Contents

Foreword

We place before you another issue of "The Administrator". New developments in the field of public administration are taking place all the time, some of them unsung, and some feted. Sometimes the wheel gets reinvented and sometimes, ideas get propagated on their own momentum. Our effort has always been to bring to you an overview of the developments as perceived by practitioners and academics alike. The Academy would like to cull out the best practices and case studies from the field experiences of our readers in order to disseminate them to a wider audience. We invite your write-ups that can be included in such an effort.

By it's very nature, the filed of public administration provides a kaleidoscopic array of experiences. Reflecting the same, this issue contains an interesting mix of subjects and articles. There are articles written by administrators narrating and analyzing the programmes undertaken by them. Articles by Amrit Abhijat, Rakesh Hooja, RCM Reddy, Rajesh Pandey, Arvind Shrivastava and Bishnupada Sethi look at various government schemes or their own initiatives and examine the reasons for their success. The administrative procedures and bureaucratic functioning comes under close scrutiny in articles on corruption, human rights, governance and role of executive magistrates. The existing governance framework is examined in articles relating to the sixth schedule, land reforms, rural development programmes, Panchayati Raj institutions, health service organizations, development informatics, women's empowerment, total literacy and tourism management. Most of these are issues that concern policy makers and implementers alike.

The contributors of the articles published in this issue range from young officers working in the field to retired civil servants, from academicians looking at issues from an objective perspective to practitioners closely and emotionally involved with the subject. However a common thread of their concern for better administration is discernible in all the articles. Today the demand and challenges faced by an administrator are varied and enormous. The global and national environment is bringing to the center stage issues that were previously on the periphery. The administration has to keep abreast of these and remain prepared to

meet any eventuality. This has to be tempered with, and have as an underlying fundamental, the concern for the poor, vulnerable and disadvantaged. We hope that in it's own way, the Administrator is able to clarify and reinforce some of these issues and the articles are useful for you. We look forward to your suggestions and comments that can help us improve upon our effort.

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Contents

Effective Executive Control for better Human Rights Compliance

- Sandeep Verma*

> *"The Doctrine of Precedent does not compel your Lordships to follow the wrong path until you fall over the edge of the cliff. As soon as you find that you are going in the wrong direction, you must at least be permitted to strike off in the right direction, even if you are not allowed to retrace your steps. And that is what I ask your Lordships to do."*
> *.….Lord Denning*

The issue of Magistracy-Police relationship in India has come up for close scrutiny whenever sporadic breakdown of law and order has taken place or when human rights violations by local police officers have been reported. A number of Commissions set up by various Governments have examined this issue, and their views have varied from *abolishing altogether the role of the magistracy in police matters to greater control and supervision by magistrates to check abuse of power and human rights violations.* Alternatively, there have been demands for setting-up of parallel local authorities (e.g. representatives of the National/ State Human Rights Commissions at the district level) for checking human rights violations[1] .

The view that the role of the magistracy in police matters should be curtailed was contained in the Fifth Report of the National Police Commission (1979-1981), where the Commission had inferred some sort of "interference" by the District Magistrate (DM) when he actually exercises "general control and supervision" over the subordinate office of the district Superintendent of Police (SP) as envisaged under the Indian Police Act, 1861. This Commission intended to limit the DM's role to one of *co-ordination* instead of *supervision;* and also intended to further isolate the DM's office by allowing only the District Inquiry Authority (DIA) to inquire into complaints against the Police[2] . The proposal for introduction of the Police Commissionerate system in cities also is based on the idea of removal of DM's powers of superintendence over the office of the SP. The First Report of the Ribeiro Committee (1988) also supported this view, and

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[1] As advised by the National Human Rights Commission, in its letter dated 24th June 1999, to Chief Ministers of all States.

[2] The DIA was to be headed by an Additional Sessions Judge, an officer who actually functions as a Court with original jurisdiction in certain heinous criminal matters.

envisaged a District Police Complaints Authority (DPCA) to be headed by the Principal District and Sessions Judge for looking into complaints of police excesses, custodial violence etc.

The other view of strengthening the position of the Magistracy can be found in the Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), Government of Rajasthan[3] . The ARC was of the view that there is a need for independent and local supervision over the functioning of the district police, and that the office of the DM hitherto exercising notional control should now play a more active and formal part. The Padmanabhaiah Committee on Police Reforms[4] had also envisaged a stronger role for the magistracy in recommending that there should be a District Police Complaints Authority (DPCA) to be chaired by the DM, and that this Authority should act as a second forum of appeal against first-level inquiry by the Police Department itself.

While it is undeniable that police actions require constant and local supervision to check abuse of power and to ensure enjoyment of democratic rights by citizens, there are a number of alternatives as stated earlier. The search for the best alternative has therefore to be made from the available choices of intra-organisational supervision, supervision by the local magistracy, third-party supervision as suggested by the Human Rights Commissions, or a combination thereof; within the overall democratic control of the State. A study of the working of this relationship is therefore critical to understand whether the existing systems themselves can be suitably strengthened to better human rights record, and whether any further third-party intervention is required at all. Here, it would also be pertinent to take note of the development of the institution of magistracy, and the nature of functions that it performs.

In many areas of British India, the office of the DM included the office of the District & Sessions Judge (DJ), the District Superintendent of Police (SP), and in some cases, the office of the Civil Surgeon as well. Over a period of time, with increasing number and diversification in the nature of public matters required to be attended to by the State, these functions were separated into distinct offices. The office of the DM, however, remained supreme, being the repository of all local supervisory powers of the Government, and this office continued to function as an arbitrator with a great degree of finality in its decisions in the case of local issues and problems. But with the advent of modern democracy, alternate State structures gained in power and strength. While the political system as such became more democratic, the capability of the institution of the DM to finalise and resolve local problems became limited to that extent. The continuing erosion in democratic institutions over the years has now critically compounded the problems faced by

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[3] Volume II of the Report of the ARC, published March 2001, Government of Rajasthan.
[4] Report published in the year 2000.

the magistracy in achieving tight and strict control over the functioning of local district officers and early resolution of local developmental issues.

This traditional system of administrative and police authorities in India is different from the western system in substance and in structure. In terms of democratic control over local police units, this control is more direct in the west, where the Mayor and the Sheriff would be locally and directly elected. This control is rather indirect in India, where a State electorate elects its political leadership, which in turn makes appointments of magistrates and police superintendents for various districts out of the members of select services. The developmental, policing and human rights issues that are dealt with by these administrators are also different, in that Indian administrators are constantly under pressure to deal with alternate choices resulting out of severe land pressures and the differing requirements of various social and politico- religious groups on control over existing resources and planned infrastructure. They also regularly deal with situations of budgetary restraints that are unique to developing countries, and with the availability of financial and administrative powers now being more and more restricted to various departments at the State level, or with local autonomous bodies; the ability of local administration to plan and implement longer term solutions to issues like child labour, rehabilitation of project affected/displaced persons, and discrimination against disadvantaged sections of the society has been severely hampered.

A study of the existing procedures regarding control and supervision of policing would be in place, alongwith a discussion of the actual working of the same to appreciate the differences between theory and practice. As per section 4 of the Indian Police Act of 1861 (the "Act"), the administration of the police throughout a police district vets in a district SP, under the general control and direction of the DM[5] . However, this jurisdiction is coterminous with that of an Inspector General[6] (IG) of Police, who enjoys this jurisdiction over the entire State. The Act itself thus creates an overlap, which has been further compounded by the fact that in actual practice, the DM exercises virtually no control over policing matters. Decisions regarding postings and transfers of local police personnel, functioning of police stations, as well as police arrangements in normal and law & order situations, are all made by District SPs working under the control of the concerned Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), who in turn reports to the IGs and the DGP. The role of the DM is completely absent in postings,

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[5] In addition, rule 58(b) of the Rajasthan Police Regulations 1948, inter-alia, provides that the SP is subject to the general control of the DM who is responsible for the criminal administration of the district. Under these regulations, the DM is competent to direct an enquiry to be made into any case of misconduct by a police officer {Note: This position of the DM vis-à-vis the police has not changed with the coming into operation of the Rajasthan Police Rules in 1965}. Similarly, the Code of Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 specifies that district police officers are subordinate to the DM.

[6] This term of "the IG" is what appears in the Act, but the Director General of Police (DGP) actually exercises these powers.

transfers, and disciplinary matters of police officers; and is advisory at best in other cases connected with police functioning.

In so far as police investigation of crime is concerned, once again, there is no role provided for the DM in practice, notwithstanding the strict legal position that makes him in-charge of criminal administration of the district. Supervision of investigation remains the sole jurisdiction of the SP and higher police authorities. In fact, the field investigation and prosecution in courts in India is further divided between the offices of the SP and the Public Prosecutor, where interaction between these has been found to be severely lacking. This multi-layered structure in criminal investigation, with no provision for local supervision over police authorities, has also sometimes been manipulated by interested political forces to shield criminal elements from a full and independent investigation and concomitant prosecution.

In matters of maintenance of law and order, the role of the magistracy is more prominent, where the powers for imposition of curfew and other prohibitory orders regarding processions etc., or restraining public in general or individuals in particular continue to be exercised by the DM or his subordinate magistrates. While aberrations remain of police action without reference to the magistracy, these cases have been by and large few in numbers. One of the main reasons for continuation of this superior role of the magistracy in such matters has been the unstated understanding within the superior administrative and political structures that these powers would be more judiciously and effectively exercised by the DM with his high degree of involvement in developmental and public matters. Contrasting this with the lack of any independent role for the DM in criminal matters over the police/prosecution mechanism, it may be said while criminal activity as such has increased substantially and successful prosecution as such has become rare; the supervisory and independent role of the magistracy has been an important factor in ensuring a generally peaceful law and order situation. The ability of DMs in controlling law and order situations has been curtailed only in the rare cases when politics has played a role in their decision-making, or where the magnitude of the specific riotous situation is such that local infrastructure is not sufficient to deal with the large-scale planning and organisation that may have been undertaken by the perpetrators[7] . Similar problems have occurred where public grievances have originated out of particular situations, the solution of which was/is beyond the administrative or financial jurisdiction of the DM[8] .

In so far as the authority of DMs to deal with other police issues like jail administration, prosecution in arms offenses, withdrawal from prosecution of petty criminal offences, release from parole and other criminal matters are concerned,

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[7] The Bombay Riots of 1993 is a case in point, where the entire exercise had been meticulously planned by a network of criminal elements with resources far outnumbering the controlling capacity of the local administration.

[8] Examples are the cases of disputes over proper rehabilitation of people affected by large-scale projects.

the general distancing of this institution from that of the SP has resulted in a situation where neither office subjects these matters to rigorous examination. This problem of systemic failure is not unique to this relationship; it has been observed in various other cases of dual- or multi- layer systems where roles are not clearly demarcated, for instance, in crime-fighting where investigation and prosecution are completely independent and isolated from each other, and in public sector bank loaning procedures where involvement of too many offices has lead to dilution of responsibility for failures.

Needless to say, the position of the DM in practice is far less effective than envisaged under the Police Act. Supervision has remained nominal and notional. The actual position of the DM has been one of responsibility but little authority. The position of the police, on the other hand, has become one of authority without adequate independent and local supervision. In fact, apart from the deterioration in the capacity of magistracy to check human rights violations, their ability to resolve other human rights issues like child/forced labour and social or economic discrimination has also been severely hampered due to strengthening of local "representative" institutions on one hand, and centralisation of administrative and financial powers at the State level on the other. With more and more powers being devolved to local political structures, and experience with political institutions in India being what it is, it is likely that timely and fair resolution of local public issues will become more strained.

The setting up of National and State Human Rights Commissions has helped in checking police excesses and other human rights violations to some extent, but local exercise of their powers is required in order that timely and effective interventions are made in sufficient number of such cases. One option that has been suggested is that of appointing district representatives of these Commissions. But exercising this alternative is likely to lead only to mushrooming of local institutions, and also to greater hostility between them for power and space. A much more effective alternative would be to strengthen and consolidate the existing institutions, while simultaneously isolating them from political interference in the manner that has been suggested by the National Police Commission, the Ribeiro Committee, and the Padmanabhaiah Committee[9].

To this end, the office of the SP itself should be strengthened by providing it with full powers in intra- district transfer and in disciplinary matters concerning his officers and staff, and also a greater say in blocking unnecessary transfer of cases

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[9] Broadly speaking, they recommended setting up somewhat State-level Boards for selections and transfers of higher Police Officials (the Police Establishment Board and other bodies as suggested by the Padmanabhaiah Committee, the Police Performance and Accountability Commission as suggested by the Ribeiro Committee, and various panels as suggested by the National Police Commission). This principle could be equally applied to the case of transfer and selection of District Magistrates, since they are and will remain the key officers expected to ensure the task of law enforcement and maintenance of public order and resolution of various important developmental issues.

pertaining to criminal investigation outside the District[10] . Simultaneously, police officers should be protected from arbitrary and unwarranted evaluation of the "propriety" of their local actions by external authorities. This evaluation of whether a particular action taken, for instance in the case of police firing, should remain limited to local levels, and to this end, the office of the DM could be entrusted with the task. Similarly, the offices of the public prosecutor could be amalgamated within the office of the SP, to function under the SP's day-to-day control, and overall supervision by the DM. The supremacy of the office of the DM would have to be re-established, so that digressions and aberrations, if any, are quickly and suitably corrected.

The DM currently chairs a number of committees entrusted with the task of grievance redressal. The authority of these committees is presently hampered due to lack of finality in their decisions, since various local officers have greater loyalty to their own departmental rules than to the collective wisdom of these Committees[11]. There is therefore a need to bring in greater degree of finality to these local decisions, and these bodies chaired by the DM could be further entrusted with more administrative and financial powers so that local issues can be swiftly addressed. Simultaneous delegation of certain powers of the National and the State Human Rights Commissions to the office of the DM or to these local committees[12] will also strengthen this process of grievance redressal, bring in closer interaction between the Commissions and the local field officers, lead to greater trust and co-operation, thus bringing in more effectiveness in bettering human rights situations. This close interaction between the Human Rights Commissions and the field officers will certainly mean dual loyalties of these officers, but then, addressing human rights issues of the recurrent nature that are so peculiar to developing countries requires a co-operative and consultative approach rather than a legal and confrontationist one.

At the same time, there is need to integrate the various Human Rights, Women's, SC & ST, and the Minorities Commissions so that there is consolidation both at the National and the State level. This will also check against any institutions doing identical work. One single Commission at the National level and at the State levels is adequate to deal all such issues, since the rights of Minorities, Women,

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[10] Allegations that this power of transfer of cases is actually abused to shield politically powerful interests are not uncommon.

[11] For instance, the DM holds regular meetings with district officials of the Water Supply Department and Electricity Boards for resolving public problems connected with these two vital issues. However, the DM can neither transfer nor initiate disciplinary proceedings against any official/worker of these departments. He does not even have the requisite administrative & financial powers to sanction schemes, or to modify or supersede impugned departmental orders so that early relief can be provided to affected public.

[12] The powers of summoning concerned officials, for instance, could be delegated, as also the power to sanction relief to victims of harassment. Delegation of the power even to advise the Government through the National or the State Commission, as the case may be, will certainly mean greater role in Governmental decision-making.

SCs and STs and other disadvantaged classes are an integral part of the overall Human Rights scenario. Bundling of these institutions will bring in a more focussed intra- disciplinary approach[13] , and also increase governmental recognition and acceptance of their advice.

To sum up, strengthening of the office of the district SP, together with a strong supervisory role for the DM will bring in a system where there are both intra- departmental as well as external mechanisms for checking human rights violations. Distancing of these institutions from political interference in their day-to-day working will lead to greater fairness in their actions, while delegation of certain powers of the Human Rights Commissions and administrative and financial strengthening of the committees chaired by the DM will mean quicker and more effective responses. Betterment of human rights record requires authority, consultation and trust; and strengthening of the district executive and their positive and constant dialogue with the National and the State Human Rights Commissions will certainly lead to better enjoyment of human rights and more effective redressal of public grievances.

