure on the Central authorities in order to make them respond to the communication needs of the region.

DH seems to be acutely aware of a continuing situation like “in the eyes of the rail ministry, Mysore doesn’t exist at all”.\(^{51}\) In the case of formulation of policy on air traffic, the Daily argued thus: “What seems singularly absent at the level of policy formulation is what may be called a sense of regional justice, let alone one of imagination”.\(^{52}\) Extending this logic, the regional daily appears perturbed with the economic stagnation of the region; a distasteful consequence arising from “the calculated and prolonged neglect” of its communication requirements.\(^{53}\)

DH considers that the continued indifference of the Centre towards investing in the transport infrastructure of the region has resulted in “industrial possibilities” remaining untapped.\(^{54}\) The daily complains that the repeated demands of the commercial community as well as the public of the state seem to have had occasioned no particular effect on the policy makers.

Notwithstanding the fact that a few railway ministers like Hanumanthaiya, Dassappa and T.A.Pai hailed from this region, the Daily seems to think that the lack of railway facilities in the region were due to the lackluster, dismal performance of the Mysore “state’s representatives in Parliament”.\(^{55}\) Since the members signally failed to bring pressure on the authorities, the newspaper presumes that the state has been

\(^{51}\) DH April 2, 1963
\(^{52}\) DH April 2, 1963
\(^{53}\) DH March 4, 1960
\(^{54}\) DH April 2, 1963
\(^{55}\) DH March 17, 1977
subjected to a raw deal from the centre. The usage ‘raw deal’ has been repeatedly employed in the editorials of the newspaper.

As stated earlier, with increased transport, DH seemingly understands that the density of communication between regions and within a region tends to grow and this contributes to the formation of both capital and community. In this connection, it traces the history of railways in the Princely State of Mysore and the transfer of the railway assets to the Union of India on its accession. After Independence, the Indian Union amalgamated the railway property of the Princely Mysore State into Indian Railways. The daily informs that this acquisition included buildings and land along with “Rs. 36 crores earmarked for railway development in old Mysore”. In the 1960s, DH notes the remarks made by the Mysore representative in the Parliament, Mr Mohammed Imam that “after twelve years not an inch of line has been laid” and the incomplete rail lines that had started “before integration” in the old Mysore State was still “waiting completion”.

The newspaper reminds the reader that the demand for extension of line from Chamarajnagar to Satyamangalam “had often been voiced by the people’s representatives even during the days of the Mysore Representative Assembly”. But goes on to suggest that due to the limited political space available in the erstwhile autocracy, the matter was left to hang in the air. The irony is hyped up by the deliberate recall of this history in the sense that DH wants to suggest that nothing much has changed with Mysore’s shift from benevolent autocracy to mass democracy. Though DH usually allies positively to the history of the Princely State of Mysore, this selective recall of a not so pleasant memory deflates the generally benign picture of the Old Mysore State that is otherwise invoked in the editorials.

The editorials frame the sub-region in terms of possession of communication and transport infrastructure. Its lack of transport facility is contrasted with the sub regions, which are rich in natural resources. For instance, the mineral rich but transport poor

56 DH May 6, 1959
57 DH March 4, 1960
58 DH November 15, 1973
region of North Karnataka, its acquisition of 200 miles long coastal line along the Arabian Sea after the Re-organisation of States without modern port facilities, the cash crop rich Malnad region with rail access to the coast etc. The daily assumes that this lacuna constituted a serious infraction to the economic development of the region.

For DH, this communication infrastructure of railways, highways, airports and seaports required the support of the Central Government. The Daily grudges that Mysore state’s claims for better transport facilities were inadequately grasped and insufficiently addressed by the Central Government. Much to the dismay of Mysore, less deserving places in the North (Jagjivan Ram’s - Bihar) seem to have been chosen for more infrastructure investments.\(^59\)

For DH, the “compact North Karnataka” being historically “parceled out to various administrations” seem to have become worthy of “attention” only with the arrival of the enlarged Mysore State\(^60\). Building of highways and railways being the responsibility of the Central Government, the daily demands the railway ministry to “to wake up to the needs of the long neglected region”.\(^61\) It suggests that building of the Karwar seaport and the Hubli-Karwar rail link simultaneously as very important. This prioritizing presumably was meant to facilitate the shifting of ores from Hospet and Hubli. Also, DH expected Karwar to act as a conduit between the North and South India for the transport of petrol and coal, which were otherwise carried in a circuitous route raising the cost of freight. When in 1964, “railway ministry’s the hare brained busy bodies” stated that “there was no justification for Hubli-Karwar rail line” the Daily felt that it led to “bitter disappointment to the public of this State”.\(^62\)

