ABSTRACT

The process of economic growth involves a significant change in the economic activities over different regions or areas along with a change in the structure of the economy. This process reflects a spatial dimension in the process of growth. It has been successful in some areas where as some areas has continued to remain backward in the sense that the pace of development has been far below than the rate of development in other areas. Therefore, when development over different areas occurs, unequally, it causes unchecked and uncontrolled process of growth leading to regional imbalance and results in numerous economic, social and cultural problems. Once the disparities are established, they get accentuated. It is a well known fact that the region or area which is already developed attract more activities by virtue of their location in developed areas. This leads to unequal growth and the developed areas grow faster at the cost of less developed areas.

Thus there is a need to reduce this regional imbalance. For this, the first important point is interm of social justice. It is believed that income inequalities can be reduced by way of reducing regional disparities. The social justice demands that all citizens are treated alike and given an equal opportunity in life. This is possible only when inter-regional disparities in the levels of development are ironed off.

Therefore, in order to achieve the objective of promoting the growth rate in backward areas and to reduce regional disparities it is essential to identify regions according to the levels of development and to assess the relative positions of
the regions and to delineate homogeneous areas so that for different type of regions, different strategies may be adopted.

The strategies for development of backward region and to minimize regional disparities, it would be appropriate to understand the concept of region. The term ‘region’ is closely associated with the concept of area or space. The term region is used to mean different spatial units by different persons. Thus it has been used to mean a resource region, programme region, metropolitan region, depressed region, planning region and so on.

There are three ways to define a region. On deals with the homogeneous characteristic, usually a combination of spatial and economic aspects of a region. Second analyses the polarization around some market or urban place within a region, and the third works out a coherent relationship between the existing administrative and political set up and the policy decisions. These attempts to identify a region are respectively based on homogeneity, nodal and programming criteria.

The design of development for the economy as a whole was being discussed. There has been reference for development of ‘Backward areas’ in the economy in the various plan documents. The discussion of the development of backward areas has been in the context of bringing about a balanced regional development and removing regional disparities. It was recognized in the second five year plan that in any comprehensive plan of development, it is axiomatic that the special needs of the less developed areas should receive due attention.
Regional planning is such a strategy which deals, simultaneously, with the problem of multi-level spatial units directly or indirectly. However regional planning would seem to require a bunch of complementary economic activities and rules be formulated for the proper setting of each of these activities. In an area for regional planning, the different regional factors interact and operate in mutual actions and reactions and any change in one normally leads to changes in other, thus setting up a chain reaction. In fact, there is a two way chain reaction, one internal within the regions, and the other external with the neighbouring or farther regions, through the different hierarchial levels of regions.

The role of planning in terms of regional development require a certain amount of technical and statistical expertise at the formulation stage and effective participation of people at the implementation stage. These requirements are woefully missing in our planning process. In addition, the absence in proper planning machinery at the state level and the complete non-existence of planning infra-structure at the district levels, make the task of preparing and implementing district plans still more difficult. An attempt in this direction was made by evolving a three tier structure of Panchayati Raj Institutions – Village Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. The Zila Parishad was to function at the district level, while the district collector continued to be the ‘collector’ of practically all governmental authorities in the district. There is another serious problem that has not been referred to, though the district collector has, the district-level functionaries of all the departments such as health, education, co-operation, veterinary, engineering etc. under him but these functionaries
deal directly with their respective department at the state level. Thus there is “dual supervision” and the possibility of friction and disputes can not be ignored.

Thus it is said that for the district planning, it is necessary to provide horizontal co-ordination and integration between the district administrative system and the local political system and vertical integration between the district level and the state level.

In recent years we have been made more aware of the problems of agricultural development especially the self-sufficiency in agricultural production in general and food production in particular. The achievement of self-sufficiency implies that the level of domestic production is at least adequate to meet the basic needs of existing population. Similarly, the development of agriculture is of a great importance for the overall economic development of a country like India, where more than 70 percent of people directly or indirectly are engaged and dependent on agriculture and its large share is in national income.

But this sector of economy have different dimensions of problem i.e. explosive growth of population and slow growth of food crops and regional variations in levels and growth of food-grains production. The most serious situation in agricultural economy is an uneven distribution of agricultural land which causes wide spread poverty and food problem among a certain group of farmers which is known as disadvantageous group in rural community. Thus the problem of food production and to achieve food self-sufficiency level is a complex one. A number of investigation programmes have been made by Indian Council of Agricultural Research, National Council of Applied
Economic Research, Planning Commission, Food and Agricultural Ministry and various other organizations, but still the problem is to be solved. Considering all these aspects, the author has selected Eastern Uttar Pradesh to study the levels of development in different districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh during the period 1981 to 1998.

