CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION
Alongside major changes in the international scene as witnessed by the global concern for economic development of newly independent nations in Asia, Africa and Middle East, flow of capital and skills from the developed to the underdeveloped and developing nations restructuring of trade and commercial policies to encourage export promotion and import substitution besides declaring each international year as year of commitment, towards provision of a public good or service such as public health, water supply, child development, nutrition etc., restructuring of international debt with a view to keeping the springs of international currency and credit freely flowing around the world and the recent breathtaking changes in Central Europe and Soviet Russia, several other expected values and concepts are being reviewed and even rejected.

One such value and idea relates to the role of large scale irrigation projects as engines of rural development in India. With the inauguration of Five Year Plans a plethora of large scale multipurpose projects were invented, discovered, designed and executed with the strength of economic planning and in the name of economic development, aimed at 'Anthyodaya'.

There is hardly a State in India which did not lay claim to such gigantic project spilling over from one plan to
another, cost escalating through time, designs growing to accommodate a variety of purposes. Many of these projects to add to their stature were internationally financed and therefore the period of implementation lengthened beyond purpose.

With the waning of the initial enthusiasm surrounding grand ideas, basic, primary, common sense gross roots questions were raised at the time of reviewing the net contribution that these projects have made in terms of their own declared objectives and in terms of simple targets which needed no spacial declaration.

Apart from the incredible load of investment, these projects failed to provide even initially assumed capacities. Capacity exploitation, therefore called for further investments in the name of Command Area Development and all the bureaucratic vested interests. Expenditure became autonomous from purpose. And it was at this time a nation which had exhausted its celebratory moments of independence began to take stock of previous actions. The review provided enough and to spare these observations become B.B. Vohra Report and the entire nation began to see what it had not wanted to see earlier.

Irrigation is an area of activity in which the uneducated Indian farmer has lived and learned and grown. There was nothing that the Indian peasant farmer did not know about irrigation provided he was given water and resources to use water. Being used to the peculiar and the uncertain climatic conditions
of his own locality the farmer had over a long period of cumulative experience intuitively acquired skills which could respond to any tricky or unexpected situation. But responding to these insights did not attract public attention because it was far too normal.

In the first few chapters we have reviewed briefly but comprehensively the so called expansion of irrigation activity at the national level in terms of a percentage increase in the irrigated area - gross and net irrigated, the extension of irrigation to new type of crops besides consolidation in respect of traditional crops like paddy, sugar-cane etc., and enabling wet dry crops to compensate for the failure of monsoon on the one hand and enabling dry farming through critical intervention.

More or less the same method and pattern is used in reviewing the growth of irrigation potential and the use in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Here it has been possible to contrast the irrigation better endowed Andhra region with those of Telangana region and Rayalaseema region. At least Telangana region can claim a Pochampadu project, but no such claims are available for Rayalaseema although the Tunga-Bhadra project and the Kurnool Cuddapah canal provide the glimpses of irrigation for this region. We have spent more attention on Rayalaseema region not only because of our local interest in it but also because of the attraction it provide for a curious investigator. We have said and we reiterate that we do not know this region, as much as we
should. Also we have been viewing this region not from within but from without. And this we believe is the cause for the gap between what is there to be known and what is actually known.

Also Rayalaseema region is unique in the sense that no major irrigation project is possible here. Is this not a blessing in disguise that Rayalaseema has not deviated into a large scale irrigation? One has to review the Telugu Ganga project in this context and may be the study would be not only interesting but illuminating.

No district appears to fully describe Rayalaseema region as perhaps Anantapur does, and which any scheme survives the Anantapur test is bound to be eligible for Rayalaseema without further test.

A detailed water endowment outline as well as the meteorological and hydrological cycle is provided in the chapter on irrigation in Anantapur. The district manifest conjunctive use of water between utilisation of surface water in the shape of tanks, ponds, spring channels and other minor but locally significant sources of irrigation on the one hand, with those deposits of water laying hidden beyond the depth of hundred and more feet below the ground.

Rayalaseema rains are thus unregulated supplies of water not only for the year but for a Five Year period. Perhaps conservation is as important as consumption. The irrigation technique suited this area is probably found at the interaction
of these two demands*. As our studies have indicated, Anantapur district is too large a geophysical area to be referred to as a unit. We need to go in to smaller sub-sections and perhaps the mandal is the right unit to speak of irrigation pattern.

We believe we have proceeded on these lines and in moving along this path we found the need for studying a single tank as an economic unit. The subject of present dissertation was thus discovered.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

I The objective of the study is to examine the question, how for it would be useful in making a single tank as a unit of economic investigation and what are the advantages derived;

II To relate the economic function of a tank with the life of the surrounding villages and to establish the fact of their interdependence;

III To consider the question, all old tanks are merely irrigation tanks, but also percolation tanks and therefore the tank irrigation was not only an instrument of egalitarian irrigation but also an instance of conjunctive use of water.

**METHODOLOGY:**

We are not proposing a hypothesis in the normal statistical sense. What we are proposing to do in this investigation

*Refer the introduction of turbine technology in Tadipatri, in the district of Anantapur.*
has wider significance in shifting data and describing them from a new angle with a view to providing a basis for formulating a hypothesis at a later date. What we are doing here is exploring the available data and relating to tank as a unit of irrigation and the relating it the economy of a village around which a hypothesis can be formulated.

With this objective in view we have built a data base from Adangal book available with Mandal Revenue Officer, Bukkapatnam, and probably we are among the new batch of investigators who are studying Adangal book in this light.

The data secured from the Adangal book is linked to the data available in a published form by Government and Semi-Government, agencies. And this process we believe has provided us with new insights into the fabric of relationship existing in the irrigation sector.