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[13] For instance, the rights of women belonging to Minority Communities could then be addressed in a more holistic manner.

Policy Researchers and Policy Makers:
Never the Twain shall meet?

- M. Lakshmi Narasaiah*

In every corner of the planet, researchers are gathering and analyzing information on vital issues of sustainable development. But how do they know their findings will actually be used in policy decisions that create positive change? Researchers and decision makers see the world, and their roles in it, in very different ways. What creates this divide between the two communities and what can be done to bridge the gap?

'Demand-side' challenges: policy in the making

By its nature, the policy making process constrains decision makers from effectively expressing demands for research. Rigorous research requires a clear definition of a problem and the variables to be measured. But the objectives of government policies and programs tend to be loosely defined and are even contradictory. Many decisions are reached through a multilateral bargaining process in which it is difficult to obtain consensus on anything more than broad statements of principle. These bargains might break down if the costs and tradeoffs involved are exposed by a research project.

Inertia and more urgent priorities mean that governments tend to think about changing policies only when time and funding have run out. At that point, it is too late for research. Furthermore, it is only after a program has been established and a clientele created that an effective demand exists for research. For these reasons, policy implementation tends to precede rather than follow research.

Even if there is a need for research, there may not be a single agency responsible for the policy decision bargaining. When a client agency does request advice, there is no guarantee that it will turn out to be the appropriate audience for the results (e.g. a study done for the Ministry of Education might find that student performance would be improved by better nutrition).

Finally, governments are often afflicted with too much information, which senior policy makers have little time to absorb.

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'Supply side' challenges of academic research

Problems also exist in the research community that supplies information and analysis. University research usually takes a long time to yield results. It is often highly critical, without suggestions for action, but fitting the self-image of many academics as gadflies. In academia, a state of conflicting views and information is normal. But potential clients find their confidence undermined when two studies reach opposite conclusions.

Academics often search for general laws and patterns that reveal phenomena of greater theoretical and long run importance than highly specific observations. Policy makers, however, want answers to the specific problems they face, even if such 'small' problems do not interest researchers.

While policy makers tend to emphasize distributional concerns (i.e. winners and losers) and the number of people affected, economists - frequent advisors to government - emphasize efficiency and financial costs and benefits. Owing partly to the vagueness of many program goals, policy makers tend to assess performance in terms of inputs rather than improvements. They also weigh losses more heavily than gains, since "a policy that hurts five people and helps five, produces five enemies and five ingrates".

Finally, the issue of compensation is critical to policy makers; for economists it is usually an afterthought. Economists tend to find a solution satisfactory if, in theory, the losers could be compensated. To push a policy change through, policy makers must usually ensure that they will be compensated, and have mechanisms to do so.

Impact down the road

The gap between demand and supply for research appears rather large. But this view may be too pessimistic, mainly because it uses narrow definitions of research and policy impact. Research is more than a set of data and policy impact may accumulate imperceptibly but with real effect over many years. The contribution of social science research is perhaps less in proposing specific solutions to well-defined problems, than in defining the problems and providing an array of concepts and methods for analysis.

Problem definition can take many forms. It can mean detecting problems from patterns in data, such as a trend toward worsening income distribution. It can also change the way society thinks about issues. Largely because of research, the informal sector now tends to be seen as a potential force for development, rather than a symptom of backwardness.

The most significant contribution of social science research may be in generating ideas and ideologies, which history shows can be very powerful.

What to do?

How, then, can researchers and the agencies that sponsor them increase the social relevance and impact of research? Since both the problem-solving and the conceptual impacts are important, research programs should be designed to provide both by developing and understanding of basic behavioural relationships and a thorough knowledge of the data. This can then be tapped to provide short-term policy advice.

Donors have an important role to play in supporting theoretical research, although they are sometimes reluctant to do so. The distinction between "theoretical" and "empirical" is in no sense equivalent to "useless" and "useful". A plausible, verifiable theory about how farmers respond to increases in crop prices, or savings to changes in interest rates, is of obvious relevance to poverty and can be very useful.

Greater attention should go to publicizing findings and donors should be prepared to finance conferences, books, working papers, abstracts and the like. Researchers should convey their findings in language intelligible to practitioners, putting themselves into policy makers' shoes when doing so. Among the recommendations made by successful policy advisors are the following:

- Learn about the history of the issue by researching previous arguments, interest groups, areas of disagreement and data gaps;

- Get into the debate early before positions harden;

- Explain which groups will be affected by the proposed measures and suggest ways to compensate those negatively affected;

- Do not propose measures that are technically optimal but too complex or costly for an agency to administer; and

- Keep it simple. Emphasize the decision at hand, the underlying problem, and options to solve it. Minimize methodology, jargon and equations.

In the research domain, there is no single recipe for policy impact. Luck and persistence, along with good science, are vital ingredients.

Discipline, Corruption, Delays and Bureaucracy

-Vidya Nand Garg*

Select any government department and have a glance at the number of inquiries going against the officials. One starting fact is that though the number of inquiries is large, still no one seems to be getting any punishment. Why? Have we become indifferent, tolerant and forgiving? Or have we become a party to all those inefficiencies and corrupt practices which we are expected to supervise and punish? Or is there any other reason? It was a search for answer to these questions that gave birth to the following article.

In the present system any complaint on a plain paper can result in inquiry. The time span between the receipt of complaint and issue of order of inquiry is generally very small. Complaints can be motivated by disgruntled subordinates, peoples' representatives, contractors and at times by citizens. An inquiry can be conducted by a departmental officer, vigilance organization or a technical audit cell. Apart from the department concerned, an inquiry can be ordered by a superior authority or a court. After a preliminary inquiry is conducted a departmental inquiry under Control, Classification and Appeal rules may be ordered and a chargesheet drawn. An official is punished only if found guilty as a result of departmental inquiry.

Bureaucratic and political corruption is at the root of delays in inquiries. The system as a whole works to provide a cover to the officials guilty of corrupt practices, rather than to punish the guilty by expediting the inquiries. The middle and higher rungs of bureaucracy are too shaky, unstable and burdened with ever expanding work and responsibilities. Further, their zeal, morale and capacity to work hard against corrupt directives has been on steady decline for the past many years. Political executive controls the instruments of investigation and to some extent, punishment.

The systems to safeguard their independence from the political executive and other vested interests are not there. Vigilance organization, CBI and other inquiry officers are under the executive. These agencies therefore, cannot be expected to be independent of political intervention. Further, inquiries are at times used as weapons to intimidate and demoralize innocent officials by the powers

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that be so that they can do their bidding at their whims and fancies to suppress the legitimate trade union activities of employees.

As a result, the public interest suffers, the structures of governance become weak and unsure and the faith of people in public services and democratic institutions gets diluted. The evil and the corrupt move around freely without fear and the supervisory levels look at the whole situation with helplessness. The corrupt connive with the mafia, the rich contractors and fleece the taxpayer of his honest money, becoming rich at their expense. In turn they begin to control the structure of governance both at political and administrative levels. The Shah Commission, which inquired into Emergency excesses, stressed: "It is necessary to face the situation squarely that not all the excesses and improprieties committed during the Emergency originated at the political level. In large number of cases, it appears that unscrupulous and over-ambitious officers were prepared to curry favour with the seats of power and position by doing what they thought the people in authority desired."

A calculated effort was made (during the Emergency) to place persons who were willing to further the interests of the centre of power in vital positions, in gross violation of established administrative norms and practices. The politician who uses a public servant for purely private purposes and the public servant who allows himself to be so used are both debasing themselves and doing a signal disservice to the country.

In the final analysis this country will be governed well or ill by the competence and character of the government officers. If they are content to be mere tools and willing to lend themselves to questionable objectives, there will never be a dearth of unscrupulous operators. There is no substitute for a vigilant, enquiring and enlightened public opinion which keeps a close watch on the doings of public servants' (1, 2). We have a large number of well meaning people but the system really requires tremendous efforts to punish even one corrupt person.

In a bureaucratic set up where there are many levels, one reporting to another, without any clear cut roles and responsibilities, it is really difficult to punish people. "Workplace resistance remains a persistent, significant and remarkable feature of modern organizations. Subordinates do continue to resist and articulate their dissatisfaction in innumerable ways despite considerable disciplinary barriers and insecurities - Hence oppositional strategies that seek to increase employee involvement in organizational processes and to render managerial practices more visible and accountable have greater effectiveness than those primarily concerned with distancing" (3). Workplace resistance has interconnections with knowledge, power and subjectivity. The role of various factors which result in delays at clerical levels is an interesting field of study in labour process theory. There is also a need

to reduce the levels of reporting to avoid unnecessary delays and to fix the responsibilities.

Long and elaborate procedures contribute to delays. Bureaucratic ignorance and inefficiencies at various levels makes these delays conspicuously long. There are long delays in exchange of information between the Secretariat and the head of the department. The system is on an adhoc firefighting basis and has practically crumbled.

In governmental system, a person is rarely punished for work avoidance. The quantum of work disposed off is also rarely questioned. This creates a vicious cycle requiring a strong external intervention to break it.

Concurrence of Public Service Commission is required before certain types of punishment can be awarded to delinquent officials. This contributes to delay. However it also provides security to officials who are sought to be punished by authorities on extraneous considerations. A continuous interaction of administrative departments with Public Service Commission is required to reduce the delays and to appreciate mutual points of view in the larger interest of the state and society. A fine balance has to be maintained between the need for security and the need for discipline.

The delays outlined above are aided by the vacancies in positions like reference clerks who keep files. Tremendous amount of paperwork, time, effort, money and attention goes in each single case and still the punishment of delinquent is nowhere near sight. The result is an allround frustration, cynicism and indifference.

Sometimes a large number of employees at different levels are involved in a case of single serious irregularity. But it is not possible to apportion the blame and punishment on incumbents of each of the levels. Disciplinary authorities at different levels are different and their subjective satisfaction about the guilt of the employee in their jurisdiction is legally required to award punishment. The different disciplinary authorities may apply different standards or yardsticks of punishment. It often happens that the same offence or irregularity invites different punishment in different hands and even in the same hand at different times. While this cannot be helped to the point of perfection, effort can be made by issuing guidelines in this regard and also by computerizing similar cases for future reference.

A unique problem in Uttar Pradesh was the formation of a separate hill cadre for various category of employees. But very few people opted for it resulting in large scale vacancies in hill cadre while creating artificially a surplus in the plains, though in the state as a whole there was no surplus. This anomalous situation resulted in the practical stoppage of fresh requisition for direct recruitment the consequence of which will be felt in future. If the direct recruitment to various

posts is delayed, it will result in unsurpation of vacant posts by the promoted officials resulting in an imbalance.

There is a clear lack of importance given to the personnel functions. Practically no reviews are held at the highest levels of these matters. Even at lower levels these issues are reviewed broadly without any specific details.

The inordinately long delays in inquiries gives wrong signals to public giving rise to cynicism. It results in keeping the morale of delinquent and corrupt officials high and encourages them to indulge in still larger irregularities. They covey a feeling that the corrupt can get away with anything given the right type of connections.

Delays result in serious setbacks to development. Resources are squandered, wasted or kept unutilized depriving the citizens of much needed services and facilities.

The impact of delay in inquiries results in denial of promotions for a long time. The recommendations of Promotion Committees are kept in sealed covers till the inquiries are completed. This at times, results in juniors getting earlier promotions and increases the litigation and demoralization in the department. Another consequence of delay in the inquiries is the delay in release of pension, gratuity and other retirement benefits. Para 351 A of Civil Services regulations permits the continuation of inquiries long after the retirement of any official.

In economic terms, efficient disciplinary proceedings can check lot a wastage and also prevent further irregularities. It is economically prudent to punish the guilty as fast as possible. But there should not be questioning and punishment on petty matters. Otherwise the initiative is sapped.

What is the remedy? If we do not keep the security factor in the procedures, the chances are that the mafia will summarily strangulate the few sane voices still found. If the innocent are to be protected then the guilty also take advantage of the same system and this results in a non-punishment situation. How to reform the system so that the guilty are punished and the innocent are not punished?

To begin with the disciplinary proceedings should be reviewed at higher levels so that its importance is felt and realized at all levels. Efforts should be made to ensure that deadlines are met. Injustice and wrongdoing should not be tolerated at any level. Each of the Secretaries and Heads of Departments should improve the level of performance in the area of disciplinary proceedings. Tolerance and forgiveness are virtues but should not be experimented and practised at the expense of the state and the public. No one should be discriminated on the basis of caste, gender, race, religion or age. Honest officials should be protected and encouraged to act fearlessly. Certain disciplinary powers have been delegated to Heads of Departments. However they also tend to neglect this very important function.

The delegating authority must ensure that delegated powers are being properly exercised in the interest of the public and the organization.

If the record, capability of officials is kept in mind while making the placement, the chances are that fewer irregularities will take place and fewer cases of disciplinary proceedings will arise. Correct placement policy is, therefore, a sine qua non of a sound disciplinary system. The long term strategy involves certain steps like insulating the system of transfers and punishment from the politicians and handing it over to an autonomous Board manned by civil servants.

Due to rapid and far reaching social changes taking place in India, the personnel policies are a sensitive area where the impact of social changes has been felt the maximum. The implementation of Mandal Commission recommendations in respect of reservations in recruitment and promotions has resulted in a change in the personnel policies of the governments at the centre and the states in a big way. The historic judicial pronouncement on creamy layers and other issues require a deep legal knowledge. The Uttar Pradesh Public Services (Reservation for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes) Act 1994 has added new grounds for providing imprisonment for officers failing to fill up the quota of jobs for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes. In a dynamic fast changing scenario adapted to the latest judicial pronouncements, the personnel policies keep varying. The personnel departments must organize training programmes for personnel at different levels doing the work of human resource development. There is a need for better interaction between training institutions and the administrative departments on a regular and frequent basis. The faculty of these institutions in turn need to update and upgrade their knowledge of personnel matters in a systematic manner.

An important interface is the law department whose role in these matters becomes crucial especially in the light of frequent judicial pronouncements. Administrative departments need to keep a close liaison with the law department to avoid delay and to keep themselves updated.

To expedite inquires of complicated matters, State Vigilance Commission has been established but normally its posts remain vacant. Only the people who have to be sidelined are posted there. There is a need to make these posts more perky and remunerative so that people are ready to work on these posts.

The process can be delayed even at the stage of preliminary inquiry by judicial orders and the entire focus can shift from the actual conduct of inquiry to the process of defending the setting up of inquiry. To take away disciplinary and other matters from the purview of High Courts and Supreme Court, we have constituted Central Administrative Tribunals and State Administrative Tribunals. Statement of Objects and reasons of The Administrative Tribunals Act 1985 says:

"The establishment of Administrative Tribunal under the aforesaid provision of the Constitution has become necessary since a large number of cases relating to service matters are pending before the various courts. It is expected that the setting up of such Administrative Tribunals to deal exclusively with service matters would go a long way in not only reducing the burden of the various courts and thereby giving them more time to deal with other cases expeditiously but would also provide to the persons covered by the Administrative Tribunals speedy relief in respect of their grievances."

The working of these Tribunals needs to be improved. The largescale orders expunging/staying the operation of punishments (which in any case come after a prolonged inquiry) nullify the entire efforts made over a number of years. The orders of State Tribunals can be appealed against in High Courts and those of High Courts in Supreme Court. This further contributes to delay. As a result it is practically impossible to punish a delinquent officer in a short time.

Wherever irregularities have taken place, the prescribed procedures have not been followed. Thus following the procedures is an important step in the direction of discipline. One of the reasons why there are more irregularities and corruption in the public sector is that while the procedures are fairly well settled in the government these are flexible in the public sector. At the same time procedures should be changed to suit the increasing population and complexity of demands placed on the system.

Personnel matters are the most important targets for computerization. In fact all personnel matters need to be computerized so as to ensure speed of disposal, ease of review and better appreciation of the problems involved. Management Information Systems in respect of disciplinary matters in particular and personnel matters in general should developed.

