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CHANGE IN THE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF FRUIT CROPS IN GOA

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**CHANGE IN THE PRODUCTION AND
MARKETING OF FRUIT CROPS IN GOA**

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PREFACE

The imperative need to study economic change in the context of an underdeveloped and overpopulated economy like India, committed to social justice and equity for all, has long been recognised. While change is an on-going process, the commitment necessitated that economic change has to be caused in the desired direction and in predetermined magnitude. Our planning efforts have met with indifferent success in both. It has been widely conjectured that one of the major defects was our almost religious acceptance of Lewis's classical two-sector growth model based on the inviolate assumption of the economic man. The non-success of our five year plans in the matter of targets and expectation was attributed to the millions of small independent agricultural producers who persisted on being 'ignorant and irrational' apparently they refused to play the game according to the imported rules.

The principal bane on our plans has been considered to be the failure and/or the non-acceptance of the peasant variety of organisation of our agricultural production with an internal growth-potential. While the irrationality of the small sized tropical producer was empirically refuted by T.W.Shultze in his now classic Transforming Traditional Agriculture (1960), he exhibited conformity with the assumption of maximization and advocated the usage of modern technology like varietal research, chemical fertilisers and agricultural machinery for achieving agricultural growth. The fact of the indivisibilities of the prime element of modern technology that is mechanisation of draft power vis-a-vis the tiny and much-fragmented land-holdings, the non-availability of alternative employment opportunities and the dis-

placement of the available non-wage family labour in the advent of machinery appeared to have been lost sight of.

Empirical studies, in search of a firm theoretical basis for the economic behaviour and decision-making in peasant farming, provided new insights under identifiable conditions obtained in unorganised and underdeveloped situations in the country. The specific nature of resources and the specific aspect of decision-making and their mutual interaction, resulting in different kinds of economic activities came to be recognised as the distinguishing features of the unorganised sector and also that it could be a very innovative sector with a high degree of resilience as also growth-potential of its own. The belief that classical economic theory was not appropriate for characterizing subsistence (peasant) agriculture was expressed by J.H. Boeke in his *Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies as Exemplified by Indonesia* (1953:40) as follows: "Anyone expecting Western reactions will meet with frequent surprises. When the price of coconuts is high, the chances are that less of the commodities will be offered for sale; when the wages are raised, the manager of the estate risks that less work will be done... This inverse elasticity of supply should be noted as one of the essential differences between Western and Eastern economies." The present study makes an attempt to analyse the economic change reported by a randomly-selected sample of cultivating households of Goa--a locationally specific enclave of India on its West Coast--on the basis of two-point data separated by fifteen years.

The author would like, in the first instance to place on record his unqualified sense of gratitude to the selected farming households for bearing with him, frankly and patiently, in his infinitely tiring probings after data. He owes his heartfelt thanks to Dr. G.R. Mulla of

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