CHAPTER I

MEANING, NATURE AND SCOPE
Primarily, planning involves guided development of economic and social change in a society. The plan of development is a design based on facts to achieve this goal, and thirdly planning is a continuous process as economic or social progress is also continuous process.

Regional planning means many things to many men. For Regional planning has an economic bias and is concerned with the centrally directed allocation of resources between regions to achieve certain objectives. Regional planning involves physical, economic, and social planning of development within regions and has more of a landuse content.

Ahmadnagar district is unique one in respected of geographical set-up in many ways. It occurs in the drought-prone area of Maharashtra State and regional imbalances are extremely pronounced in it. The northern part of the district presents a contrast with the southern, so far as the agricultural development is concerned. Northern part is agriculturally more developed due to the irrigation facilities while the southern part is lacking in this respect.

Rural development hinges upon the progress and prosperity of agriculture in this district. Consequently the agro-based industries gave a momentum to its economic development. This has also been reflected in the patterns of
density of population, density of roads, spatial distribution of towns, services etc. Obviously, there are glaring contrasts between northern and southern areas.

The present work has been mooted with a view to study a relatively backward area with several human and physical challenges for purpose of planned development. What has been observed generally, is that only particular areas/tahsils get preference in developmental activities and sizable areas are consistently neglected, for one reason or another. In order to understand the present position of Ahmadnagar district in this respect from where I hail, it is proposed to accomplish a thorough study of problems and prospects. Such a study alone shall be helpful in fixing priorities etc. in future.

Removing spatial inequalities in levels of socio-economic development, is the goal of regional planning and the district has been selected for that sort of study. The first and foremost goal of planner is to identify the region in all aspects and suggest solutions in this light. While preparing the plan it should be horizontally and vertically integrated.
(A) REGION, REGIONALISM AND REGIONALIZATION

I) REGION:

Region is a homogeneous area with physical and cultural characteristics distinct from those of neighbouring areas. As a part of national domain a region is sufficiently unified to have a consciousness of its customs and ideals and thus possesses as a sense of identity distinct from the rest of the country.

One of the basic concepts in a region is that it is, more or less, an area of internal similarity both in physical setting, as well as, in its cultural characteristics. Moreover this internal regional similarity is not a matter of accident. It results from certain geographical facts which include

(i) Location, (ii) Geological Structure and mineral resources,
(iii) Geomorphological characteristics, (iv) Climate,
(v) Natural drainage, (vi) Soils, (vii) Vegetation,
(viii) Trade and Communications, (ix) Land-use and agriculture,
(x) Population, (xi) Language, (xii) Culture. Some of these essential factors of regional unity are usually strong. The binding force is the common language and culture of the area. Similarly, sometimes location becomes the strong unifying force.

A first step in an outline of the concept of the region is to examine whether the region is a natural
phenomena or nearly a mental construction. There are two divergent views viz. (i) Subjective, (ii) Objective in this respect. The subjective view looks upon a region as a means to an end being simply an idea - a model to help to study the world. It is a method of classification, a devise to aggregate areal features with the only natural regions being the surface of the earth on which man finds his home. The subjective view adopts an opposite stance. It looks upon the region as an end in itself, a real entity an organism that can be identified and mapped.

The subjective view is now generally accepted. Hartshorne wrote that "attempt to see the region as a unity concrete object have passed into history. Regions are seen as descriptive tools defined according to particular criterion for a particular purpose there being as many regions as there are criteria to define them". Vidal-de-la Blache adopted a similar approach in France, although he used population as the basic criterion and starting point for identification. All these approaches have obvious geographical determinism and an undertone with the human environment. In the words of de-la-Blache Man and nature have become moulded in to one another over the years rather like a snail and its shell. Dickinson R.E. a constant advocate of the city region, sees it as a natural and social unit. Certain other recent studies could also be seen as leading limited support to the concept of the region as a natural entity.
The concept of region as a method of classification has evolved through two distinct phases reflecting the economic advance from a simple agrarian economy to a complex industrial system. The first phase the formal region concerned with uniformity and defined according to homogeneity. The second phase the development of functional region concerned with interdependence the interrelationship to the parts and defined on the basis of functional coherence.