For the Daily, the need to lay the 90 miles railway line between Hassan and Mangalore for providing an outlet to the Malnad’s dollar earning products appears as a

\(^{59}\ DH May 6, 1959\n^{60}\ DH October 19, 1959\n^{61}\ Ibid\n^{62}\ DH October 21, 1964
"self-evident need". While attributing shamelessness to the denial expressed by the railway minister Jagjivan Ram towards the laying of the Hassan-Mangalore Project, it notes with dismay the minister’s glee “over the extension of the broad gauge line in some obscure region in his own state.” It posts a warning by cautioning that such a policy of open discrimination militates against a scheme of “rational development”.

DH is quite certain that Bangalore, the capital city of Mysore and Karnataka need to become the node of communication both within the state and outside the state. It supported the idea of a trunk route to be laid connecting Bangalore with Trivandrum, Hyderabad, Nagpur and Bombay. It also perceived a need to have a direct broad gauge connection between Mangalore and Bangalore and conversion of meter gauge to broad gauge in the Bangalore-Pune and Bangalore-Mysore line. The “introduction of Viscount is urgently called for” in the Bangalore-Bombay sector to cater to the swelling volume of air traffic.

The language of needs and neglect seems to capture the newspaper’s thinking on ‘transport infrastructure’ for the region. Besides, there is a less obvious construction of the hierarchy of needs. The editorials make a distinction between Malnad’s transport requirements and North Karnataka’s transport requirements. Malnad is associated with affluence and therefore it is looking forward to a more opulent future. In contrast, North Karnataka is associated with destitution and the infusion of transport requirements may help the region in attending to its basic needs. Hence, DH does not unduly bother with the fact that the implications for the apparently similar demand hold out different possibilities for the various sub regions.

This actually exposes the editorial’s contradictions in its recurring demands for development. While the editorials loudly protest against the discrimination in the allocation of resources between North and South India as well as Karnataka and its other Southern neighbours, DH seems to approve of some kind of discrimination within the

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63 DH May 6, 1959
64 Ibid
65 DH April 2, 1963
region. In fact, it advocates differential treatment of various sub-regions within the State of Karnataka. Therefore it is possible to read this, as a lack of moral compunction on the part of DH to hierarchize differentially the development needs of the various sub-regions within the Mysore State.

Also, the editorials seem to promote unabashedly Bangalore as a nodal center, which reaches out to important places within the state and outside the state. Perhaps, this preferential attitude towards Bangalore stems from the newspaper and its readers being largely located in Bangalore. Also, being an elite newspaper, it is likely that it arrogates itself the power to decide for the people of the state. While it points out the discriminations that Mysore State experiences with regard to other States, it is not sensitive to differential treatment of sub regions with regard to investment in the area of communication and transport infrastructure. When it discusses the Railway Minister, Mr. Jaffer Sharief's move to make Bangalore, a railway zone, there appears to be a no other sub-regional aspirants within the state.66

Old Mysore region and North Karnataka are implicitly recognized in the text as dissimilar spaces and as existing in different times. Bangalore is constructed as a distinct city with special wants and care. Even in Bangalore a certain section is sharply foregrounded. It is the dramatization of this section's problems, which gets expressed in the Daily's anguish when it lavishes editorial space for the problems of the 40 passengers flying to Bombay. Associating Bangalore with airports and North Karnataka with bare minimum roads suggests that DH is seeking to establish a linkage between particular spaces with particular notions of time. To repeat, this differential notion of time is established through the demand for roads, rail links and airports.

These are not just abstract notions of time and space, but a way of trying to frame particular people through this rhetoric. Even while the paper claims that it stands for the entire region, it is also at the same time engaged in fragmenting the homogeneous community. Thus, the very fact of emphasizing on the delayed time of the 40 daily

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66 DH April 18, 1981
passengers in the Bangalore-Bombay flight and the lack of roads in Hospet for carrying ores to ports may be perceived as DHs effort not only to locate the different regions as existing in different times and spaces, but also to understand differently the inhabitants of these regions.