In large bureaucracies, in case a correspondence is addressed and sent to a wrong person or authority, it may be impossible to locate such a document. For transparency, public should constantly be kept informed of the persons whom they should address their complaints. And this should be done at different levels and in different locations so that there is widespread impact of such an arrangement.

Punishment in bureaucracy should perform the role of deterrent. Officials should have a fear that if they do anything wrong, irregular or corrupt, someone overseeing them will ensure punishment to them. Also the fairminded and honest people should be able to work fearlessly so that the public good is served. Forgiveness is generally extolled as a virtue in our culture. However in governmental system the discretion to forgive is not vested in any authority. Punishment must be fair and proportionate to the irregularities. This is main role of the authority proposing and awarding the punishment.

No single individual can provide this kind of environment. Senior civil servants, technocrats, politicians, judges and advocates - all have to join hands together. Comparative systems in various countries should be studied to give the solutions that suit the conditions in our country. System of punishment alone cannot discipline, though it is the most potent tool to achieve goals in this direction. Inculcating in children the values like character discipline, punishment of the evil, can go a long way in making them better future employees.

As time progresses, demand for better quality of public services will become stronger. This will put pressure on officials to deliver the goods. Judicial intervention will also force the executive to perform. As a result, the system is expected to become more responsive to punish the slack and guilty officials. If we fail in this, the punishment to the guilty officials will be given outside the established systems, giving birth to terrorism and anarchy.

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e/; dky rd ik;%Ia iukZ;; jki ij iki ds dFkkfyd ppZdk Ìkfeld vkfÌiR; Fkk vkj ckbfcy dk vuqpkn oftÌr FkkA ijrqfcfV'k 'kklk dka}kjk jke dspp Zl sì foPNn djrsgh ekuksl kekftd ifjorZu dsu;snkj dk l=ikr gvkA teÌh vkj fcÌvu eackbfcy dsvuqpkn dsiz kl 'kq gq rFkk xhd lkfgR; dh ikphu ikÌ/frfyi;kadk Hkh vuqpkn fd;kx;kA bu xÌFkkdsvuqpkndksuskekftd ifjorZu eavR;r egRoiw/Hkfedk vnk dhA mÌlgkuckbfcy dkstu&lkekÌ; dh Hkk"kkeamiyÒì djkdj lHkh dks ml dsv/;;u dk volj jinku fd;kA blh dsifj.kkeLo: ibÌ/yÒ eafppZvkQ bÌ/yÒ" dh LFkkiuk gbÌZ rFkk iÌ/KVi Ver la iukZ;fo'o ek}dsÌkkfydkdsHkkjh fojkÌk}dscko tm] QÌyuseal Qy jgkA bjÍe el vkj ekfVZu yÌkjj vkfn dsiz kl kauste Ìuh dksiki rFkk dÌkkfyd : f<÷kalsefÌrDr fnykbA bu ?kVukkÛekus ifjr gkdj blÌkblZe rkunq kbZckbfcy dsvuqpkn fofHkÌu Hkk"kkvkeaiÌ rr djuseatÌV x,A ifj.kkeLo: i] ckbfcy vkt fo'o dh l okfÌd Hkk"kkvkesavufnr itÌr dgÀA ckbfcy dsvuqpkndsdkj.kl kygoha&l=goha 'krh rd blÌkblZel eZfo'o dsvfÌdkk Hkk&Hkkx ij QÌyuseal Qy jgk vkj fo'o dsfofHkÌu l eektkvkj l aLdfr;kadsfo?kÌu dkHkkj dj.k cukA

Hkkjrh; Hkk"kkvkalsfonsÌkh vuqpkndka dh JÌ[kyk eal cl sigysmÌ jhh 'krh eal ÌÌr l sphuh vuqpkndka dk mYyÒ[k feyrk gÀ blh iÌdkj NÌh 'krkCnh eal ÌÌr dsipÀÌr= rFkk ckfÌÌl Ro dk Qkjih h eavuqpkn gvkA Hkkjr eavxxÌrh l kekÌT; dh LFkkiuk dsckn ikphu Hkkjrh; Kku&foKku dsegÌko dksLohdkj djrs gq l u=1774 blÌeal j fofy;e tÌkÌl uscakky ,f'k;kfVd l klÌkbÌh dh LFkkiuk djdsikphu ik¡kÌR; Ìkfeld]nk'kÌfud rFkk l kfgR;;d dfr;kads: ikÌrj dk ekxÌizÌkÌLr fd;kA bl l kÌkbÌh us ikphu Hkkjrh; Kku&foKku dh [kkst] vuqpkn rFkk ink'ku eaegÌoiw/Hkfedk vnk dhA blh dsrgr l u=1798 blÌeal j ekÌÌu; j fofy;El usdkyhnkl dh l kiqfl) dfr ^vfHkKku 'kkdrÌ ye* dk vxxÌrh eavuqpkn iÌ rr fd;kA Hkkjrh; Ìel/,oan'kÌu l siHkkfor gkdj ik'pkR; fo)kukauslHkh Hkkjrh; xÌFkkdk Lo&Hkk"kkvkeavuqpkn vkjÌk fd;kA eÌÌ l eqyj]'kkÌÌu gkoj]] 'yxy] fi'ky vkfn fo}kukuslÌÌr l steÌu eavuqpkn fd, vkj l Ìkr ofind rFkk yk¡dd l kfgR; dsvuqpkn l srqyukRel Hkk"kk&foKku dk vkjÌk gvkA bu fo}kukadsiz kl kal sHkkjrh; vk;Hkk"kkvkvkÌ ;wjksih; vk;Hkk"kkvkdh rkfRodÌ ,drk dsifrikfnr djus dsiz kl l vkjÌk gqA ifj.kkeLo: i l aiukZfo'o dsfy, Hkk"kk oÌKfud oxhÌdj.k dsu, ekunÌÌ LFkkfir gqA blh iÌdkj ukynk] r{kf'kyk]ekxgu tlnMÌkdsvkÌ gMÌik dh l H;rk dsxÌ oiukZbfrgkl dk fo'o dh vuqdunÌHkk"kkvkvuqpkn gkuskals fo'o'o&l l Ìdfr ,oaL H;rk dsbfrgkl dksl e>usdsfy, ,,dub zÌ nfÌ'V feyhA blh rjg ifÌpeh l H;rk vkj l aLdfr rusinÌol ekt eaHkkjhh mYyÌ&iÌfÌky dk Hkk l=ikr fd;kA l kfgR; ds{kÌ=eavxxÌr jkekf.Vd dkO; usvuqpkn dsekÌ/; e l sbVyh] ;muku vkj Ýkl I sgkdj ,f'k;k eaiÌÌ'k fd;kA ;jki dsbl jkekf.Vd dkÌ/; dsiÌ.kkÌkrkdsvaexkdfo dkyhnkl dk Hkk l Eeku l fgr mYys[k fd;k tkrk gÀ blh iÌdkj bu jkekf.Vd dfo;kausnkjk dÌr ifu'knkdsvuqjch vuqpkndkl s Ýkl hÌh h Hkk"kk eafd, x, vuqpkndkdksfÌÌ<÷dj Hkkh ijÌ.kk iÌÌr dhA dkyhnkl dh vufnr dfr;kadk v/;;u djdsgh teÌu dfo xÌVsusdkyhnkl dh 'kdÌrÌyk dksl ekfÌÌr djdsdforkfy [khA ;g rF; Hkh ek= lakkx ughagÀfd ik;%fo'o dh l HÌ eie`{k Hkk"kkvkeajkfkÌ&k&tf y; V] ghj&jka>k] yÇyk&e tuÌ kÍ h dÌFkk,aikbZ tkrh gÀ ;sdÌFkk,aiÌ R;{kr%vuqpkn dsekÌ/; e lsfofHkÌu l ÌLdfr;kadsse/; vknku&inÌku dh irhd gÀ

tÍkfd Åi ij mYys[kfd;k tkpqdk gÀÌkfeld ipkj&iÌ kj eaÌeÌxÌFkkdsvuqpkn dh ijaijk vR;ar ikphu gÀ on] ckbfcy] dqjku] xhrk] mifu"kn rFkk ck§ vkj tÍu Ìkfeld xÌFkkdk l aiukZfo'o ij ÌHkko fn[kkbZnnjrk gÀA ifÌ;kr if'pe vkykpd Vh-,l-bfy;V ck§ vkj mifu"knh; Kku&ijaijk l sifÌÌkfor

,oaifjr fn[kbZnrsgA bIh izdkj dkV}{ghxy]uhRIsvkSj Ikrz/dh dfr;ksesHkkjrh; n'kZu dk iHkko Li"V ifjyf{kr gksrk gA

Hkkjr o"kZesauotkxj.k dh pruk dksipkfgr djuseavuqpkndkadh cgqr cM-Hkfiedk jgh gA bIh ek/;e Isge Ýkdhlh jkT; Økfar] ;ujksih; mifuo'kokn] vejhdh ixthokn rFkk lkE;okn tS h?kVukvka ,oa; qkkUrjdkjh 'kfDr;ka Isifjfpr gq,A bu 'kfDr;ka@?kVukvkausIiaukkZfo'o esalkekftd ifjorZu esaD;k Hkfiedk vuk dh]bIh rF;Isl Hkh ifjfpr gA uohu Ikekftd&jktuhfrd&vkfFkd vkndksyukausu dksy e/;;qkhu tM-rk vkSj : f<vkfnrk dkslekIr djuseal g;;ks fn;koju lekt eauo&pruk dk Hkh Ipkj fd;kA gekjsnsk'k esaUuhloha 'krh dsnkkSjku Hkkjrsnq;k, dsik;%IHkh IkfgR; dkj vuqpknd lHkhjgsgA

'Lora=rk IsiwoZys[ku vkSj vuqpkn dksvyx&vyx ½foIk½ughaekuk tkrk FkkA cM&cM-ukeh ys[kd ekSfyd ys[ku dslkFk&lkFk vuqpkn Hkh djrsFkkA ys[ku mudsân; dh lMelu Fkk vkSj vuqpkn mudh ijk.kk½xkxhZxqr%vuqpkn]1986] i"B 3½A okLro esabl dky dslkfgR; dk ie[ky{; tu&ekul esa ,Isk ifjorZu ykuk Fkk tksnsk'k dh Lora=rk dk ekxZiz'kLr dj IdsAbl dk;Zgrqosvuqpkn vkSj Itu nkukadksleku egRo nrsFkkA bIh inkkjiku 'kDI ih;j dsukVdksdk dkQhcM-Ik[;ke,avuqpkn gqykA ;g vuqpkn dksy LokUr%I [kk; dh Hkkkouk Isgh ifjr ughaFkk oju uo&tkxj.k vkSj uokksk'k dh Hkkkouk IsvkrikIr 'kDI ih;j dk ;g Ikfgr; ekuo dkok: f<+]vakselEr gkusdh ijskk nrkFkkA blh inkkj pnkkLyk kokfd;k dslEy[kdl foRI&lys]uhusV&kkj dh dfr;kdk pnl e,avuqpkn iLrir djnsnkukan'kkadh Il-dfr;kdksfudV ykuadki/;kl fd;kA

vuqpkn dk egRo Hkkjr tSscgHkk"kk&Hkk"kh rFkk ukuk&Il-dfr;kadsns'k e] tgkadksb &dks ij ikuh cnkys½vkB dksl ij ckuh] dh dgkor pfjrkFkZgkrh gA,svkSj Hkkh vfIId gA D;ksfd lait.k vkSj Ii dZ dsek/;; e ds: i e,avuqpkn dh foik dk iz,xk djdsofofHkUuu {ks=kavkSj Il-dfr;kadsykxkadksfudV ykus eal gk;rk feyrh gA 'Hkkjr dsHkk"kkok oKkfud l oZk{k.k e,aHkkjr o"kZdh79 Hkk"kkvka,oa554 ckfy;ka dk mYys[k g$MkkWMhh-ih-iVuk;d]1994 i"B 27½A dksy IfoIk dh vkBoa uqd phe,sagh8 jk"Vh; Hkk"kkvkadk mYys[k gA bI tfVy Hkk"kkxr ifjos'k e,avuqpkn dk egRo vkSj mi dh vifjgk;Zrk vkSj Hkh vfIId gkstkrh gA Hkkjrh; Hkk"kkvka,svuqpknkadh Jà[kyke,achl oha'krh dsnkkSjku cfidc pm];'kjr pUn] ekbdly ei I{mu nÙk vkSj johUnzukFk dh cxyk dfr;kadh fganh esavuqpkn] ejkBh ys[kdksagfjukjk;.k vkiV½ [kka\dj dsfganh esavuqpkn rFkk ,e-,u-I R;kFkhZvkSj oh-oekZ}jk cxyk Isey;kye esavuqpkn mYys[kuh; gA

ik'pkR; IkfgR; rFkk Kku&foKku usvuqpkn dsek/;e IsikifksRR; IkLdfr ij viuk iHkko Mkyk ftl dsjpukRed vkSj udkjkRed ipkko cf) thfo;kadh ppkZdk fo"k; jgsgA ;|fi ;g ekuk tkrk g\$ fd ik'pkR; IkLdfr dsvkØe.k usHkkjrh; IkLdfr dksgkfu igpkbZgSvkSj Hkkjrh; Ieakt dksfo?kVu dh vkSj vxIlj fd;k g\$rFkkfi Ikekftd ifjorZu ds?kVd ds: i e,avuqpkn dsegRo dksvLohdkj ughafd;k tk IdrkA IKo"kZIHkh inkHkjrUnqgfj'pUnzusIkekftd ifjorZu esavuqpkn dh Hkfiedk ds egRo dksl e>k FkkA½MkkWUjhjktuhiky]ikyhoky%vuqpkn]1986] i"B 30½mudh fuEu ifDr;ka Isvuqpkn dk egRo mn?kfVr gkrk g%&

^^i SI c fo |k dh dgmgkbZtqjSvuqpkn A
fut Hkk"kk ekjkal cS;k dksysgaLoksn AA
tkfu I dSI c dN I cfg fofoI dyk dsHkn A
ouSoLrrqdky dh brSfeVSnhurk [kn AA**

fut Hkk'kk en l aiwkZ Kku&foKku dh miyfCl l sgh nhurk dk fouk'k l Hko gSvk£; g vurpkn l s gh l Hko gA Lok Ìhurk l xke dsnkßjku xhrk n'kLu usl aiwkZHkkjrh; tu&ekul dks ,dtw/ cuk, j[kkA; g xhrk dsvurpkn dk ghegRo gA bl h iridkj l aiwkZHkkjro'Zen ^vkl rqfgekpye* dh l kekftd l l Ldfr dh LFkkiuk dk Jş Hkh cgqr dN vurpkn dksnukmfpr gksxkA

f'k{kk l kekftd ifjorZu dk l cl s cdkjxj i sk l u gA f'k{kk ds{ks= en vurpkn dk egRo Lo;aflI) gA f'k{kk en vurpkn dsegRo dsl cil en MkkW thÙh fl Ìky fy[krsgaß&