Eastern Uttar Pradesh is an important part of the Uttar Pradesh. It spreads from 23° 45’ to 28°20’ North latitudes and 81°5’ to 84°36’ East longitudes. The greatest length from North to South is about 550 kilometers and maximum width from East to West is about 375 kilometers. The region as a whole comprises of 19 districts of Uttar Pradesh.

In order to identify backward region, to measure levels of sectoral and overall development and the extent of disparities in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, 37 indicators have been selected and these indicators have been grouped in 9 sectors namely – agriculture, industry, education, transport, communication, health, banking, co-operative society and power.

These sectors and their respective indicators were analysed with the help of a simple method known as composite index. Since the indicator varies from one region to another in their occurrence and they are not equally important. Therefore, different weights are assigned to different indicators by method of percent proportional standardized mean, that is to say the weight assigned to one indicator is calculated by using $\frac{x}{\sigma}$ for each indicator, where $\bar{x}$ is the mean of the series of one indicator and $\sigma$ is the standard deviation for same series.
These techniques are used for the assessment of socio-economic development and agricultural development in Eastern Uttar Pradesh. Such type study provides a base for national planning and helps researchers, administrators, policy makers and planner to identify regions, at different levels of development.

The analysis of the study area to identify the backward regions, to measure the levels of sectoral and over all development and extent of disparities in Eastern Uttar Pradesh reveals that there is general development in socio-economic fields. But this development is not uniform in all the districts. The indicators have not been developed in uniform pattern in all the districts. Some are highly developed and some are less developed. Similarly, some are developed in some districts while in other districts they are not developed. Agriculture, education, transport, communication, banking, co-operative societies and power sectors have made high and moderate development in most of the districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. The industries have made high and moderate development in Allahabad, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Deoria, Mau and Sonbhadra, while in the remaining districts the development of industries was low. Similarly, health sector also made high development in Allahabad, Varanasi and Gorakhpur and moderate development in Ballia, Basti, Faizabad, Pratapgarh, Sultanpur and Mau districts. In general, the districts of central and north-western parts have made less progress than the districts of other parts of the study region. There are different factors for the different types development in different sectors. For examples in the fields of agriculture less development in some districts is due to
unfavourable topography, problems of floods and famines, lack of capital and lack of diffusion of agriculture etc. Less development in industries is attributed to the fact that there is a good development in agriculture and more than seventy percent population is engaged in agricultural activity. The educational development is generally related to urban centres and hence high level development is found is those districts which have large number of settlements in terms of population and rural areas have low level of educational development. Transport and communication sectors, in general, have made good progress in most of the districts. Only few districts such as Basti, Gonda, Mirzapur, Siddarth Nagar, Maharajganj, Deoria and Sonbhadra have made slow progress. The development of these sectors depends on the government policies and programmes and ultimately government policies are not the same for all the districts. Therefore, some districts made good progress and some districts made slow progress. Health and bank facilities are also related mainly to urban centres. The major development of these sectors is found in urban areas. Therefore those districts which have large urban settlements, they have high growth in health and bank sectors and in those districts where urban development is less generally the development of these sectors is moderate and low. Co-operative societies development is found more in those areas where modern banking facilities are lacking and where the regions are mainly rural in nature. Power development was high and moderate in most of the district except Bahraich, Basti and Pratapgarh where it was slow.

Level of regional development show many dimensions of progress and stagnant. There are found strong contrast in the
levels of development between the different regions of the area. A contiguous region of high level of development is observed in the southern part of the area, which is relatively prosperous and well developed while the other regions are moderately developed. The general pattern of the levels of development shows a decline in the economic and social well being in some districts like Bahraich, Basti, Gonda, Maharajganj and Siddartha Nagar. The high level development is found in Allahabad, Varanasi, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh and Mau. These districts attained the high level development in 1996. Similarly, the districts of Pratapgarh, Ballia, Deoria, Faizabad, Sultanpur, Jaunpur and Ghazipur recorded the medium level development in 1996. Five districts namely Bahraich, Gonda, Basti, Siddartha Nagar and Maharajganj remained in low level category because of less development of agriculture, economic and social facilities and amenities. In these districts we find some industrial development but the development in other sectors is very low.

The “Food-Security” is defined as a situation where everyone on the globe has access, at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. At the district level or house hold level, food-security implies having physical and economic access to foods that are adequate in terms of quantity, quality and safety. The over all food security entails three basic issues viz (i) availability (ii) stability (iii) accessibility.