Apart from the spatialisation of the sub-regions within the region, the editorials spatialize the nation also. It constructs North India as ‘pampered’ and South India as “neglected”. The supposed neglect of the region is treated as synonymous with the neglect of the South in general. The condescending attitude of the Centre towards the South is frowned upon not just because of the inherent injustice of it. It is also because North, in the imagination of the newspaper, appears a little too distant from contemporary times. It seems to suggest that when the South is more ready to take on development projects including communication infrastructure, it makes little sense to invest in a rail project in some “obscure region” of Bihar, which incidentally happens to be the constituency of the rail minister Jagjivan Ram.

The editorials tend to fragment the regional community into commercial community, political class, an abstract citizen commuter and a public. The demands of the commercial community for ports, highways and railways are construed as genuine. The editorials seem to prioritize the commercial community, plantation owners, and air travelers over the rest of the constituency. The political class, which is constructed as negotiators with the centre is consistently chastised for its lack of bargaining skills. It seeks to highlight the inability of the Mysore representatives to pressurize the central authorities. This inability is attributed to the tactlessness of the members of Parliament belonging to the state. In this context, DH makes a distinction between Janata rule and the Congress regime. In an editorial drawing reference to Janata rule, it avers “some of the long awaited Karnataka (rail) projects deserve to be given the attention due to them by the Janata Government”.

With the abstract “citizen” standing for the educated middle class fast becoming more mobile, the editorials argue for easier and faster passenger traffic facilities. In DH’s
style of reasoning, the boundaries of the region appear to be constantly shifting. While
the deprived citizen that it refers to suggests the national citizen, its focus appears to be
mainly on the entitlements of the denizens of the region. In its early editorials, it specifies
the commercial class as belonging to South India and in its later editorials, it specifies
them, as belonging to Mysore. The political class that it cites are representatives of both
region and nation as well. In this manner, DH tends to innovate a porous boundary for the
region. While communication infrastructure determines spatial and temporal boundaries,
it seems to offer ways to resist these boundaries too.

5.6 Prohibition

The theme of prohibition as discussed in the editorials of DH appears to engage
with this issue relating to civil society and the problem of governance. In this instance,
the newspaper owners who are also liquor distillers and belong to a historically evolved
community of toddy tappers known as Idigas/Gouds resist Gandhian inspired prohibition
and produce pragmatic arguments against the policy through their liberal, anglicized
editors. Though the issue is posed as universal reason vs historically constituted reason it
is but a conflict between two historically constituted reasons. This translation of the
interests of the community and projecting the instrumental and expressive concerns of the
owners as universal interests of the public at large, take the distinct form known as
‘development’.

From the standpoint of newspaper owners who are also distillers from the toddy
tapping community, and also from the Westernised elite editorial set-up of DH, opposing
Gandhian in the policy making of the Congress party appears to have logic of its own.
Since the main business of the owners of DH happened to be brewing and selling liquor
at that time, it makes economic sense for them to oppose prohibition. Since they belonged
to the toddy tapping community, they found it unsound to acknowledge any normative
judgments to be made against their community’s occupation and interests. In some
manner, this opposition appears to take the form of Shudra resistance to Upper-Caste
hegemonic display of moral power. The English educated Westernised elite editors found
holes in the priorities marked out by the new Indian State, in the Constitution, in the Gandhian ideology and the (hypocritical) stance of Gandhians in the Congress Party.  

Historically, the Royalty in Mysore cultivated a rapport with the top Congress leadership. Gandhi was received as a State guest on several occasions. The Royalty performed on their own some of the symbolic acts like taking up the Charka and speaking of Harijan Reforms but when it came to ‘Prohibition’ they refrained from identifying with the Nationalist Movement as it would it deplete the State exchequer.

As stated earlier, it is believed that the liquor business has been in the central of imagining the region. There is a story that the Dewan of Mysore, Ramaswamy Mudaliar persuaded the Maharaja not to accede to the Indian Union in the closing years of pre-Independence. Since the Backward Class movement was slowly beginning to surface, The Dewan and the Maharaja felt that BCs might look upto their project favourably as it would give them the impression that this step potentially would help in unifying the BCs across the region. In this context, Venkataswamy and Guruswamy, wealthy BCs of the region, were coaxed into running a newspaper for mobilizing opinion against accession to the Indian Union. Rather than Kannada becoming the unifying factor for conceiving such a ‘Nation’, it appears caste would have emerged as the most important integrative motif. In order to conceive and translate this Shudra Nation into reality, these entrepreneurs were supposedly enticed with an offer that taxes on liquor products would be waived for the next ten years provided Mysore State remained outside the Indian Union. These are grapevine narrations. What need to be addressed are the relations between DH, liquor business, Idiga community and the imagining of ‘region’?