"Since it is not possible for everyone to learn well more than one or two languages, it is absolutely essential that the scientific and technical literature of more advanced countries should be available to our university students in our languages." (Tips to translators)

l kekftd ifjix{; en vurpkn dsrhu egRoiwkZ{ks= gß& dk;ky;hu vurpkn]0;kolkf;d vurpkn rFkk l kfgfR;d&l kLÇLfrd vurpkn A rhuksa ipdkj dsvurpkn U;ukfÌd ek=k en l kekftd ifjorZu dh xfr c<kusdsfy, mÙkjnk;h gSA dk;ky;hu vurpkn dk l iÌ l jdkjh i =kpkj l sgA Hkkjr dh tfVy Hkk"kkfd fLFkfr dksns[krsgq I foÌ/ku }kjk jkT;ksrFkk jkT; rFkk dUnzdschp i =kpkj gsrqfofHkUu Hkk"kkvksa en vurpkn dh 0;oLFkk dh xbZgSA bl ifØ;k l su cdoy fofHkUu Hkk"kk&Hkkf"k;ksa dse/; vknku&inku l Hko gqvk gß oju cgqr l s'kCn Hkkjr dh l Hkh Hkk"kkvksa en vkerkSj ij ipz,k esyk, tkusyxsßvkSj l kekftd l l Ldfr dsvxx cu x, gA bl ifridkj 0;ol k;laslÉr foKkiuküa ipkj l kekxh vkfn us Hkh ^miHkkDrk l l Ldfr** dsiÌHkko l su;&u; s'kCn x<usel gk; rk nh gSvkß] dbZckj fofHkUu Hkk"kkvksadsfof'k"V 'kCnksdks l koÈkk& cukuesaegRoiwkZHkkfedk fuHkkbZgSA l kfgfR;d&l kLÇLfrd vurpknksadk l ekt ij cgqr 0;kid iÌHkko iMrk gA bl ipidkj dsvurpknksßsDykN l dy l kfgR; dh dfr;kdsvkyokok jktuhfr n'kU rFkk foKku l s l cÌr Jş'B dfr;ksadk vurpkn Hkh 'kkfey gSA bu l Hkh ipidkj dsvurpknksausl kekftd ifjorZu dh xfr dksrhoz djusesaegRoiwkZHkkfedk vnk dh gA

bl ipidkj ge n[krsgßßfd vurpkn dksiki] coQk&: i l h] j ìk[kk t£sukekl siqdkj jtkkusrFkk vurpkn dh ikek.kdrkl drkß]Hkk"kk l rFkk l Vhdrk ij iz'ufpau yxk, tkusdsckokotm;g Li"V gßßfd vurpkn orÌku l ekt dh vR;r egRoiwkZrFkk vko'; dfof/k gA bl h idkj.k vkt vurpkn ij Lora=foÌk ds : i ençfopkj fd;k tk jgk gA orÌku oKkfud rFkk vkS)kf[kd mUufr rFkk l pkj vkÈ l pukØkfr ds; xçen vurpkn vkÈ Hkh vfÌd egRoiwkZgksx;k gA V/Duk9kkÙh rFkk l pukdks{ks= eaiÌR;cdjk"V^vkÈßl ekt 'kh?kfr'k?kkmliUufr dsfy, iz'kl jr gA ^tkgisigysvk] l kisk,* dsfl rLilÌecd;ce; ek;a g vfuok;Zgks x; kgßßfd fofHkUu Hkk"kkvksaenjijÌr vurpkn dh 0;oLFkk miyfCl gkß vkÌqfud l kekftd 0;oLFkk enRofjr xfr l vurpkn dsegRo dksn[krsgqßdÙ;Vjhdrr vurpkn ds{ks= enHkh vuqÌ ìèku fd, tk jgsgAßl; g bl ckr dk irhd gßfd l ekt ij vurpkn dsiÌHkko dk v/;;u ,d egRoiwkZfo"k; gSvkß] l kekftd ifjorZu dh ifØ;k rsst djusen vurpkn dh egrhHkfedk gA

l nHkZl iph

Karunakaran K., M.Jayakumar, (ed) (1988). Translation as synthesis, a search for a new gestalt, Bahri publication, New Delhi.

iku flag lqjthkku](1991). fgunh Hkk"kk lanHk¼vkS lqjpuk]fnYyh-

Dr. Koul O.N, (ed) (1994). Language Development and Administration, Creative, New Delhi.

MkWñjLrksxh vkyksd cqekj](1984). fgunh ea0;kogkfjd vuqokn]thou T;ksfr]fnYyh-

prqosnh ek-xksqd".k cqekj xkLokeh]¼1986). vuqokn&fofoÌ vk;ke]cÙnhÉ; fgunh lLFkku]vkxjk-

Dr. Koul O.N., (ed) (1994). South Asian Language Review, Creative, New Delhi.

MkWñxqÙr xkxh]¼1986). vuqokn]Hkkjrh; vuqokn ifj"kn]ubZfnYyh-

flag vkj-ih](1990). dk;k¼y;hu vuqokn leL;k vkS lekÌku-

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Subsidy or Self-Reliance?
An Alternative Approach to Rural Development
- S. Datta* & R. Banerjee♦

</div>

Introduction

Since independence the emphasis on rural development has resulted in mushrooming of a large number of government agencies and voluntary organisations concerned with rural development. These agencies have only a limited success in ameliorating the conditions of the masses. The results of the experiments carried out by the government departments show that the benefit has not gone to the intended beneficiaries. There is a surfeit of isolated individual efforts but absence of a concerted effort to evolve an integrated framework for development. An integrated strategy for development and the appropriate methodology for implementation has yet to be evolved. It is essential to define clearly the role of voluntary agencies in the development process.

In this context, the present paper analyses the impact of "Shri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP)" to draw lessons from this experience and suggest a framework towards poverty alleviation programmes in India [Ref. 1 and 2].

The paper is divided into 4 sections. A brief summary of the SKDRDP project is presented in Section II. Section III assesses the impact of the project on rural development and finally in the last section we summarise the lessons and draw some conclusions.

The Project (SKDRDP)

Dharmasthala, in the Belthangady taluka of Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka, is a unique centre where Jain Teerthankaras and Lord Manjunatha (Lord Shiva) is worshipped by Vaishnavite Brahmin priests. The Institutions of Dharmasthala (which include various temples, religious places, hostels, educational institutions and estates) are managed by the Jain Heggade. The Heggades have been managing the activities of the temple as representatives of God Manjunatha and other Dharma Daivas over the centuries. The present Heggade, Shri Veerandra Heggade (the 21st Heggade), enjoys the traditional respect and regard of the local people.

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Shri Veerandra Heggade felt that he had a moral responsibility to help the people in the region which extended beyond charity. He established the Shri Kshetra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP) in February 1982 as a time bound programme targeted at alleviating the conditions of the poor in the area.

Objectives

The objectives of the SKDRDP was to help the poor families in the villages of the Belthangady taluka. Poverty alleviation programme was mainly to be based on exploiting available resources, especially in agriculture. The beneficiary families were to be educated on health, sanitation, cleanliness and their awareness about aid or facilities available from the Government. The project aims at making the beneficiary households self-reliant, inculcate good habits and bring about social, cultural and religious harmony in the village.

Methodology

The project was initiated in a phased way by adopting 30 villages in the first year, and the rest (total 81 villages) in subsequent years. According to the project plan the SKDRDP intended to make the beneficiary families self-reliant within a period of 5 years.

After a village is adopted an elaborate survey of families in the village (who posses less than 3 acres of land) is undertaken. Details about family members, their educational levels, skills, income, land, irrigation, crops, economic and other problems are collected. On the basis of the survey the families are classified as A, B or C according to their needs (C represents the poorest of the poor). The steps in the implementation of the programme are shown in Figure 1.

Organisation

The presence of a full-time paid employee called 'sevaniratha' with the responsibility of 1-2 villages is the essence of the project. He is the field level assistant who is supposed to reside in the village adopted. He is given a monthly remuneration of Rs. 500 plus costs of travelling. He is provided with a bicycle and an office in the village which also serves as his residence. He has to keep in contact with the beneficiary families and provide suitable advice for their development. He is responsible for making plans for each adopted family and forwarding the demand to the office for sanction. He is also required to monitor the progress of families and follow-up various sanctioned activities. In addition to the 44 'Sevaniratas' there are 6 'Supervisors' to monitor and supervise the objectives of the trust. These supervisors are provided with a motor cycle.

There are three 'Project Officers' in the head office for providing control and advice as and when required by the field staff. The overall in-charge of the project is the 'Heggade' himself.

FIGURE 1
Steps in the implementation of the programme.
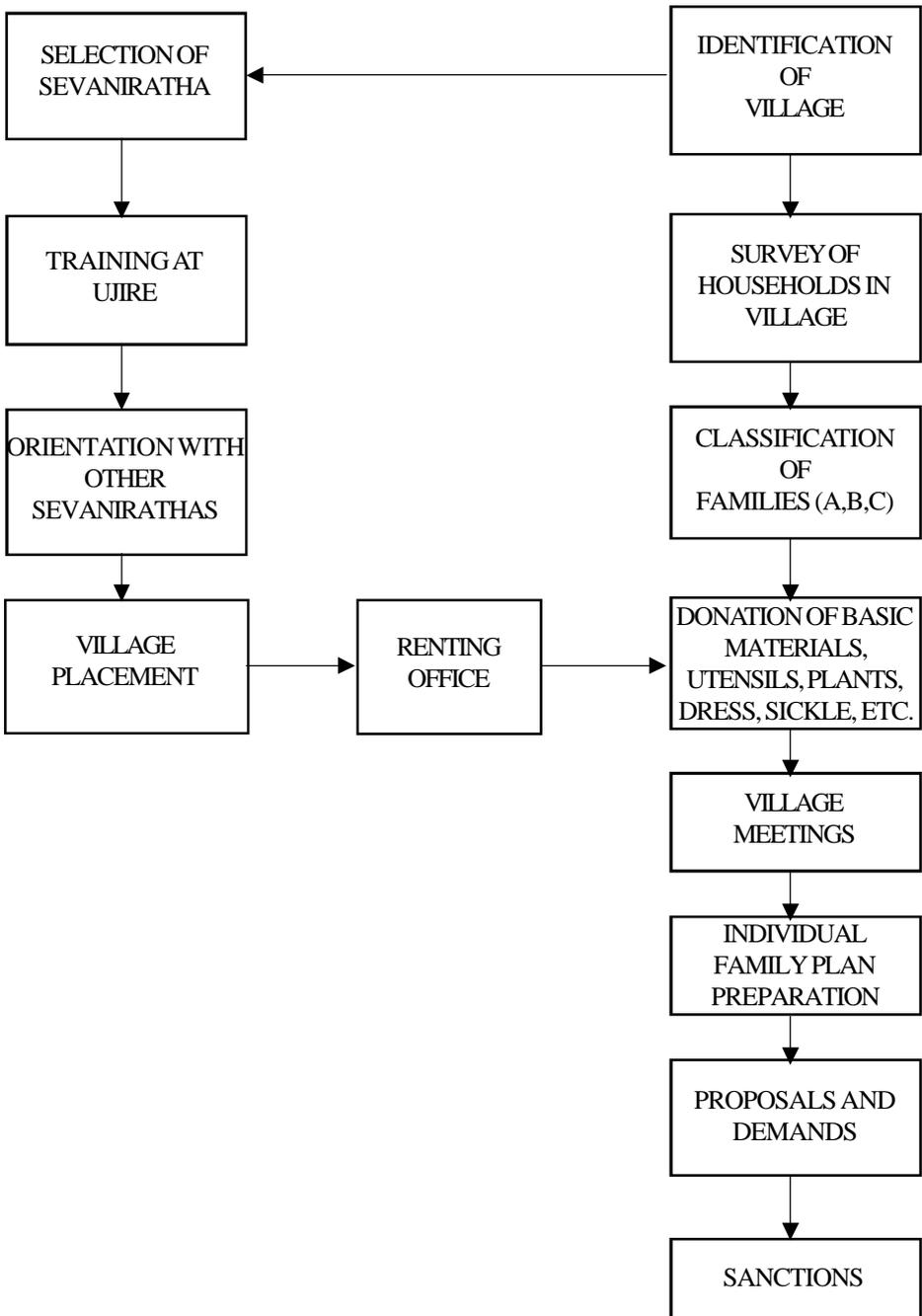
Special Features: Some of the special features of the project are listed as follows:

(a) *Family based scheme* - The SKDRDP recognises the importance of identification of needy families and planning based on the requirements of individual families.

(b) *Survey to assess actual needs* - The trust determines the actual needs of various families by means of a survey and by discussions with the help of the 'sevaniratha'.

(c) *Attempt to change habits* - The initial packet of aid given contains utensils, clothes, sickle, mat etc. The idea is to inculcate habits of cleanliness. The logic of this aid is that when the clothes get worn out or the utensils broken the families will replace them. It also attempts to change the bad habits like drinking, gambling etc.

(d) *Opportunity cost of labour* - Most of the beneficiaries work as agricultural labourers in their fields. They cannot afford to work on their meagre land holdings. The SKDRDP encourages them to develop their own land and give them the confidence that their land can help them attain self-reliance. They are encouraged to build a mud wall or fence (agolo) protecting their land, digging a well, planting banana, cashew, arecanut, rubber and other crops. They are expected to provide self-labour for this. No cash inputs are given. However, they are compensated for the period when they are working on their own field by rice. This ensures that they can work on their fields and get food during that period. Thus by paying the 'opportunity cost' of their labour the trust encourages the beneficiaries to develop their own fields and be self-reliant in the process.

(e) *Scheme not money-based* - In most cases the aid provided is in the form of a sanction for rice. The rice is collected by the beneficiary family from the shop. Seedlings are also often provided. Thus the emphasis is not on aid or money based help but on active participation of the beneficiaries.

(f) *Self-help leading to self-reliance* - This is a time bound programme which aims at making the beneficiary self reliant in 5 years.

(g) The project attempts to integrate its activities with the Government programmes.

(h) Continuous role of *"sevaniratha"* in the village.

(i) Effective *documentation* and a good *monitoring system.*

Impact Assessment

A sample (10%) of the beneficiaries were selected for the primary data collection on the basis of a stratified random sample method. The project conducted a survey of the households in 1983. The purpose of the survey was to identify the

beneficiaries and classify them into three categories (A, B and C) according to their economic conditions and also to identify and plan their requirements. For the selected households in our sample we also used the data from the same survey for the identified households.

We tried to collect primary data from 114 households (10% sample from a total number of 1144 households) and succeeded in getting information from 113 households. This was facilitated by the extensive records maintained by the trust authorities. To assess the impact we must take into consideration the initial objectives of the project, listed as follows:

1. *Poverty alleviation programmes:*

    (a)   Proper exploitation of the available resources with preferential treatment to agriculture.

    (b)   Financial assistance to fulfil the above item.

    (c)   Providing technical guidance looking into the need. The expectations of the above objective is to bring about the much cherished development of the beneficiary family, the removal of poverty. Self-reliance of the family is the anticipated goal.

2.   Encouraging cottage and home industries to improve the family as well as village economy.

3.   Educating the beneficiaries on health, sanitation, cleanliness of the individual and environment.

4.   Attempts to eliminate vices through continuous education and follow-up.

5.   Creating awareness about the formal and informal education.

6.   Inculcating the knowledge of 'thrift' and 'savings'.

7.   Creation of proper 'self-employment opportunity' through training and follow-up.

8.   Assisting the beneficiary to avail of any aid or facility from the government.

9.   Attempts to bring about social, cultural and religious harmony in the village.

The basic hypothesis for starting the scheme was to create opportunities and give assistance to people who have strength but lack interest and those who have interest but do not possess opportunities. Though poverty and helplessness were the eligibility criteria to become a beneficiary under the programme, only those persons with less than 3 acres of land were identified through a household survey.

The data on assets owned by the families were collected and the minimum requirements were identified for each family.

All surveyed families were given some primary materials (e.g. utensils, plates, sickle, mat, dress, mirror, books for children and a photo of Lord Manjunathaya) as aid.

To bring in development of about 200 beneficiary families, the field worker i.e., "sevaniratha" is supposed to maintain contact on a continuous basis during the project period of 5 years with the beneficiary families. This linkman is supposed to be a trained person with fair knowledge about agriculture, animal husbandry, health, sanitation, small scale industries and other relevant areas of village life. He is supposed to assess the resources available for a household and prepares a plan (both annual and five year) for the adopted family. The "sevaniratha" is supervised by a supervisor.

Further the sevaniratha maintains a close liaison between the project co-ordinators and the families of the assigned village(s). In the course of his work he may get help from project co-ordinators, supervisors, other government and bank officials. The 'sevaniratha' sends a 'demand' form in the case of requirement of aid to the project office for a particular family. The aid is released only after getting sanction from Shri Heggade. In general this aid is given in the form of rice through the local distributor. Usually a chit is issued with a sanctioned amount of rice from a particular shop. The chit is received by the family through the Sevaniratha. The distributor collects the money later on from the project after producing the chits. The other forms of aid given are in the form of seedlings/saplings and in a very few cases, cash.