It is sometimes referred to as a "nodal or or polarised region" and is composed of heterogeneous units such as cities, towns and villages which are functionally interrelated. The functional relationships are usually related in the form of towns using socio-economic such as Journey to work trips or shopping trips linking the employment or shopping centres with subsidiary centres.

The delineation of formal regions involves the grouping together of local units which have similar characteristic according to certain clearly defined criteria but which differ significantly, from units outside the region on the basis of the chosen criteria. The resultant formal region will never be perfectly homogeneous within certain clearly defined units.

If criteria are simple and static such as land over 500 ft. identification is relatively simple. But if there are a variety of criteria such as unemployment rates, activity rates and migration trends and many of the criteria are constantly changing, the task becomes more difficult.
The literature on regional planning defining a region as a distinct spatial entity has always been an intricate problem and has engaged wide attention.

Traditionally there are three distinct approaches to the definition of a region. First deals with the homogeneous characteristics usually a combination of spatial and economic aspects of a region. Second analyses, the polarization around some market or urban places within a region. Third works out a coherent relationship between the existing administrative and political set-up and the policy decision. These attempts to identify a region are respectively based on homogeneity and programming criteria.

Regions occupy a central position in geography and most of the classics of geographical literature are regional monographs. Although regions have come under some heavy crossfire they continue to be one of the most logical and satisfactory units of organizing geographical information.

The author takes the view that regions are but a spatial case of the general problems of classifying data.

(II) REGIONALISM:

Regionalism refers to the tendency for phenomena on the earth's surface to associated in spatial groups as both individual or specific groups and as typological or generic groups. This concepts is the core of geography.
Each aspect of an area exists in the context of land interrelated with other aspects and cannot be understood completely unless it is seen in its total context, nor can the area as a whole be understood. The consciousness of this greater whole of this areal pattern of characteristics in the minds of the inhabitants is called "regionalism."  

Regionalism is often especially pronounced in isolated or mountainous areas where the physical distinction from surrounding areas is strong and where the culture and economy are likely to be distinctive also.

The term "regionalism" properly represents the original idea in action as an ideology as a social movement, or as the theoretical basis for regional planning. It is also applied to the task of delimiting and analysing regions as entities lacking formal boundaries.

In other words, this idea of 'spontaneous regionalism' has been re-echoed in the following words. "When like thoughts and attitudes dominate entire groups of people, there emerges the dynamic force of public opinion or group thinking, which shapes and moulds the life of a region or a nation. In a measure, these evolve from the human, economic, and physical surroundings."
(III) **REGIONALIZATION**: 

Regionalization is the process of delineating regions. The process may take several forms depending upon the purpose of regionalization, the criteria to be used and data availability.¹⁰

As the nation has grown in size and complexity efficient and responsive management requires some types of decentralization in a process generally known as regionalization.¹¹

We can differentiate the following major concepts in integrated economic regionalization for planning purposes containing important distinctions specific to these problems. (i) physio economic regionalization, (ii) Energy resources, regionalization (iii) state as planning regions (iv) Integrated economic regionalization.¹²

Regionalization is an exercise of dividing regions of higher order into sub-regions or aggregating regions of lower order into those of higher order based on relative homogeneity in the selected characteristics of functional interdependence between the nodal centre and its hinterland or between the different functional centres of different hierarchic levels.

However for purpose of convenience of getting statistical data and administrative convinience, such areal units as district or tahsil is used as planning area. The author has, thus selected Ahmadnagar district for analysis on this background. Beside this, (i) barring the Akola tahsil all the
remaining parts of Ahmaḍnagar district constitute the drought-prone area in the lee of western ghats (ii) It has a historical unity as it was under the rule of Nijamshahi Kings with capital at Ahmaḍnagar city, during medieval period. All these facts point to the element of underlying climatic, historical and functional unity, in the region under study, to a considerable extent. (ii) The entire region constitutes the immediate umland of Ahmaḍnagar city and thus it is a nodal region.