The daily appears to consider prohibition from three vantage grounds namely a Gandhian framework, liberal and secular viewpoint and from a toddy tapping community perspective. While the anglicized, liberal editors of DH were presumably fabricating a

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67 Joseph Pothen, the editor who had named the newspaper as “Deccan-Herald” had on an earlier occasion written “A bottle a day keeps misunderstanding away”. Cited in T.I.S.George Pothen Joseph’s India A Biography New Delhi 1992:9
world of unencumbered individuals through the invocation of Nehru and other liberals, the Gandhians who are cast as playing an active role in manufacturing a supposedly hollow moral universe are made to be seen as curtailing the freedom of the envisioned unencumbered individuals. Further, the newspaper owners belonging to the historically evolved community (Idiga’s) appear to project their occupational and business interests as universal interests through the anglicized elite editors like Joseph Pothen and others. In fact, they contest the normative world of the Gandhians, as a policy on prohibition may lead to several evils include bootlegging, illicit liquor brewing, affect the health of the population. Whereas the taxes on the sale of liquor, the editorials argue may become handy for purposes of implementing Five Year Plans and for mobilizing resources for universalizing education which in turn may prepare the nation for better democracy.

In retrospect, the theme on Prohibition seems to have been included for several reasons. Firstly, there are exclusive editorials on the theme. Secondly, the proprietors of the newspaper owned distilleries and it was considered as a major source of their income. Thirdly, the owners belong to Idiga community, which is recognized as a powerful community in Karnataka. Fourthly, the editorials point out that congressmen affected by Gandhian virtues supposedly engineered this debate both in and out of Parliament. Lastly, editorials discuss prohibition as one of the Directive Principles.

DH in every one of its editorials on prohibition has consistently opposed any move to implement prohibition either at the Centre or at the State. The debates hover around three contesting positions namely legal, moral and economic. Albeit, at a much a deeper level, the issue seems to be more fundamental and a definitional one. Who is supposed to define what is virtue and vice, right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour?

**Constitutional Obligation**

The daily appears to address the Constitution not merely, as a set of formal rules governing institutions of the State but also as a non-instrumental location, providing assorted values, meanings and discourses regarding individual/societal behavior and
actions. The Constitution emerges as a text providing diverse strands of argument either for defending or attacking prohibition in DHs rendering of the debates on this issue.

The Directive Principle and the preamble, which are employed to provide fodder for discussing prohibition, are actually imbued with ideological moorings of various hues. It has been acknowledged that Article 47 owes its origin to Gandhi's thinking on lifestyles. While admitting the sanctity of the Directive Principle of Constitution (Art 47) that deals with Prohibition, the daily contrasts this demand with the supposedly more immediate demands that are found in the preamble of the Constitution which envisages a socialistic pattern of society and another Directive Principle dealing with the state's responsibility of providing free and compulsory education to children less than 14 years of age.

It seems to ask this question: "Is democracy best insured by investing in education or by implementing a policy of prohibition?" Which one of these objectives should become a priority for the new democracy? In effect, the daily seems to suggest that with the revenue sourced through taxes on liquor, the States or the Central Government may invest the garnered money to educate the masses. The daily through this connection between education and democracy engineers another connection between prohibition and hypocrisy. Thus, the reader is presumably asked to treat the problem of illiteracy as a real one and prohibition as a "proven fraud".

In another context, the Daily reacting to the discussion of Congress High Command on the constitutional provision dealing with prohibition contrasts it with the Preamble of the Constitution. It notes:

Why such people affect so much sanctity where prohibition, which is no doubt a directive principle in the Constitution is concerned, when at the same time they are so suspiciously silent over the progressive perversion of the very preamble of the Constitution, namely, the

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DH March 9, 1959
DH February 11, 1966
establishment of an egalitarian society, also called a Socialistic pattern of society, passes rational understanding...\textsuperscript{70}

This period signifies an interesting period in the evolution of Congress Party. There emerges a rift in the Congress, essentially between Indira Gandhi with socialist postures and the Syndicate members like Morarji Desai, Nijilingappa and others. Morarji Desai who is supposedly enthused to fight for Gandhian virtues (prohibition) inside the Congress party also casts his lot against the Socialists inside the Party. The Gandhians are seen to be unconcerned about the food crisis facing the country at that time, unemployment, lack of basic education and civic amenities to the citizens at large. Instead, the Daily finds them indulging in “sound and fury entirely disproportionate to the representative capacity of those who cause the noise, claiming themselves to be Gandhians where prohibition is concerned”.\textsuperscript{71} This passage cited above illustrates the predicament facing the ideological drift in the Party without mentioning the performing actors.