In the present study the uniform norms of desirable cereals and pulses for the entire population of the Eastern Uttar Pradesh have been used. Because the data of cereals and pulses is available and they are important things for diet and nutrition in Indian situation. According to Indian Council
of Medical Research, Hyderabad, the standard requirement for food (cereals and pulses) is 176 kgs. per head per year. Indian economy is an agricultural economy and here more than seventy percent population is engaged in agriculture and live in rural areas, therefore food-security in India involves an overall rural development, agricultural development and corresponding poor man's development, where by he is able to either produce sufficient food in the decentralized regional planning for or else is able to earn to buy sufficient food. Equitable availability of food and equitable accessibility of food require decentralized regional planning for food production and planning for storage and decentralized marketing.

In Eastern Uttar Pradesh it has been found that in recent years the demand for food grains is not increasing because of greater production. All the districts have per head per annum higher production than the standard requirement. But if we see the production pattern of cereals and pulses in Eastern Uttar Pradesh since 1981, we find a different pattern of production of cereals and pulses. It has been found that in 1981, there was deficit condition in per head share of cereals and pulses in most of the districts. Only two districts namely Deoria and Gorakhpur presented positive condition. But in 1998, the per head share of cereals has increased more than 100 percent in all the districts and per head share of pulses decreased from 1981 to 1998. Thus at present there is no shortage of cereals in the region and the region has sufficient production of cereals than the requirement for the total population. But the per head pulses production has decreased in most of the districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh from 1981 to 1998. The main cause of decease in pulses production is the
decrease in area under pulses. It has been found that a large area under pulses has been replaced by wheat and rice. Because the productivity of wheat and rice has increased many times by new agricultural technology. This is the major cause that is why the production of cereals has increased in Eastern Uttar Pradesh while the production of Pulses has decreased.

Thus from the study two points emerge – one is that there is adequate cereal production in the region than the requirement and other is pulse production is less than the requirement. The pulse prices, at present are very remunerative to the farmers but it is the risk of crop failure due to pests and diseases that discourages the farmers to cultivate the pulses in the large scale. Therefore, it is essential for the agricultural scientists to bring about a technological break through as in the case of wheat and rice by developing more high yielding and pest and disease tolerant varieties of pulses. Keeping this view in mind, a number of improved varieties of pulses have been developed and they have checked the declining trend in areas where irrigation has been introduced. Now, the major task lies in motivating the farmers to adopt the pulse production also just like the wheat and rice. Similarly, there is a need to introduce short-duration varieties of pulses both under irrigated and unirrigated conditions. This will help greatly in increasing the pulse production in Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

As far as cereals production is concerned there is adequate production in the study region. There is no any shortage of cereals in Eastern Uttar Pradesh at present. It has been possible mainly due to the high yield and higher growth
rate of production by the new agricultural technology. But this adequate food grain production is not available to all the people at all times for an active and healthy life. Poverty has been one of the major causes for this poor food security. More than seventy percent population lives in rural areas and is engaged in agricultural activity. This population, by and large, is characterized by dirt, disease, mul-nutrition, ignorance illiteracy, lack of resources for improvement and development and a very low rate of capital formation, considerable unemployment and more under employment and very low percentage of rural people to take advantage of science and technology because they have neither resources nor the adequate knowledge. Acute and chronic under nutrition and most macro nutrients deficiencies primarily affect the poor and deprived people who do not have access to adequate food, live in unsanitary environment, without access to clean water and basic services and lack of access to appropriate education, capital, communication and information. In developing countries, where approximately 2/3 of the population lives in rural areas, increased production of food for family consumption or as a source of income helps to stabilize food price and improved marketing facilities can also contribute the food security.

Thus, there is a need to improve the socio-economic conditions in rural areas and it will ultimately offer an opportunity for better income and employment generation, so that the poor can have access to food.

No doubt study reveals that in Eastern Uttar Pradesh socio-economic development is also found but it does not keep the pace with the agricultural growth and population growth.
In some districts such as Gorakhpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Azamgarh, Mirzapur and Sonbhadra it was high while in other districts it was moderate and low.

Thus after identifying the districts to the levels of the development different strategies of development should be persuaded in order to develop the districts at a faster rate of growth, to bring down the regional disparities and to increase the income and employment opportunities so that poor can have an access to food. The major thrust of planning should be on the development of all sectors in all the districts at a faster growth rate than the rate of population growth. Thus, the proper balanced regional development strategy should aim at increasing the rate of growth in all sectors of all districts and at the same time the gap between the highest and the lowest district comes closer and closer. Similarly it would be in a position to achieve political, economic and socio-cultural harmony and stability and can achieve a very high level of development.