B) CONCEPT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

In biological sciences, the term development connote growth or maturation. It implies the gradual and sequential phases of the change. In the realm of sociology, however, the concept of development takes on a teleological tinge. Mac Iver's reference to this and the related terms is interesting at this point. For him 'change' implies "nothing but a difference through time in the object to which it is applied", and when the element of continuity is added to social change, it becomes a process. The term "growth" implies a direction of change, but merely in quantitative characters. 'Evolution' "involves something more intrinsic, a change not merely in size but at least structure also" 'progress' denotes direction toward some ultimate objective that is determined ideally.¹³

Having argued that development and change are not to be seen in either isolation from one another or as independently from all parts of the system it would follow that the solution
would lie in the area of integrated and comprehensive plans for development.  

As foreseen by Marx in comparison to the society of his time it is inductive of social development, that a considerably higher part of the social product would be "intended for the communal satisfaction of needs such as schools, health services etc." The etcetra must be taken to include values and other cultural intangible variables that determine the quality of life.

Social development is when redefined as "the greater capacity of the social systems, social structure, institutions, and policy to utilize resource to generate favourable change in level of living integrated in the broad sense as related to accepted social values, and a better distribution of income, wealth and opportunities."

The importance of economic factors such as income, standard of living, poverty level, and such others in the explanation and interpretation of social behaviour and institutions of man can hardly be overemphasised here. According to an eminent American sociologists "Since immemorial times, thinkers were aware of the important role played by economic factors in human behaviour, social organisations, social processes, and historical destiny of society."
In the present study an attempt has been made to assess the role of economic factors, viz. tenurial status, irrigation facilities availability of input, credit facilities as well as facilities of high yielding varieties of seeds. According to an estimate, the rapid rise in population is the obvious cause for emphasising the urgent need for developing agriculture. The creation of the employment opportunities and removal of poverty have been the goods of economic development of all underdeveloped countries in the world.

The natural resources and the human population are the basis of economic development of an area. The natural endowments as the the fertile river basins, plenty of water supply, rich forest and mineral wealth or their paucity play vital role in the economic development of an areal unit. The qualities of inhabitants as their levels of education, working habits and understanding of the needs of the contemporary society etc. are equally important in the development process.

C) MODERNIZATION:

Modernization is a continuous process and it is a result of various scientific or cultural innovations either locally developed or received from outside to the benefit of the society. In the modern era diffusion of innovations cultural or technological is occurring very fast due to the world covers of mass media of communication viz, the T.V. and the wireless networks. The innovations received generally
under go processes of filter before they are incorporated in the way of life of the people concerned. The development works as the construction of modern highways and railways, introduction of administrative system, financial system, and even political and educational systems in our country, are the fruits of British efforts. Therefore, modernization was considered to be westernization in our country for some time. As pointed out earlier these days innovations are being received from any part of the globe in every country and all the communities of the world have a fair chance of modernising themselves if they so want.

When society changes its traditional mooring into a modern society there is a gradual but fundamental change in the living style of the people and in their outlook on the world. It involves a new orientation in the attitude towards authority and the functions of government. Modernization is a total transformation of society a movement in a consciously chosen direction. 17

The influence of urban life can be clearly seen in rural societies in the vicinity of large cities. This influence is evident in such aspects like social organisation, family organisation, food, habits, standard of living, dress, habits, religion, beliefs etc. As the result of the city the means of transportation in the village has undergone a radical change. Along with the change in means of transportation, never occupations, have found their way into the village life.
Flour mills, grinding machines, oil expellers, power looms, electrical gadgets etc. familiar sight in the villages. With the introduction of new agricultural implements the facilities for repairing them have also penetrated into the villages. The hairdressers, gold-smiths, carpenters, etc. of the village have adopted modern tools in their work in preference to the old ones. The new technologies implements in agriculture are becoming popular.\footnote{18}