Each Sevaniratha maintains a number of documents describing the progress of activities. He is supposed to visit a family at least once a fortnight. Each adopted family maintains a notebook where the visits and recommendations of the sevaniratha is recorded.

There are 44 sevanirathas working in these villages. For every 7-8 sevanirathas there is a supervisor. The supervisors are provided a motorcycle so as to visit the sevanirathas and supervise their work. They check the books and records maintained by the sevanirathas. They also occasionally visit the families to check whether the sevanirathas are doing their work properly. The supervisor reports to the project officers. The project office has a Jeep and occasionally the project officers also visit the villages and sevanirathas. The strict monitoring and control is the essence of the scheme.

The guidance and help are provided for sanitation, cleanliness, education to children, medical aid, aid to eliminate vices, aid in case of unexpected eventualities etc. Under the developmental activities, agricultural and allied activities and animal

husbandry are predominant. Land levelling, fencing, digging of wells are the three prime on-farm development activities promoted by the project. These are provided in terms of rice. Free distribution of seedlings, saplings through the nursery at Dharmasthala from the project as well as from the forest department is the next form of aid. Technical guidance is also provided for maintaining these seedlings. Construction of house and cattle sheds comes next. The other activities are cottage and home industries; procurement of raw materials, helping in marketing of the final product and tapping of loan/subsidy from the bank/other programmes of the government.

Further, the project assists the beneficiary families to make use of various government schemes. The facilities include old age pension, pension for the disabled and widows.

In addition to organising of a Krishimela (twice a year) the project also organises various programmes for social, cultural and religious activities as well as for technical education.

Analysis

The present study is based on data collected (in 1988-89) from six villages selected at random with/different distances from the project headquarters as can be seen in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2.
A SKETCH MAP WITH DISTANCES FROM DHARMASTHALA.
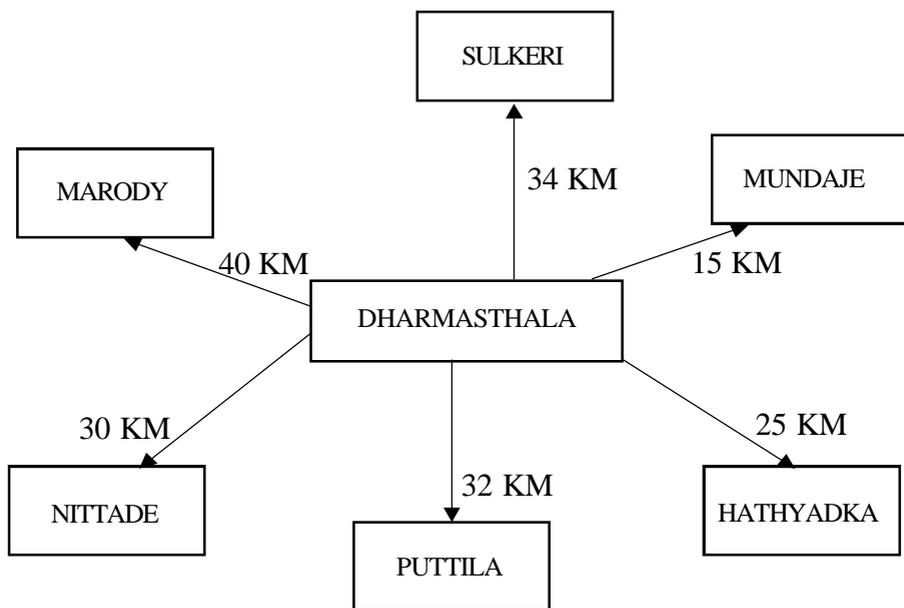
We now briefly summarise the main points of the findings.

(a)   Sectorial distribution : Table 1 depicts the distribution of funds for each purpose for the period 1982-86 to all the villages. The funds provided shows that housing related activities (mud wall and house repairs) received the highest priority by the trust. Next in priority is irrigation, seeds distribution and land levelling. Although the funds in other socio-cultural (medical/educational) activities represent a small portion; but provision of such funds may prove critical in the success of the project as a whole.

TABLE 1

Annual funds provided by the Dharmasthala Trust to SKDRDP

(IN RUPEES)

Sector	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986 Feb-Nov
I. AGRICULTURAL AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES					
A. Land levelling	25123	103399	87574	74592	46820
B. Irrigation	18766	108670	101810	208681	306519
C. Seeds	20226	89624	172302	168471	273500
D. Agricultural implements	7441	15576	3925	16248	1729
E. Others	20011	154367	172944	215967	180584
Sub-Total	91567	471636	618555	683959	809152
II. HOUSING					
A. Mudwall	33402	199310	190192	261800	174445
B. House repair	35768	107639	253952	172497	115827
Sub-Total	69170	306949	452144	434297	290272
III. SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES					
A. Educational	1799	13166	21047	26312	13596
B. Medical	3602	19379	20548	27107	26781
C. Others	1598	18051	19734	18598	12305
Sub-Total	6999	50596	61329	72017	52682
Total	167736	829181	1132028	1190273	1152106

TABLE 2

Governmental and Institutional Funds channelised through SKDRDP

(IN RUPEES)

	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986 Feb.-Nov.
Government schemes	35416	225630	336482	838540	495496
Subsidy & loans from banks & financial institutions	172420	156077	298030	442608	1067091
TOTAL	52656	381707	634512	1281148	1562587

This clearly demonstrates that the project is designed not only to cater for productive activities but also for other socio-cultural activities so as to produce the best possible results. Further, (shown in Table 2) as the funds allocation of the trust picked up the govt./bank loans and subsidies (which were lower than that of allocated by the trust) slowly outstripped the funds provided by the trust in 1986, the govt. funds/subsidies accounted for Rs. 1.562 millions as against Rs. 1.152 millions by the SKDRDP. This shows that the activities of the project helped in developing productive potential of the area/ households progressively.

(b)   Distribution according to distances: Table 3 provides particulars of expenditure for each village in the selected villages since adoption. Though adopted in March 1983, Marody (the farthest from the Dharmasthala) has received the lowest average aid per household.

The distribution of average aid for different distances (from the Dharmasthala) is presented in Figure 3. Mundaje, Hathyadka and Nittade had an edge over Puttila, Sulkeri and Marody. There exists a distance decay function in terms of the trust aids. The order of the villages in terms of distances are Mundaje (15 km), Hathyadka (25 km), Nittade (30 km), Puttila (32 km), Sulkeri (34 km) and Marody (40 km). Although Mundaje is nearest, because of better transportation facilities, Hathyadka is much better off in terms of performance of the trust activities. Though the degree of decay due to distance cannot be measured, the Figure 3 clearly shows some bias of distance in terms of distribution of rice, number of demand met and the peoples' feelings (percentage of people who felt that the project has benefited them). The relative condition of Marody is the worst. The project should have taken special care of its activities and could have put a priority but the relative performance is lowest in this village.

TABLE 3

Village Data of the sample households

Name of the village	Month of adoption	Total valuation of aid in rupees	No. of adopted families	No. of sample house holds	Avg. Aid per house hold	Avg. Size of family	Illiteracy (%)	No. of earning members per family	Land Holding size in acres	Avg. income per family (1988)	Avg. Surplus/ deficit per year	Avg. income per family (1983)
Hathyadka	March 1982	110951	254	25	437	4.92	39.84	2.08	1.91	5748	860	3044
Marodi	March 1983	64976	207	15	314	5.47	54.87	2.27	1.56	5747	290	3057
Nundaje	June 1983	111351	229	23	486	6.17	34.50	2.78	1.18	7321	1107	4237
Nittade	June 1983	101479	182	18	558	7.00	33.33	3.11	1.52	5713	-385	3772
Puttila	Jan. 1983	77896	184	18	423	5.72	43.69	2.22	1.04	5347	-717	3603
Sulkeri	Feb. 1983	39826	88	14	453	6.28	48.86	3.00	1.22	5466	4	3457

Fig. 3 Distance Decay Function (SKDRDP)
Distribution of Rice
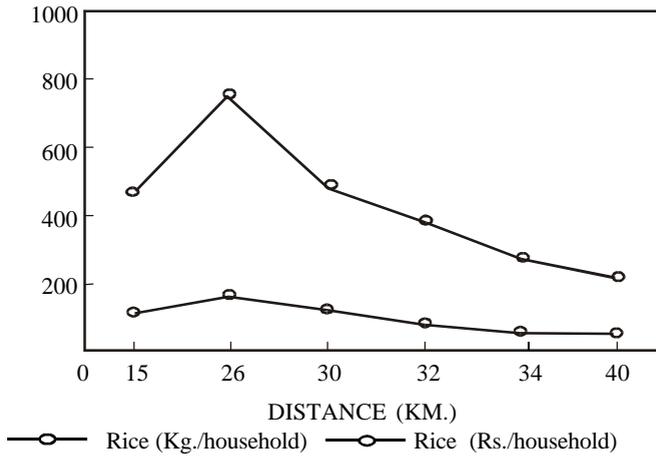
NUMBER OF DEMANDS
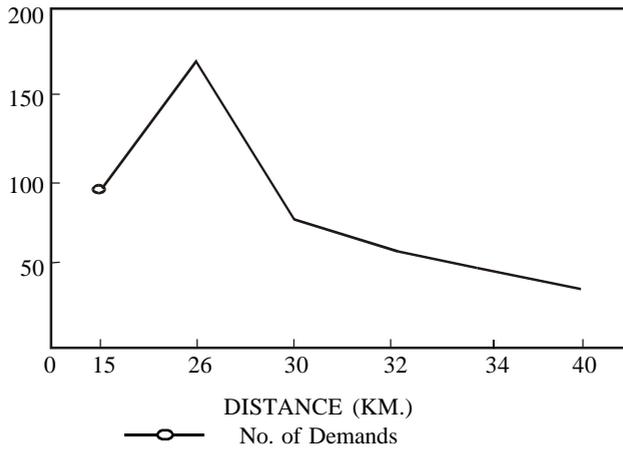
PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE BENEFITTED
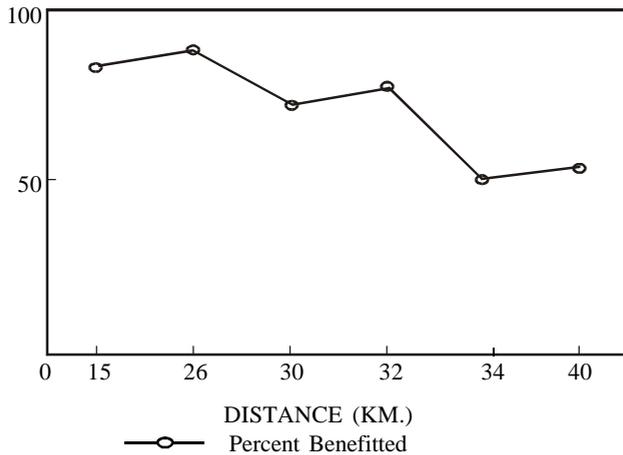
(c)   *Income analysis*: Table 3 also gives the summarised information of the survey in the selected villages. The income of Mundaje was and still is the highest among the selected villages. The villages Nittade, Sulkeri and Puttila showed overall deficit per family. The per capita income in these villages are also lower than that of Mundaje, Hathyadka and Marody.

The distribution of aid was mainly to increase the agricultural income of the selected families by providing seedlings; land development and irrigation activities (mainly 'well construction'). The trust distributed rice and provided the opportunity cost of labour so that the farmers were induced to work in their own fields for future increase of income. The distribution of rice in kg and the number of demands met is given in Table 4.

(d)   *Asset formation:* In general, these farmers are having very few assets. Some have land of about 1-2 acres. About 28% of the households have encroached land. 32% of the families have radio sets. Due to the activities of the trust the percentage of people having wells is 66.37% (Table 5). Except the house and some land there were hardly any other forms of assets in the sample households.

However, due to the stress given by the project on planned plantation programme, majority of the households are having some plants in either on their land or in the encroached land (Table 5). The trust is trying to legalise some of the encroached land to the owners. The benefits of having these tress and plants may be realised after a gestation period of 4-5 years. For example, a family with 50 cashewnut plants can have an additional annual income of up to Rs. 5,000 after 5 years.

TABLE 4

Distribution of Rice and number of demands met by SKDRDP in the study area

Village	Distance from Dharmasthala	No. of households	Rice (kg.)	Amount (Rs.)	Number of demands met (No.)
Mundaje	15 km	23	2512 (109.20)	10525 (457.60)	93 (4.04)
Hathyadka	25 km	25	4020 (160.80)	18673 (746.92)	170 (6.80)
Nittade	30 km	18	2099 (116.61)	8608 (478.20)	76 (4.20)
Puttila	32 km	18	1370 (76.10)	6754 (375.20)	57 (3.16)
Sulkeri	34 km	14	693 (49.50)	3760 (268.50)	46 (3.28)
Marodi	40 km	15	725 (48.30)	3171 (211.40)	35 (2.30)

* Figure in brackets are averages per household.

TABLE 5

Asset holding of the sample households

Name of village	No. of Households	SC/ST	Encroa- ched Land	Assets					No. of Plants				
				Radio	Well	Cow	Chicken	FYM	Coconut	Arecanut	Cashewnut	Banana
Hathyadka	25	4	5	13	18	10	4	12	543	1248	1953	598
Marodi	15	5	1	4	4	9	3	8	300	110	138	92
Mundaje	23	2	8	7	19	71	6	13	479	564	1329	250
Nittade	18	1	4	7	14	6	3	16	446	86	990	150
Puttila	18	-	11	2	9	12	1	7	256	1031	390	160
Sulkeri	14	4	3	4	7	9	2	4	374	328	227	123
Total	113	16	32	37	71	117	19	60	2398	3367	5027	1373

(e) Socio-cultural awareness: In addition to find out the economic benefits the study tried to assess the social-cultural-political awareness of the sample households. Though the awareness regarding the government and bank schemes are increasing, the success is far from satisfactory. The savings habit of these people are very low, only 16.8% of the people have some sort of savings. Majority of the households in all villages are aware and are happy with the project. However, about 50% of the beneficiary families in Sulkeri and Marody believe that the project has definitely helped them. These figures are relatively quite low compared to the other four sample villages (ranging from 72% to 88%).

The science and technological awareness is quite low and the sevanirathas and the project in general should take this aspect into consideration for future benefit of the region. The information on better agricultural production technologies; health and sanitation; smokeless ovens (chulas) must be taken to the people along with propagation of saving habits; stopping of bad practices like drinking/gambling (which are prevalent in this region).

(f) Role of Leadership: A separate questionnaire was administered to the sevanirathas (field investigators) with the intention of finding out (according to their views) what are the important factors which contributed to the success of such schemes. The assistants were asked to rank the eight factors as given in Table 6. The ranking shows that leadership, clear objective and methodology of the project; image of the temple and dedication/sincerity of the sevanirathas are responsible (in the order mentioned) for the success of the project.

TABLE 6

Ranking of the important factors

Sl. No.	Factors	Rank
1.	Leadership of Shri Heggade	1.24
2.	Objectives and methodology of the SKDRDP	2.76
3.	Image and reputation of Dharmasthala	3.22
4.	Sincerity and dedication of the Sevanirathas	4.38
5.	Skill, technical knowledge and guidance of project officers	5.08
6.	Hardwork of the beneficiaries	5.41
7.	Financial aid provided	5.45
8.	Help from the Government agencies	7.68

Concluding Remarks :

(A)   Criteria issue: Is it a success or failure?

We have in the preceding sections discussed the findings of our study in SKDRDP area. To assess any development programme in the dichotomous classification of success or failure may not be possible.

What project should be considered successful? Often answer to this question is beset with a number of difficulties. It is necessary to specify clearly the criteria of success or failure before declaring any project a success or a failure.

Such criteria may be defined in two broad classes - one would be basic (and absolute) and the other relative. There must be some minimum requirements (basic minimum) that have to be fulfilled before any project can be classified into 'successful' category. The other criteria may be related to declared objectives of the project - here one can define the degree of relative fulfilment of different specified objectives of the project.