Depletion of State Exchequer

The daily in several of its editorials categorically warns against implementing prohibition, as it would result in colossal financial losses to both State Governments and Central Government as well. Since planning appeared crucial for nation building and the Mahalanobis model of capital intensive development vis-à-vis the Gandhian inspired village economy required enormous resource mobilization including revenues from liquor enterprises, DH seems to dismiss the argument for prohibition also from an economic point of view. Though DH rarely refers to Mahalanobis or Gandhian model of economy, it is in order here to invoke these two models.

Reacting sharply to the Mysore Government’s move to execute the policy in a phased manner, the daily in a lead screamed that the State was ‘plumping for a phased

\textsuperscript{70} DH Feb 11, 1966
\textsuperscript{71} DH Nov 2, 1966
programme of bankruptcy’. In another editorial dealing with the Government’s scepticism with regard to extending prohibition to the ‘only three wet districts – Bangalore, Gulbarga and Raichur’, the newspaper opined that this move should be ‘seen as the beginning of realism getting the better of faddism’. In the same editorial, it continues that ‘the rest of the State being covered by the reform which in reality has only succeeded in ensuring enormous loss of revenues which entails more taxes and erodes the rule of law’. To compensate for this enormous losses, the editorial informs the reader further that the Finance Minister “Mr. Jatti, for the Government stated that the Centre had been approached for making good fifty percent of the certain losses of Rs. 15 crores, if Prohibition were to be extended in our state”.

Of Gandhians and Gandhism

It is possible to discern a double intellectual move in its treatment of the Gandhians towards prohibition policy. In some ways, the editorials on Gandhi, Gandhism and Gandhians in the context of prohibition seem to propose a certain kind of a non-interest based community. But this proposed non-interest based community articulated through various Gandhian personalities is effectively milled and rendered to the readers as actually being an interest based community. Whereas the views of DH are articulated by representatives of a historically evolved community not on the basis of particularistic interests but such interests being effectively conceived and projected as universal interests, through their anglicized editors.

One of the editorials sets the stage to engage with the anatomy of the argument by reproducing Morarji’s statement that “drink made the mind weak and therefore spoiled the body”. This Vaishnavite concern for maintaining a distinction between mind and body appears to have caused the daily to fume thus:

What is necessary for building up the health of the people mentally and physically is to see that every citizen has sufficient food, shelter and employment and has the means to educate and train himself to

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72 DH Mach 3, 1959
73 DH July 18, 1962
74 DH January 29, 1963
live a decent and useful life, but today owing to growing unemployment rise, in the cost of living and lack of elementary amenities for healthy living, there is widespread misery and discontent.

In DH’s reply to Morarji Desai’s faddist concern, there seems to be a move towards clobbering the distinction between individual salvation and collective salvation, spiritual and physical, psychological and structural dimensions respectively. Reacting to the weak mind and spoiled body problem, the editorial speaks about the “health of the people” in general and then relates it to mental and physical health of citizens in particular. Instead of arguing that collective misery is an accumulation of weak minds and spoiled bodies, the daily speaks of the lack of basic needs like food, shelter and employment. DH seems to prefer theorizing misery structurally rather than psychologically. For the daily, there is no greater end than people living a “decent and useful life”.

Here is yet another philosophical engagement with Gandhism. For DH, “Gandhism represents a high type of refinement and is nothing if it is not the pursuit if it is not the pursuit and recognition of the truth.” The daily seems to imply that there is a need to make a distinction between an abstract, ideal type notion of truth vis-a-vis an empirical notion of truth, between a construct and experience. And it concludes “the truth about prohibition is that it has not only ‘used to prohibit’ but has become a sham and a fraud fooling none and harming the entire community”. Against those National leaders who the daily proclaims as pragmatic, it pitched other leaders who were carrying out an “obituary campaign for the continuance of a proven fraud like prohibition”.

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75 Ibid
76 DH Dec 11, 1966
77 Ibid
78 Ibid
Given below are a copy of an editorial and the analysis of the same.