The present stress on rural development does not imply neglect of urban areas. Indeed it is increasingly realised that urban development would be retarded when villages are improved.\footnote{19}

The development activities for rural uplift are carried out mainly by government or semi-government agencies and in some cases, even private companies. The aim is precisely to improve the methods of agriculture, facilities of irrigation, road transportation, medical facilities, education and other services. Since development i.e., change is a continuous process the planning agencies can do is give a proffering hand to this process of change, what is equally important is the psychological change in the orientation of the people for whom the development plan is meant. The local people generally know what they precisely need and therefore, their involvement in the developmental decision making is extremely vital to the success of the plan of development.
D) GANDHIAN APPROACH:

Mahatma Gandhi considered the spinning wheel not only as the key to Swaraj but also a means of mass education, a link between the masses and classes, a symbol of dignity of manual labour, the means for securing more even distribution of the means of living, a check on drain of wealth to foreign countries, an occupational therapy for psychic illness afflicting the west, an emblem of non-violence, a force for international peace and an instrument for village reconstruction. To the question whether Khadi was an economically sound proposition his reply was "Khadi is the only true economic proposition in terms of millions of villagers until such time if ever, when a better system of supplying work and adequate wage for every able bodied person above the age of sixteen, male or female is found in his field, cottage or even factory in every one of the villages in India". He wanted all persons to give their spare time to spinning and the villages to become self-sufficient in the matter of all their needs, specially food and clothing.

Modern planners, however thought that Gandhian economy would mean an extremely low standard of living. About Khadi they thought that "it was an intensification of individualism in production and is a throw back to the pre-industrial age". They were of the view that village industries can never compete with the machine.
Industrialisation is the main hope of most poor countries trying to increase their levels of income. It is also the most controversial aspect of the problem of economic development.

E) OBJECTIVES, DESIGN OF THE STUDY, METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES:

I) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

Removing regional economic imbalance is one of the important goals of regional planning. Ahmadnagar district has been selected for this sort of study. The first and foremost goal of a planner is to identify the region in all aspects and suggest solutions in this light, while vertically integrated. While considering the needs and economic returns the principle of regional relative equality in development activities may also be suitably considered.

The main objectives of the present study of Ahmadnagar district (Ref. fig. 1,1), a micro-region, is to analyse the processes of growth as a functional unit at the level of organisation of the economic activity, spatially. In fact, the settlement hierarchy and space-relations constitute an expression of the region's physiographic structure, resource base (physical and human) and the stages of development. By extensive field work and sample survey using spatially prepared questionnaires, the complex relationships among different regional elements have been analysed in the present study.
In spatial planning from grass root levels there is a need for vertical and horizontal integration and co-ordination of development activities. For instance the spatial frame work of the development plan at the tahsil level should be viewed as a part of the similar effect for the larger areal unit like the district of which the tahsil is a complementary unit. The synoptic birds eye view conveyed in the principle of regional planning finds its relevance in such studies.

Objectives of study (i) to evaluate the spatial structure of agriculture landuse, population, settlements, economic activities, services, amenities and existing space relations (ii) The study involves the services, and amenities and functions of the settlements and the spatial pattern of movement of people and the purposes for which they move. (iii) To rank the settlement on the basis of composit functions (iv) to form a spatial development strategy for planning at and bellow the district level by way of a synthesis based on these studies.

(II) DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study is attempted at two area levels i.e. at the district level, and at the tahsil levels, it is oriented to an assessment of spatial patterns of settlements, functions, and their relative importance or rank and the hierarchic nature
of the space relations, if any. This has provided a larger regional setting in which the relative importance of settlements of different sizes could be ascertained both at the district and tahsil levels. Study of regional structure is attempted at both the area levels with appropriate scales of mapping and choosing unit areas and locations for the compilation of secondary data.

