Spatial analysis of economic development and resource organisation for an allround balanced regional development on the lines of territorial production complexes (TPCs) poses a challenging task. The formation of linguistic states under the States Reorganisation Act, 1956 can be deemed as the first step in the direction of establishing a decentralised spatio-sectoral planning strategy in India. But this exercise required an immediate ground work involving geographical in-depth studies, and a restructuring of the organisational and administrative framework. Suitable changes in the existing institutional framework, in addition to the decentralisation of power down to the grass root level i.e., the Village Panchayat and Gram Sabhas, were absolutely essential in order to mobilise the resources and to involve the people in developmental programmes. But such a radical change was not evident even three and a half decades after Independence. These shortcomings are now adversely affecting developmental efforts. With the result that the Indian experiment of planned economic development for establishing a socialistic society within a federal structure and centralised planning has been abortive.

Alternative strategies are to be constantly devised as every move fails to achieve the desired objectives, particularly the eradication of poverty, illiteracy and unemployment. A careful analysis of the investments of plan funds and achievements during the three decades of planned economy in a spatio-temporal context is the first urgent task before analysing any problems of development and before laying down the strategies for balanced regional development. Such an effort is made here for the State of Karnataka and the results are quite revealing.
Development is a multi-faceted, interdependent, and slow process. It is affected by a number of factors which are often outside the purview of geography. But some of these factors viz., economic, political and sociological, administrative and psychological, are so powerful that they decide the trend of development. At one time, as the deterministic school over-emphasised, the resource base was deemed to be all powerful and with the advent of modern scientific and technological developments, quick and efficient means of transport and communication, global political alignments, pressure groups and tactics, economic associations have become very important. Today, the political structure and the ruling party's relations with the Federal States within the Country on the one hand, and the neighbouring countries and others far off, greatly influence the development trends.

Mixed economy, strategy adopted at the time of Independence and the representative form of government under a multi-party system are the two non-spatial elements that have adversely affected a balanced regional development although in theory, these two ought to have favoured a quicker development at all levels. While the mixed economy proved to be a tool for accelerated exploitation it has no place for economic equity and social justice under the 'laissez faire' and 'maximisation of private profits' maxims. A loose political organisation on the one hand and out-moded exploitative economic policies in a much avowed socialistic pattern on the other, have further complicated planning and development problems.

A soft government cannot solve the hard economic and social problems. The economic problems facing the Country are too numerous and very intricate. There are the problems of shortage of power, unfavourable balance trade, unimaginative fiscal and economic policies, deficit budgetting and the wrong priorities in planning, coupled with the burden of ever-increasing population. The Indo-China War and the Indo-Pakistan Border conflicts, recurring droughts, and increasing
debt burdens etc. have cut at the very root of the economy. Erosion of democratic values and deterioration in personal and public morals under the influence of large unearned incomes, the acquisitive nature of society and the callous attitude of the rich towards the poor and the downtrodden, empty slogans and the lack of a strong will on the part of the ruling parties to set right the conditions, have made the backward regions remain backward even without the minimum basic needs like drinking water, education and health facilities, transport and communication, etc. Exploitation of the illiterate, the poor and the fullible by the middlemen and unscrupulous traders has led to a few persons becoming richer much against the very basic objectives of the socialistic state.

The economic geographic problems have their deep roots in other disciplines where the solutions are hard to find. Under such complicate situations, it is necessary to unravel the basic fallacies in our models and theories of economic development and propose a sound regional development strategy so that the fruits of labour and planning reach the poor and deserving in all sections of society.

Geographical studies down to micro level are needed in order to assess the resource potentials and adopt suitable strategies for the different regions. But a co-ordinated all-comprehensive study at the different spatial levels is all the more essential. Rather it should get the highest priority at present since each government department is working in isolation, much to the disadvantage of the other and this has adversely affected an over-all development of the region.

An attempt is made in the following to provide a very comprehensive account of the spatio-temporal aspects of economic development of Karnataka from its inception in 1956 to the end of 1978, when the Fifth Five Year Plan was abruptly terminated.
If this study sheds light on some of the spatial aspects of the sectoral development and provide clues for a better balanced regional development in future, then not only the millions of the neglected poor and the multitude of people living below the poverty line, but also the large numbers who are fast sliding down the line will also surely be benefitted. To that extent, this study is a pointer and the author will be amply rewarded if the deficiencies are pointed out to him.

The work is humbly dedicated to the toiling millions who live and work below the poverty line.

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