Basic criteria could be related to basic requirements of development. Thus any project of development must be concerned with economic growth and distributive justice. The project under study fulfill this basic criteria.

The project was meant to provide basic economic/social needs of the poorer section of the population. This basic objective of the local development has been taken care of in this project and therefore the efforts can be declared as successful.

Coming to the declared objectives of the project one can list the following:

(i)   meeting the primary requirements.
(ii)   making agriculture and related activities more scientific.
(iii)   giving encouragement to healthy and better living.

If we take the above three objectives in the same order as above, we find that the objective (i) have been fulfilled to a higher degree for those villages which are nearer to Dharmasthala. Many poor and distant areas did not receive the same level of aid as those which are nearly placed and relatively better placed economically. Thus the aid programme did not effectively correct relative differentials in economic parameters though all villages were helped in meeting basic requirement but not in proportion to the degree of the need. This finding suggests a relative degree of non-achievement of the original objective (i). Similarly it is found from our analysis of data that scientific awareness has been achieved, still more is possible and desirable. So in this case success has been at best partial. Efforts regarding better living, health and nutrition etc. also have been successful upto a point and here again success rate in remote areas and relatively illiterate sections have been much less. It is presumed that the degree of effort for

fulfilment of these objectives in such areas should have been relatively much higher but this higher degree of efforts (in proportion to the requirement) were not forthcoming.

However, taking an overall view the project can be generally considered as successful.

(B)   Replicability Aspects:

In a way one can consider 'replicability' question as a criterion issue. We have made one subtle distinction in this regard. Criteria of success/failure of a project may or may not be sufficient to ensure success/failure of a programme consisting of large number of such projects. Success/failure of a programme will largely depend on the replicability of the project. Thus replicability question is important when we want to apply the experience of one project in a specific situation in a general way over a larger area covering different situation and time periods.

A project process and resultant effects will be non-replicable in case of the following:-

(1)   If the project idea/methodology is based on special characteristics of the area and such characteristics/environment are not generally found elsewhere, then the project may not be easy to replicate.

(2)   If the project success is dependent largely on the specific characteristics of the project team and if those special team characteristics are not normally transferable through training and orientation.

(3)   If attitude of the community which are specially favourable and not normally found elsewhere and if generation of such favourable attitude is not possible even with public contact, awareness and other programmes. In a way (3) is a sub set of (1) above.

(4)   If the degree of resource use, effort and supervision bestowed to a pilot project cannot be multiplied when the successful pilot projects are multiplied in many locations and if the success is critically dependent on those inputs of resources and efforts.

(5)   If the project success, input availability, team spirit and involvement and community's support are all dependent on the charismatic leadership of the project leader and if replication of such leadership qualities is difficult in practice.

It may be noted that all five conditions detailed above are related to each other. For example, area specificity of most projects may not be considered a constraint to the replicability in a large country like India, where most areas are not unique and similar areas are to be found elsewhere in the country. As regards

Dharmasthala project, it is quite clear that area characteristics are nothing special, similar situations are obtainable elsewhere in the country and in all such places, the experiences of this project will be made.

The characteristics of the community or the recipients are also not very special. Age/income/educational profiles are of a nature that are normally found in any relatively poor sections of out village community. So on these considerations also the replicability criterion is satisfied.

Regarding team composition, it is found that in view of the charismatic leadership available, team members though not very competent professionally are emotionally involved and are very loyal to the organisation. There is also some religious bond helping formation of a well knit team. Such emotional involvement and bond may not be replicable. However, professionalisation of the project team through appropriate training and orientation may create professional devotion to cause which can be an effective substitute to emotional attachment. So replicability is not seriously affected due to this.

Efforts required, degree of supervision and monitoring needed are found to be quite significant in this project but at the moment the project work is not organised on efficient scientific lines and therefore direct supervision and monitoring is needed. Such degree of effort in many project sites may not be replicable. However, organising the project management on sound lines and managing effective feedback and monitoring system may reduce the need of such direct supervision and monitoring. Under such conditions this aspect can be taken care of and project ideas will be replicable.

The last aspect that remains, is the charismatic leadership of Shri Heggade. Will the entire experiment collapse if the leadership of Shri Heggade is removed? As things stand now this question is difficult to answer, in fact there are many points to suggest that the success of the project is singularly dependent on his charismatic leadership.

The over-dependence on leadership makes the scheme apparently non-replicable. However, this is the basic question. We must grapple with this problem in our search for a viable, replicable model for rural development specifically concerned with poverty removal of the poorest section of the rural population.

It is a debatable question whether results of charismatic leadership are replicable through efficient professional management and good effective (not necessarily charismatic) leadership. Such leadership qualities are reproducible through training and orientation of project leaders having right attitudes and background.

Taking all these aspects into consideration it is our view that though it may be difficult to replace the leadership of Shri Heggade, it may be possible to replicate

the project elsewhere. The following steps must be taken to ensure the replicability of the success of the project :-

(i)   Proper understanding of the project area and beneficiary :- a good survey before launching the project may be necessary.
(ii) Adequate selection, training and orientation of the project team have to be launched. Such training and orientation must emphasise field level experience based training and orientation.
(iii) Proper design of organizational structure, information and monitoring system.
(iv) Appropriate training of project leaders through exposure to field level experience and linking professional growth with leadership effectiveness. These may help in bridging the gap of efficient professional leadership and charisma.

In the last section we shall summarise various lessons that can be learnt through our evaluative study of SKDRDP project for initiating similar projects elsewhere.

(C)   Summary and Conclusions:

The various issues raised in this evaluative study are summarised below:

(a)   The project considers family as unit and the schemes are designed for each family separately. The plan period of five years is sufficient to take into consideration the all-round socio-economic development of the poorest of the community.
(b)   The presence of a paid employee (sevaniratha) who is available at the village all the time for local level monitoring and liaison between the family and the project helped in creating confidence and faith amongst the rural poor people.
(c)   The project is not money based. It helps those people who has the ability and will to work in his own field. The compensation is given in terms of aid (usually rice) to substitute his opportunity cost.

The average aid per household is Rs. 445 only as compared to Rs. 4000 or more by similar poverty alleviation schemes by the Government and the banking system (based on subsidy). Many a times imparting proper information at the right time and provision of resources are more helpful than providing the volume of money required for the scheme.
(d)   The project attempts to assess the actual need of the family through discussions. It also tries to inculcate good habits and change the bad habits of the local community. The project aims to make the beneficiary self-reliant over a period of five years.
(e)   The acceptance of the project and local participation was whole-hearted due to the religious factor and the great tradition of the temple of Dharmasthala.

(f) The charismatic leadership of Shri Heggade and a clear-cut objective and methodology of the project was responsible for the success of the project.

(g) The sincerity and dedication of the project workers along with an effective control and monitoring system helped the project to achieve a reasonable rate of success towards the goal of rural development of Belthangady taluka. The effective documentation and monitoring system helped the project substantially.

(h) Training and orientation programmes conducted by the trust was able to generate a good work-culture and enough enthusiasm among the project workers so as to take up the challenge of poverty eradication in the region under consideration. The project team though not competent professionally at the beginning has turned out to be emotionally involved with the success of the project. The selection of such sincere and dedicated workers was important for the purpose of the project.

(i) There was a definite attempt to integrate the government programmes and bank schemes with the project. The govt./bank schemes and the project are complimentary to each other.

(j) The project emphasises the role of agriculture and allied activities in the process of rural development. The low per capita income in the region along with the only sector of employment (i.e. agriculture) may lead to large family size for larger incomes. To combat the issue of increasing family size it is necessary to increase the per head income of these poor people by enhancing the possibility of more income from the non-farm sector in the long run.

(k) The increasing number of plantations of cashewnut, arecanut, coconut, rubber etc. due to the free distribution of saplings by the project may bring in better income opportunities in the future for these poor families.

(l) The periodic organisation of 'Krishimelas' (agricultural fares), other religious cultural programmes and mass meetings have generated some enthusiasm amongst the rural poor families. In addition, the arrangement of pension for the old age, disabled and widows; getting land records and provision of information or agriculture, animal husbandry, health, sanitation etc. have definitely succeeded in increasing the peoples awareness and motivated them towards a better living.

(m) The degree of success though laudable could have been better if the landless poor peasants/agricultural labourers were taken into consideration and specific schemes were developed for their benefit. Hopefully, the next phase of the programme will target something towards this objective.

(n) The awareness on health/sanitation; government programmes and science and technology issues should be given priority in the next phase to achieve a self-sustainable development of the region.

(o)   The degree of aid should be increased in the remote rural areas as there exist some amount of distance bias at the present allocations.

(p)   The task of rural development and poverty eradication should take into consideration the issue of infrastructure; provision of raw materials at the right time and creating appropriate maintenance facilities; marketing arrangement of the final products; and then arrange the required finance for it. However, the most important part is to impart knowledge amongst those poor people and generate some sort of confidence amongst them so as to make the goal of self-reliance and rural development a reality.

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**Development Informatics
(Theory and Practice)**
- Sanjoy Das Gupta*

Introduction

This paper is based on the author's field experiences, gained during the process of evolving and implementing computer-based information systems in two developing countries. Also, through the Asia Pacific Development Informatics Network's (APDIN) workshops, case studies and research efforts, considerable insights are available into the major problems being faced by developing countries in evolving and implementing development informatics.

Our attempt in this paper therefore would be to try and profile some critical factors that have impeded information technology from impacting on the development scenario.

The approach is eclectic and therefore does not attempt any total 'understanding' or 'solution'. However, it is our hope that the analysis made reduces some of the ebullient optimism that is attached to the theory that computerization can resolve problems being faced in the planning and implementation of development programmes.

Structural Constraints to Informatics: Grassroots Administration

In most of the Commonwealth countries (that is, former British colonies), the system of administration evolved had as its basic unit the district administration. Almost all these countries had an administrative apparatus where the government agent, district collector or district officer was the supreme representative of government expected to head and implement the policies of the colonial government over the populace resident in the district. Thus, for example, in India, the colonial government was split into presidencies, for example, the Bombay Presidency, the Calcutta Presidency, the Madras Presidency, and each of these presidencies organized administrative units called districts which was headed by a District Officer who oversaw the functioning of every department of the government in that particular territorial unit. In India, on an average, a district comprises of an area of 7,000 km^2 with a population of 2 million living in about 1,500-2,000 villages. It is extremely important to note here that the role expected to be played by the head

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of the district was one of a controlling authority who laid down the law, collected taxes and maintained law and order. In other words, one could postulate that the district administration personified a control psychology and development measures were seen as incidental activities.

In a slightly preemptive mood, we would like to ask what would happen if computers were introduced in a set-up which had been born and continued as an apparatus for control. The question begs the answer. Computers would then be seen as an extension of administrative control and development planning on an automated basis would merely be a bestowal of benefits by a benevolent feudalistic dispensation.

Surprisingly, in the post-colonial era, while the ethos of policies has changed in almost every ex-colonial country, the administrative structures of local government have never been completely dismantled. The attempts have always been to re-define the role of the district administration and orient it towards development planning (as against its previous image of imperial control of a territorial unit inhabited by large masses of people). Also, attempts have been made to create democratic structures like provincial governments and locally elected councils which are expected to co-exist alongside the district administration and possibly interact with it in taking development decisions. These development decisions range across selection of educational facilities, or building of roads, or organizing of training programmes, or implementing anti-poverty programmes aimed at households living below the poverty line.

Objectives of Development Planning: Constraints for Informatics Culture

In many of these countries, one could see the emphasis of planning increasingly shift towards poverty alleviation programmes. If one was to try and define the content of development planning, it would span across three areas:

(a)   Anti-poverty programmes which are directed towards providing assets to households living below a particular level of income and expecting that, through the productive utilization of these assets, these households would generate additional incomes and thereby get above the existing conditions of total poverty.

(b)   Area development programmes which would attempt to provide assets like schools, nurseries, youth libraries, link roads, bus stands, soil conservation, irrigation tanks, small dams, vocational training centres etc., to rural communities.

(c)   Employment generation programmes to handle problems of communities facing floods, famines, scarcity, in fact any event by which communities have been dislocated from their natural means of earning an income.

Alongside this, of course, as part of a development planning process, there exist departmental activities like promotion of animal husbandry activities, fisheries, forestry, agriculture, small-scale industry, women and child development programmes, horticulture, sericulture etc.

An administrative apparatus which has been designed as an extended unit of political and physical control of a territorial unit has been endowed the task of development planning on the lines indicated above.

We would like to assert that a gap between theory and practice is emerging in the field of district level development planning. In a tragic sort of way, this is because the same structures which had been endowed with a new role of development administration are being provided computers and software applications on an increasingly accelerated basis and are now expected (having failed to initiate progress through development plans) to bring about a striking change in the efficiency and implementation of development programmes. Researchers can highlight the problems in individual countries, we will only try and propose certain abstract premises to explain the current phenomenon.

Repeated surveys dealing with the reasons for below average achievements of development programmes, or sometimes their complete failure, have thrown up a host of reasons like the lack of implementation strategy, including lack of monitoring or inability to correct field level problems as and when they occur. In other words, the analysis of the problems that development plans have faced have become post-mortem efforts which in no way have been able to salvage specific and good efforts from failure.

Development Culture vs. IT Culture

As we have noted earlier, the administrative structures which implement development policy today were born in a colonial situation, hence, there is a fundamental inevitability of these structures to overcome an administrative culture of control. This control has manifested itself in terms of the attitude that administration officials take towards development issues. Whether it is in terms of selection of beneficiaries, or selection of assets for villages, or planning for scarcity works, an inherent delay factor has crept in [The delay in itself may not contribute completely to a programme's failure]. No clerk in an administrative set-up is worth his salt if he does not make a villager run from pillar to post to get a ration card, or a bank loan, or any other facility. It is part of the control psychology of administration not to accept urgency as a necessary concomitant for public service. When this individual attitude of an individual unit of an administrative structure is accepted as typical, then the combination of these units into an administrative totality enhances delay into an acceptable, almost inevitable, normative behaviour. In other words, development goals, schools, roads, facilities, anything that

contributes to a better quality of life, is an intangible distant event which may or may not happen. Delay has, of course, also been perfected into a most ideal instrument for corruption, and repeatedly in developmental processes the message to large sections of the populace has been that your case or your file moves faster if you are willing to bribe the gentleman across the table. However, since corruption is not isolated at only the lower levels or only in developing countries, we would prefer to focus on the historical basis of administrative structures which breeds a culture of delay in development processes as the primary factor for the current scenario.

Another casualty in this process of delay is the linkage factor. We know how important linkage is when we are stepping out of one train and have to catch the next one within 15 minutes. If the train we are travelling in is delayed, we have missed the opportunity of a link-up. This may seem a trivial example, but in a sense almost a similar occurrence takes place in development planning when one event, by getting delayed, fails to provide the expected linkage with another programme. For example, when milch animals are given to individual households by one department of development administration, then it is expected that another wing of the same administration would have created the milch society which would organize the collection of milk and a third wing which would organize the chilling plant and transportation facilities. Without achieving these linkages, the provision of milch animals to individual households is a useless, if not a regressive, development activity since the asset provided did not become a productive one.

All that we have outlined above is the very antithesis therefore of what one can articulate as a computer culture. It is therefore not improbable to understand the enthusiasm of planners and administrators to view computerization as an answer to all the problems associated with development planning. It will be my attempt from here onwards to argue that computers and informatics by themselves hold no answer to the developmental problems unless this drive towards computerization is attempted as part of a basic understanding of the milieu in which it is being located. I would like to therefore state here that computerization demands a spatial and temporal change in the grasp and understanding of development phenomena. A distinctive approach has to be adopted in handling IT in the context of rural development.