The physical landscape and its spatial variations provided some clues to the variations in landuse structure and productivity and also in influencing the emerging pattern of transport and growth of some settlements and nodal centres. Data on broad landuse and cropping pattern were mapped and analysed. The demographic characteristics and the types of services and facilities and specialised functions were analysed both by tabulation and mapping.

The study of space relations was carried out in two stages, first by compilation and mapping and tabular analysis of the data, and second the distribution of services viz., vegetable supply zone, milk supply zone, student zone educational zone, commuters zone, cotton purchase zone, etc. at the district and tahsil levels. The grouping of settlements on the basis of nodal hierarchy and ranks by composite score are provided the basis for arriving at the pattern of settlement hierarchy.
Sample survey was carried out to supplement the knowledge of regional structure and space relations arrived at with the help of secondary data, based on the result of these studies an attempt is made to highlight the basic strategies in district planning.

(III) **Methodology and Data Sources**

In the present work scientific method both in the lab and the field has been employed. The analysis is based on primary data collected in the field and secondary data gathered through various sources is utilised for this purpose. The work of data mapping has been accomplished using various cartographic techniques to enhance the quality of the work. Suitable statistical techniques have been used in the analysis of the various attributes of regional planning. The analysis is based upon the cause and effect model of explanation. The welfare approach in geography as my guiding principle, Every attempt is directed with this view. Resource base, central place hierarchy and some important commodities and services, relationship is analysed to give an integrated basis.

F) **Choice of the Study Area**

Ahmednagar district has an area of 17048 sq. kms. and population of 27,11,216, according to 1981 census. Density of population was 159 persons per sq. kms. 23,59,283 persons live in 1312 rural settlements.
Urban population on the contrary shows very high concentration in large centres. Ahmadnagar (181239 persons) and Shrirampur (55,495 persons) in 1981. Broadly the population is more concentrated in Kopergaon, Shrirampur, Sangamner, Rahuri and Ahmadnagar tahsils, as well as in some towns in these tahsils. The northern part of the district viz. Kopergaon, Shrirampur, Rahuri, Sangamner and Ahmadnagar are more agriculturally developed due to irrigation facility.

The accompanying map (Ref. Fig. No 1.2) brings out the salient feature of the settlement structure, pattern of distribution and space relations through linkages that have developed over the years.

Bombay and Pune influence the pattern of intra-regional and inter-regional relations that can be observed by the location of most of the important urban and industrial centres in this region. In Ahmadnagar district out of thirteen tahsils headquarters only five tahsils headquarters are classified as urban viz. Ahmadnagar, Rahuri, Shrirampur, Kopergaon, and Sangamner, which are located on the Pune-Manmad railway line or axial roads. The above discussion makes it clear that the study area is characterised by contrasts both physical and cultural and therefore furnishes interesting region for analysis.

Since the author was born and brought up in Ahmadnagar city, he has been a witness to several events leading to
economic growth of various parts of the study area, the famines and the backwardness of others. He has thus, an insight into its problems.

G) PROCESSES OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

From these considerations it would be possible to identify two broad dimensions of the regional development process. Both are complimentary and yet they can be treated separately (Ref.fig. No 1.3). First one is related to regional economic planning and the second one is regional physical planning. The regional physical plan or framework of physical plan portrays the manner in which economic development is organised in space. Therefore in order to understand and evaluate the regional development process and regional economy the framework of a regional physical plan becomes an important tool. Because of the interdependence of regions and locations studies to understand the spatial organisation of the economy cab and should be carried out on different regional levels, ranging from the micro to macro levels. From an operational point of view, the development, planning district and regions comprising of groups of districts within a state could be the different area levels at which such studies could be attempted.

Interrelationship among settlements and the landuse is the essence of the process of integrated development at
SPATIAL AND LOCATIONAL DIMENSIONS IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AFTER: L.S. BHAT

Fig. No-13
the lower area levels of functional organisation. 21

Thus the process of regional development starting as simple one becomes increasingly complex as the areas get functionally organised around nodal centres of different ranks. This sets the stage for spatial differentiation in the pattern of development leading often to disparities in levels of development.
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