DH - Monday, March 9th 1959.
The editorial deals with *Prohibition*, a public policy of the Mysore State in particular. Its attitude is neatly encapsulated in the headline *Phased for what?* Though headlines of editorials of newspaper are supposed to reflect balance, poise and sober sentiments towards the story, this particular headline offers a contrast. It displays a quality of shrillness. Without waiting to explain the contents of the policy, the headline appears to inject its nomadic readers with a potent dose of skepticism. So much so, the travel has already found a direction.

The lead sentence, which predicts that prohibition 'may end up in a phased programme of bankruptcy' unambiguously suggests to the reader that the editorial is building an offensive against the policy of prohibition in general and a phased one in particular. In its argumentative repertoire, an appeal to authority is invoked when it summons 'the considered views of such distinguished leaders as Mr. Nehru and a former Finance Minister, Mr. C.D. Deshmukh'. The editorial implies that these attributions have been made in the context of these leaders having reportedly warned the policy makers against any hasty decision regarding the implementation of prohibition in the states and centre as well. The stature and farsightedness of these authority figures are presented to the readers as compelling evidence for DH's tirade against the policy.

More at home, the predicament of the Mysore Excise Minister Mr. Rachaiah in implementing the policy in all the districts is brought to the attention of its English knowing readers. Unlike news reportage, editorials rarely employ quotations. Here Mr. Rachaiah's quote used in parathentisis seem to demonstrate the predicament of the Minister. It reads "what is evident is the contradiction in the formulation of policy, for Mr. Rachaiah has said that the whole of Hassan could not be covered by Prohibition "as the Government needed money for the implementation of the second Five Year Plan". The key words in the quote namely 'government' 'money' and 'plan' capture the spirit of the times, the spirit of the times being 'economic growth' and in a larger sense 'development', be it for the nation or the nascent region.
DH identifies that the need to raise resources for translating the massive capital intensive second Five Year Plan appears to have 'prompted Nehru and Deshmukh to advice' all the states to go slow on Prohibition. Perhaps, the rapport between the Centre and the nascent States, mostly Congress ruled states in the early years of Independence and the charismatic presence of leaders like Nehru who reduced Federal problems into Congress concerns, appears to have motivated DH to euphemistically employ the term 'advice'.

DH seems to tell its readers and the policy makers in Mysore to take comfort in the unwillingness of several other states in implementing Prohibition. With the exception of Andhra Pradesh, the states include West Bengal, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh where prohibition is rejected partially or wholly. DH chides Andhra Pradesh for giving into 'fanatics' and 'faddists implying that the consumption of liquor comes naturally to individuals and populations and any policy against this intrinsic desire will only make the fanatics 'cling to illusions'. In its effort to attack the policy, DH tends to use the technique of naturalisation.

Reluctant to take on Gandhi/Gandhism but more comfortable with engaging with Gandhians, DH invokes the name of Amrita Kumari in two contrasting ways. The daily seems to suggest that even this recognized Gandhian was of the opinion that the 'impossible policy' of prohibition was 'doomed to defeat'. Having made the enemy accept defeat in a pragmatic sense if not in a moral sense, it goes on to remark that this view was voiced when the recognized Gandhian was out of power implying that contemporary Gandhian's acted out of convenience rather than conviction.

While admitting the sanctity of the Directive Principle of Constitution (Art 47) that deals with Prohibition, the daily contrasts this demand with another Directive Principle dealing with the state's responsibility of providing free and compulsory education to children less than 14 years of age. It seems to ask this question: Is democracy best insured by investing in education or by implementing a policy of
prohibition? Which one of these objectives should become a priority for the new democracy and that too, a socialist democracy?

DH points out that in order to pursue a ‘puritanical mirage’, the State exchequer may lose more than Rs 300 crores. Despite the repeated appeals of Prime Minister Nehru not to press for prohibition, the daily tells its readers that this ‘irrational persistence’ among certain fanatic faddists, would result in the ‘most expensive legislation on morality’.

It is possible to conclude that a kind of Shudra imagination of the ‘region’ emerges in the editorials of the newspaper. Though the Daily shows its affinity to the Nehruvian project, it tempers the project with pragmatism. The newspaper’s preference for a non-sacral notion of material and moral life is consistently expressed. While the editorials approve of benign intrusion of capitalist modernity, it tells its readers of the capacity of the region to be self-reflexive.