The problem in introducing computer-based information systems in rural development is to try and avoid an approach of typical transaction processing systems like ticketing or billing. Very often, professionals face a problem in understanding why a system developed and working perfectly for transactions being made in a corporate environment does not work in a government system. Possibly the answer lies in the fact that rural development has many processes which do not get easily captured in a typical system design since it involves much

more than the handling of customers in a bank or an airline office. This theme can be developed at considerable length, but here we would like to restrict ourselves to indicating that in the context of rural development the individual views of communities and individuals themselves are involved in the kind of choices available for undertaking development activities. At the same time, there is a complex and dynamic set of forces at play which keep interacting and interchanging among themselves. It is therefore not possible to capture the entire scenario of dynamic change and transactional activity that takes place in the rural dimension within a structured system design.

Issues of Political Economy

The question to be asked is in the given development situations that exist in developing societies in theoretical terms what is expected to be achieved by introducing computer-based information system (CBIS). Experience has shown that inevitably an approach has been to try and take up two kinds of activities. Firstly, an attempt to automate existing manual systems and secondly to establish large data bases of information on various developmental activities.

To expect a system which has been moulded in a particular space-time to suddenly become more efficient and accurate through a CBIS is an optimistic approach. What we are trying to suggest is that it is seldom understood that IT points towards a total systemic change. This is not so much because the analysis of a system is a difficult task but suggesting changes in the precarious balance of forces and counter-forces in a development milieu, is a complex affair and requires complete support from the top.

Built into the development systems are issues of patronage and political power. As long as computers tread the trodden path of the previous system, these factors will not come into conflict. However, if an analysis on CBIS begins to propose alternative strategies for implementation of development programmes then not only it leads to conflict, but inevitably but the CBIS becomes the casualty since it will be rendered non-functional.

The areas we are conversant with are replete with examples of such casualties. Also, it is almost impossible to either propose an alternative administrative system (since administrative systems are not created overnight) nor can one logically believe that a neutral system is possible in the current developmental systems of society. Therefore, elite groups which control policy planning power groups that hand out patronage through development programmes will always act as a barrier to any CBIS.

For example, in many of the developing countries, it is a sacrilege to even suggest that the collector system of administration should be abolished since the basis for its creation no longer exists. In part, this is because no systematic attempt

has been made to propose an alternative system which projects the same security and neutrality that a collector based administrative system has been able to gain over the last hundred years.

One has to remember that this system carries with it a huge paraphernalia of clerks, peons and sub-area administrative groups which will also then face extinction. This large group of administrative officials have developed overtime the mandate to monitor, implement and plan development activities under their territorial jurisdiction. Having learnt to handle their task in a structure which is absolutely impervious to any change, it would be a great fallacy to expect computers to make any substantive impact on development issues however excellent the hardware, software and system analysis provided.

If I want to go back in time, one could possibly try and recapture the period when the colonial systems was being established for the first time. Today, administrative cultures were evolved in part from an existing administrative system and the needs and constraints of colonial administration. If one was to suggest that for a moment, no administrative structure exist, and therefore there is a need to evolve a new administrative order which would harness technological factors and make development of villages agriculture community assets and welfare of the poorest farmers as a main concern then how should one go about it?

Some Administrative Possibilities

In the late 19th century, in most of the countries which had a colonial background, two extremely important departments were created by government to handle information needs. These were the Statistical Department and the Survey Department. The Statistical Department was organized to maintain all the demographic data of every village through a process of a census undertaken after a ten years' interval. The census till today remains the greatest information exercise that is carried out in these developing countries. There is a whole cadre of statisticians who are expected to design formats, capture data and analyze them into a variety of projections. It is this data provided by the Statistical Department which has become the basis for all the departmental plans and policies of a government.

Once again, we can note that an institution established a hundred years ago continues not only to flourish but to play its key role in governmental processes. In most countries the Statistical Department till date collects and processes data manually. It is an amazing situation where a department collects data through a computer-based information system (CBIS) and yet for its planning activities uses the data provided by the Statistical Department. The Department of Statistics as it exists today has its regional offices and representatives right down to the districts (the district statistical officer) who are expected to maintain information on every aspect which pertains to planning.

Why is it that in developing policies for introducing information systems, the Statistical Department which is all-pervasive and so very critical to the planning process, was never given a lead role or declared obsolete and no longer required to play its major role. We would like to propose that the entire structure and content of the Statistical Departments which exist in these developing countries now need to be overhauled and recast to become a part of the total information plans of government. The follow-up of such a process would probably imply that instead of a ten-year census a lot of the information can be kept on-line. The ritual of holding a census along with its vast multitude of formats and handbooks and departmental paraphernalia needs to be abolished not because they have not played a vital role but because their usefulness is over.

In a similar fashion, these developing countries had also established in the colonial days a Survey Department. It is indeed surprising to note that the maps developed in the 1910s or 1920s are still being used as a basis for a large number of planning projects. The Survey Department itself lives in a cocoon of the past and has yet to grasp the potential of GIS or remote sensing.

Interestingly, in many of these countries, a Department for Remote Sensing has been established and the Department of Aerial Photography has also been established. The potential that these departments have for helping the Survey Department to create modern cartographic products has not been tapped.

One might go even further and suggest that why don't these two Departments of Survey and Statistics be merged so that geographic information systems get established as part of the government process to accelerate the advent of information technology in public administration. Such a merger once again implies a major policy paper which could be better handled by an agency which is able to objectively study the needs of the country since, left to themselves, the interdepartmental clash for leverage and control would distort any attempt to integrate these time-worn departments into a useful instrument for development planning.

We visualize a time when information about a district, both socio-economic and cartographic, would become easily available on a diskette or down-loaded to grassroot systems for localized decision making.

Role for Academic Institutions

As we have pointed out earlier, academic institutions in the developing countries have been kept on the periphery of large computerization programmes initiated by government. Hence, the chance of tapping considerable expertise which exists in these institutions have been missed. If the government policies could clearly articulate their approach and the requirements that they are likely to have in terms of manpower and software expertise, in fact even for hardware, it is possible for academic institutions to play a major supporting role for the drive towards

computerization. This would be specially so if a new discipline -- development informatics -- could be introduced in these institutions which would in many ways be tailored to the developmental priorities that government anyway wants to impact upon through its computerization drive.

The academic institutions could also play a major role in bringing information into public domain. A variety of data on development programmes could be systematically fed into databases kept in academic institutions to be used by researchers and policy planners for their own analysis. It would also create an opportunity for public awareness of the approaches that the government is adopting towards development planning.

The Macro-perspective of the Micro-approach

Let me digress a bit here. Most of the developed countries have seen a great profusion of voluntary agencies which have engaged themselves in a variety of rural development activities. Most of their activities are in many ways quite similar to activities undertaken by government agencies. For example, provision of drinking water, building of community assets, provision of vocational training, organization of women's group, etc. In fact, for each of the activities that our voluntary agency has selected, there is a parallel government department which is supposed to be doing that work. The basic question is why have these agencies opted out of government structure completely. There will be different answers for these questions but from the point of view of our main focus, the issue becomes that can the message being given by the voluntary agencies efforts be answered by the introduction of a few or a lot of computers into the governmental departments.

We would like to propose that there is a lot to learn from the micro-efforts of voluntary agencies in meeting development needs in particular areas and the failure of the macro-approach by the government agencies. There is no way that the CBIS introduced in the present juncture of government systems will begin making departments to function with the same vibrance of voluntary agencies.

Emergence of an Elite Department

Inevitably, in almost every country, we have found that along with the debate on computer policy, an elite department has emerged which is expected to control computer policy. This particular department in a majority of cases is attached directly to the Prime Minister's or President's Personnel Department. This department controls the centralized purchase of all hardware, it decides on the kind of computerization policy that will be evolved, it decides on what kind of data requires to be collected, who will collect the data and how it will be transmitted. In other words, this kind of elite department's primary objective is to continue the status-quo of the authority structure that exist in society and its secondary role is to promote information technology. All international funding has to be canalised

through this particular department so that it can vet the proposals and select the experts and the academic institutions in which projects will be based and developed. This department has the legitimacy of the state to curb any alternative strategy towards information technology dispersal which may affect the status-quo. The outcome of this policy control is presented below.

Acquisition of Hardware: Consequences and Alternatives

Undoubtedly the main initiative for large computerization programmes in the developing countries is coming from government sources. While in some countries the strategies are worked out by individual departments of the government, in some others the policy initiative is coming from a National Computer Board which has been created to oversee computerization programmes of the government as a whole.

If one examines the acquisition of hardware for the computerization programmes of the government, some of the major highlights appear to be :

(a) Acquisition of large mainframes by individual departments who expect to create the databases by receiving data from the grassroots.

(b) Very little design effort has gone in towards maintaining compatibility between interdepartmental systems.

(c) A central EDP unit has been created to ensure that a professional cadre will handle the data and information needs of the department.

(d) Communications in the nature of LAN or WAN has begun to come more as an afterthought than a part of the total plan.

(e) Expertise available in the academic institutions of the concerned countries has been rarely utilized in the selection of hardware.

(f) In many ways large multinational vendors have apparently worked out strategies to "capture" a particular market and in the process have adversely affected the chances of vendor freedom or alternative acquisition of hardware.

(g) Finally, the maintenance of these systems continues to be a part of the task of the vendor which essentially means that there is minimum transmission of technical expertise from the manufacturer to the user organizations.

An analysis of the above would suggest that hardware acquisition has many times preceded any kind of a system design or a system requirement analysis. In other words, the hardware has come first and is expected to be somehow utilized by the concerned departments with the result that inevitably, in most of the countries, hardware continues to lie under-utilized and much of this hardware has anyway become obsolete. We would not like to draw any similarities to computer hardware

acquisition with military purchases where weapon systems are rapidly purchased in part due to the hard-sell techniques of the vendors and in part due to the ignorance or other factors of the user. However, the scope for a comparison does exist.

There seems to be a great amount of resistance to re-strategize hardware acquisition in which smaller systems would be bought which suit the needs of units of a department rather than its total needs. Also, smaller systems being less complicated, there is a greater possibility of handling their maintenance locally. Linked to this is the fact that there is a far greater degree of choice available at the lower end of computers which allows for a certain degree of open competition amongst vendors. Finally, smaller systems would have to prove their worth before further systems are acquired.

Acquisition of Software : Consequences and Alternatives

Turning to Software, we find that the following aspects can be highlighted :

(a)   In a majority of the cases, the software packages have come as a part of the hardware deal and to that extent are designed by an external agency. This software has seldom come into any large-scale usage.

(b)   Very little indigenous software development has been initiated to handle the application requirements in the individual countries. In part, this is due to the fact that no clear policy exists on the need for working out software needs of individual departments in any systematic manner.

(c)   It has become deceptively easy to acquire cheap software packages for the lower-end systems like Dbase and Lotus. However, even if these packages do get used, the need to install individual packages for a large number of systems implies a very large cost.

In view of the above, one can say that software planning has been a low priority area even when policy commitment has been made towards large computerization programmes.

One could then ask how does one go about promoting indigenous software development, not as a part of an export promotion drive, but in terms of meeting the needs of national and regional computerization programmes. In fact, some attempts have been made to create large organizations which hire software developers to develop application packages for individual departments. Since these efforts have not been linked to any academic institutions and, further, since the developers have never worked in the user environment, the impact of these efforts has been somewhat limited.

One would like to argue that there is an urgent need to try and systematically establish indigenous software development in the developing countries where large-scale computerization programmes have been initiated by linking this activity

to the academic institutions and providing a variety of tools, techniques and training programmes to raise the skills of the developers.

Development Informatics: Creating Support Systems for IT to Succeed

The introduction of computers in government has been undertaken by both in-house and external agencies. If one were to analyse the pattern of the training provided, inevitably, three or four major aspects get highlighted.

Firstly, the training period is seldom beyond a week, sometimes fifteen days. Before looking into the contents of the training itself, the question one could ask is whether this time period is sufficient. Officials attending the course are expected to learn about PCs, software, hardware and applications in a short span of time. How much of this learning will they be able to retain? If one were to reflect that the same officials have, during their own educational careers, been trained in disciplines like economics, mathematics, sociology or history for over a period of three to five years, then it is important to reflect as to whether a short period of training is adequate now to equip them not only with the knowledge of computers, but also its potential in changing the management culture of their organizations.

Turning to the content of training courses, one finds that the short course is almost entirely focused on understanding hardware and an appreciation of fourth GL packages like Dbase, Lotus, etc. Once again, the question asked is about the adequacy of the content to provide the learners to utilize their learning as an input for impacting on their own work area. We would suggest that neither the time frame nor the content of the training courses has any element of adequacy to meet the requirement of intelligent introduction of informatics to public administration.

In effect then, the question posed is what is an ideal period of training to be provided as part of an overall strategy to introduce information systems? Linked to this is the issue which is a focal point of this part of the paper. Should not this effort have been made much earlier during their undergraduate and post-graduate days at the time when they were developing a grasp of the social and political circumstances of their societies? This should not be interpreted as a suggestion that everybody should be taught computers. In fact, the attempt is already there in various educational institutions to provide computer courses, but such efforts are seen more in the nature of a mechanical appreciation of bits and bytes rather than an attempt to relate it to immediate societal problems as being projected, explained and taught by existing major disciplines.

Thirdly, to organize a training programme on computers when the objective is actually development informatics, gives an unnecessary precedence and importance to the acquisition of learning about hardware and software. If one were to give an example of a motorist learning to drive, the knowledge of handling the gears and knowing the traffic rules is, over a period of time, an unobtrusive learning which is internalized by the driver in his quest for mobility to meet the

demands of the job. In other words, I am arguing that computer learning, though essential, has to be transmitted as part of a well-designed learning process to achieve certain objectives.

We would therefore like to propose that there is a need for a new discipline to be taught in universities and administrative institutions. This discipline could possibly be called 'Development Informatics'.

As a slight digression, one would like to cite the case of sociology being born at a time when the industrial revolution had reached its peak and there was a tremendous socio-cultural upheaval taking place requiring new concepts, new categories and analysis which no other previous discipline was adequately equipped to handle within itself. Therefore, when August Comte coined the word 'sociology', it began to attract various adherents who realized that indeed there was a need to develop societal analysis into a social science. In a strikingly different way, during World War II, there developed a need to utilize mathematical models to suit the purposes of finalizing details of depth charges to blow up underwater submarines. Subsequently, this particular approach to modelling using mathematical techniques led to the emergence of a new subject called 'operations research'. Today, it is considered an important discipline in educational institutions. One would like to then think that faced with as yet the untapped potential of the information revolution that is taking place in our societies, there is a need to create a new discipline called 'development informatics' which would try to integrate a knowledge of computers with a knowledge of society, economics and mathematical modelling. In a sense, a platform on which an inter-disciplinary effort can be made is now required to be established.

I should be forgiven for sounding somewhat clumsy because one is treading into unknown areas in which articulating ideas is a somewhat difficult exercise. I apprehend that there would be any number of people who could logically question the need for a new discipline. After all, aren't the current social science subjects adequate to equip persons with an understanding of societal phenomena in specific areas? Further, the dividing line between an arts subject and a science subject is so evident in our educational curriculum that it would be difficult to try and relate computer knowledge, which is essentially a science, with development planning which is often seen to fall in the realm of arts.

Anticipating such apprehensions, one would like to extend a two-fold argument. In the first place, our societies are moving into forms and shapes which are leaving the social analysts panting behind. The pace of technological change is being so vibrantly felt right across the globe that there is a need to internalize it as part of a discipline. Take, for example, economics which has got splintered into so many sub-categories -- macro-economics, micro-economics, econometric modelling, etc. These are all demands being made of a basic discipline to meet a changing societal requirement.

Linked to an amazing intrusion of technology into the lives of individuals and societies is the glaring fact of tremendous inequalities that exist between the developed and the under-developed countries. In the under-developed countries themselves, there is a tremendous dichotomy between the urban rich and the rural poor, in other words, the islands of prosperity which exist in the big metropolises of developed countries, and the vast mass of rural communities which face problems of illiteracy, housing, clothing, employment and impoverishment. If, for years, development strategies and programmes carefully worked out by planning agencies and funded by both national and international organizations have impacted either partially or negatively on the quality of life of such large populations, then there is something which is fundamentally wrong in the processes of development planning. The answers lie in linking research, planning, implementation and monitoring within the aegies of a new approach.

Two terms or concepts that one could propose on the new discipline of development informatics are the 'breakout strategy' and 'dynamic individuality'.

The breakout strategy would essentially be an ability of a community to work out its own effort at prioritizing a host of alternatives available which could accelerate their economic progress in a major way. Chart 1 is an attempt to demonstrate this proposition. If you notice in Figure 1A, a group of leather workers has as its immediate environment a restricted market, localized supply of raw material, limited design ideas, traditional sources of lending and also traditional methods of production. Figure 2A demonstrates the same group's ability to break out where the same squares depicting environment now have a new market, banks providing working capital, a change in traditional skills and production methodology, new designs and alternative sources of supply for raw material. This group had various external factors overseeing the changes introduced. All these changes are the result of information translated into a localized thrust for economic development which leads to a complete breakout by a disadvantaged and poverty-stricken rural community.

Dynamic individuality is a concept which can be seen as a part of this new discipline which permits an individual to grasp the potential of an immediate phenomenon and constantly move to a higher and higher level of economic stability. Contained in this proposition is the argument that when we undertake poverty alleviation programmes there seems to be a mental block on the part of planners to restrict the potential of an individual to a basic economic minimum of subsistence which is also known as the poverty line. Dynamic individuality as a concept of development informatics would suggest that there is no restriction to where an individual can or should go, but instead of making it a rhetorical proposition it is being attempted to suggest that it has a scientific basis and not therefore relegated to fate and chance.

Going back to an anticipation of the apprehensions that such a discipline may evoke, we would like to point out that there is now a surfeit of hardware and software available and ready for application to developmental problems. There are any number of software technologists who are digging deeper and deeper into their own projects, making it more suitable, user-friendly and based on OSI (open systems integration). In other words, while we do need a continuation of these efforts, the investment being made on technological refinement of hardware and software has to somewhere be commensurate with the positive impact that they should make on societal problems and societal issues. In other words, we are suggesting that given the tremendous potential already created by technical experts, it is time to now weave together or, to use a cliche, synergize these efforts for application in the development arena.

Looking at the propositions made above, we could conclude by saying that there is a need for a new discipline called 'development informatics'. This discipline requires a multi-disciplinary approach, the evolution of a training methodology which will not be restricted to imparting knowledge of bits and bytes. The discipline being born at this time and stage of our civilization would be quite a restless and aggressive vanguard addressing itself to a multitude of development problems faced in our societies. It will probably develop a philosophy, may be an ideology, of its own.

Centre for Development Informatics

At present, a variety of institutions, both technical and academic, are engaged in promoting IT in the realm of development but seeing the vast magnitude of the tasks involved it may be time to try and think of setting up a centre which is exclusively dedicated to this task and with a primary focus of helping users in developing countries in policy planning for the introduction of IT as well as promoting the concept of development informatics as a discipline. This kind of a centre can work on the curriculum as well as the training methodologies required to create a multi-disciplinary approach. Further, one can think of the centre providing a well-organized facility in which software packages for development planning are made available for viewing and analysis to users. Possibly a wide range of hardware with a record of the location in which they are being used could also be provided as a part of this facility.

Conclusion

We would like to propose that the information revolution is an all-pervasive phenomenon, which has begun to decisively affect our lives. The problem, one could call it a tragedy, is that its great potential for accelerating development, is taking such a long time. Our present duty lies in strategizing the advent of IT into playing a major role which will not only improve the quality of planning but also set in motion a more egalitarian ethos in development processes.

Cancer of Corruption and the Numbing Millennium

- P. Chakraborty*

Just before his assassination, the great humanist Abraham Lincoln expressed his fear saying:

> *"I see in the near future a crisis approaching, that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for my country …………. an era of corruption in high places will follow and the money-power of the country will endeavour to prolong its reign by working on the prejudices of the people until the wealth is aggravated in a few hands and the Republic is destroyed".*

What Lincoln feared in 1864 about his own country seems to be equally valid for our country in 2000 i.e. even 135 years later (Bandopadhyay, 1994).

Gravity of corruption looms large on India so much that in a survey conducted in 1995, a Hongkong based firm viz. Political and Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd, after a decade-long study of comparative corruption across 11 Asian countries revealed that China, Indonesia and India were the most corrupt countries. Consequences of corruption shook up the Communist Party of China enough to call for a thorough overhaul of the party as well as the govt. machinery. In April, 1995, Wang Baoshan, the then Vice-Mayor of Beijing committed suicide when his corrupt deals were exposed and his arrest seemed imminent. Even though China does not have the institutions to cope with corruption and lack of an independent judiciary as well as a free media are major disadvantages, still fear of humiliation in public and castigation from the C.P.C. i.e. Communist Party of China have been leading corrupt public servants like Wang to resort to suicide. On the other hand, India has a liberal democratic polity and public opinion against corruption is very strong. But experience shows that at times it is so manipulated that even Parliament fails to punish the guilty while the judiciary is only occasionally effective, and in most of the cases, helpless. Individual as well as collective greed and run for profit have overshadowed law, while morality and social good have taken a backseat (Mohanty, 1995).

One year later, another survey was conducted by a Germany based NGO viz. T.I. (Transparency International) involving as many as 41 countries, and India

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was rated as being among the seven most corrupt countries in the world, better only than Philippines, Brazil, Venezuela, Pakistan, China and Indonesia (Noronha, 1996). Recently, according to international statistics, India is reckoned to be among the 10 most corrupt countries of the world (Mitra, 2000). Corruption has virtually affected every part of the globe, rich and poor; every part of the society and every aspect of human life. The Supreme Court of India has described corruption as a dreaded disease like cancer "which, if not detected in time, is sure to malignise the polity of the country leading to disastrous consequences. It is termed as a plague which is not only contagious but, if not controlled, spreads like a fire in a jungle. Corruption is opposed to democracy and social order, being not only anti-people, but aimed and targeted against them too. It affects the economy and destroys cultural heritage. Unless nipped in the bud at the earliest, it is likely to cause turbulence, shaking of the socio-economic political system in an otherwise healthy, wealthy, effective and vibrating society" (Singh, 2000).

The menace of corruption was found to have enormously increased by the First and the Second World War conditions. Corruption, at the initial stages, was considered confined to the bureaucracy which had the opportunities to deal with a variety of State largesse in the form of contracts, licences and grants. Even after the war the opportunities for corruption continued, as large amounts of govt. surplus stores were required to be disposed of by the public servants. In order to consolidate and amend the laws relating to prevention of corruption and matters connected thereto, the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947 was enacted. As the Act failed to serve the objects for which it was made, a new Act viz. The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 was brought to the field with the object of dealing with the circumstances, contingencies and shortcomings which were noticed in the working and implementation of the 1947-Act. The law relating to prevention of corruption was essentially made to deal with the public servants, not as understood in common parlance but specifically defined in the Act.

The term "Corruption" has not been defined in the Act but the various forms of corruption the Act declares as offence and punishable have been described. Recognized forms of corruption under the Act are mainly: (a) taking bribe as a motive or reward, (b) offering bribe, (c) taking gifts or presents (d) dishonest or fraudulent misappropriation of any property, (e) possessing disproportionate wealth or assets, (f) habitual acceptance of any bribe or gift, (g) taking pecuniary advantage by abusing position or without public interest, (h) abetment of any such offence and (i) attempt to commit any such offence. Legal consequences of such offences of corruption are imprisonment for a term not less than six months and fine to an unlimited extent, while in certain cases the minimum term of imprisonment extends to even two years. A convention has been in vogue to impose fine to the tune of the value of disproportionate asset held by a corrupt public servant. In 1994, an Income Tax officer was found to hold disproportionate asset of Rs. 1,57,029.00

and the court of Special Judge while convicting him imposed a fine of Rs.20,000/- only. Later, on appeal, the High Court enhanced the fine-amount to Rs. One lakh i.e. the amount which could not be satisfactorily explained or accounted for by the convict (Singh, 1994).

The offences and punishments prescribed under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 are in addition to other legal consequences provided under other laws in force like Indian Penal Code, Benami Transactions Act, representation of the People Act, Foreign Contributions (Regulation) Act, 1976, Foreign contributions (Acceptance or Retention of Gifts or Presentations) Regulations, 1978, Foreign Exchange Management Act, 99 etc. By virtue of sec. 28 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, nothing contained in the Act shall exempt any public servant from any proceeding which might, apart from the said Act, be instituted against him. Therefore, in addition to being prosecuted for misappropriation of any property under sec. 13 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, a govt. servant may also be prosecuted under sec.409 IPC read with other relevant provisions of law, like, sec. 420 or 477A of I.P.C.

Prohibitions are more severe on govt. servants compared to public servants. More or less similar types of prohibitions have been imposed on the govt. servants under the respective Conduct Rules like AIS (Conduct) Rules, CCS (Conduct) Rules etc. Where the Prevention of Corruption Act and other laws mentioned above seek to punish various types of corrupt practices under the heading of criminal misconduct, the Conduct rules like AIS (Conduct) Rules, CCS (Conduct) Rules etc. read with AIS (CCA) Rules, CCS (CCA) Rules etc. seek to punish various types of corrupt practices under the heading of misconduct which need not be backed by any motive or mens rea or criminal intention. Where the Prevention of Corruption Act and other laws base such acts of public servants on the stain of 'illegality', the Conduct Rules base such acts of govt. servants on the traces of immorality or moral turpitude.

Under various Conduct Rules, (1) no govt. servant should use his position or influence directly or indirectly to secure employment for any member of his family in any company or firm; (2) no Group A officer, except with previous sanction of the Govt., permit his son, daughter or other dependent to accept employment in any company or firm having official dealings with him or the govt.; (3) no govt. servant should, in the discharge of his official duties, deal with any matter or give or sanction any contract to any company or firm or any person, if any member of his family is employed in that company or firm or under that person, or is interested in such matter or contract [vide/Rule 4 of the CCS (Conduct) Rules]; (4) no government servant should except with the previous sanction of the govt. or the prescribed authority, ask for or accept contributions or associate himself with any fund-raising programme (Vide/Rule 12); (5) no government servant should accept,

or permit any member of his family to accept/any gift from anybody or from any foreign firm having official dealings with him or contracting with the Govt., except on occasions like wedding anniversary, funeral or religious function, and to the extent prescribed (vide/Rule 13); or on marriage in form of dowry (vide/Rule 13A); (6) no govt. servant should, except with previous knowledge or sanction of the prescribed authority, acquire or dispose of any immoveable property within India or outside India, by way of lease, mortgage, purchase, sale, gift or otherwise, and should not enter into any transaction in respect of moveable property beyond the prescribed limits either in his own name or in the name of any member of his family, or enter into any transaction with any foreign govt. or foreign organization or concern for such acquisition or disposal of any immoveable property either in his own name or in the name of any member of his family (vide/Rules 18 and 18A).

Provisions in the AIS (conduct) Rules are more or less similar. It has also been clarified by the Hon'ble Supreme Court that similar provision in the Prevention of Corruption Act would not pose a bar to a departmental enquiry against a govt. servant charged with corruption on the ground of his failure to satisfactorily account for his assets (Manekar, 1963). Buying or selling method of cheating the Central Govt. of income tax and other taxes and the State Govt. of stamp duty, registration fees etc, and has become a convenient mode of transferring black money. Charging "pugri" or "premium" or "salami" for renting houses and flats also amounts to corruption, but hardly there is any effective law to tackle the same.

Whether the various laws are effective enough in curbing the menace of corruption can be well understood from the following statistics released by the Central Vigilance Commission. In 1948-1952, the total number of dishonest senior bureaucrats were less than 10 per cent of their total strength. During 1965-68 this figure was still below 20 per cent. In 1995, nearly 60 per cent of them tended to have a simple programme of money-making (Saxena, 1995). During 1985-90, the Commission received more than 20,000 cases of corruption, which has gone up to more than double during 1995-1999, out of which more than 75% pertain to various govt. departments. According to a Union govt. report, the number of cases taken up by the Central Bureau of Investigation against public servants rose from 693 in 1991-92 to 721 in 1993-94 involving 609 senior officers, and in 1998-99 this figure has a staggering rise of more than double. Cases taken up at several courts i.e. charge-sheeted across the country led to prosecution of 305 public servants including 144 senior officers in 1994-95 (Mandal, 1994). Some years back, the one month jail term of a senior bureaucrat in Bihar involved in a corruption-case was increased to six months by the apex court. In another case, a senior police officer and his subordinate colleagues in Haryana were imprisoned for abducting and keeping in illegal custody a businessman having trade association with the Haryana Chief Minister's son-in-law. The Supreme Court had another very unusual case to decide regarding a so-called "illiterate" special magistrate

whose servant used to record crucial dying declarations on his behalf under suspicious circumstances. On hearing that the magistrate had signed at least 40 such declarations, a shocked Mr. Justice Kuldip Singh of the Supreme Court remarked: "We will take care of this magistrate. How can such a thing happen!" (Bhatnagar, 1995). No doubt the number of convictions since 1995-96 is on rise, still compared to the number of complaints lodged or received, it is too meagre to create any substantial impact of legal consequences of corruption in the public mind.

In Mizoram, till today there is hardly any conviction in corruption cases to create any impact at all. In a solitary case, the Special Judge under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947 convicted one Executive Engineer sometime in 1980's. But the conviction was challenged before the Gauhati High Court on the sole ground that the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946, an Act providing for investigation etc, by CBI was not extended to Mizoram which had been an Excluded Area in 1946 under the Government of India Act, 1935. Failure of the Standing Counsel of Mizoram to produce the notification extending the said Act as well as the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947 before the High Court at the time of hearing resulted in quashing of the conviction and the accused was set free. Irony of the situation was that subsequently in a similar case arising out of Nagaland, the Advocate General of Nagaland could produce the notification extending the Acts to all Excluded Areas under section 92 of the Government of India Act, 1935, including Lushai Hills District (later, Mizoram), and the conviction of the Nagaland official was upheld by the High Court. He said the Executive Engineer of Mizoram whose conviction was set aside by the High Court on technical ground could salvage himself out of the possibility of any further appeal before the Supreme Court, and could rise even upto the rank of Chief Engineer. Limitations of our judicial system have been best depicted by Mr. Justice M. Hidayatullah, former Chief Justice and Vice-President of India, by narrating how a black witness answered when he was asked about the sanctity of oath and of significance of evidence given on such oath. The incident was like this:

Judge :   "Rastus, do you know what happens to you if you tell a lie?"
Witness: "I goes to hell and burns forever."
Judge :   "Rastus, what happens to you if you tell the truth?"
Witness: "I lose the case."

Here lies the malady of our judicial system which is based mostly on oral evidences tendered on oath and where a witness normally comes prepared to tell a lie (Hidayatullah).

Corruption has become a part of India's ethos. Perception of honesty and corruption has undergone radical changes during the years. Slow files have been indulging in fast bucks. Files do not move unless inducements are offered. The giver is aware of the low salary packet of govt. employees and the ease with

which they can be tempted. The logic behind is to extract benefits within a reasonable span of time so that the utility of the decision is not lost to the beneficiary. Moreover, India's present society is one where people are judged by what they have rather than what they are. One's status in society depends on the quantity of material goods one possesses, and this leads to a rush for acquiring wealth, regardless of the means involved. Misuse of official car or telephone no longer counts as corrupt practice. The STD facility in an official telephone is supposed to strengthen the management-information system. In a particular case when a junior bureaucrat's STD bill shot up to Rs. 15,000 in a month, she certified all the calls as official and no one questioned her? Even if it may not come strictly within the parameter of a criminal misconduct, but definitely the false certificate or declaration issued by her knowing fully that it was false was misconduct. It was no doubt an off-shoot of corruption. M.N. Buch, a very prominent bureaucrat who served in many enviable capacities including that of Chief Secretary, M.P. and Vice-Chairman of Delhi Development Authority, writes:

Accepting gifts and hospitality is no longer considered inappropriate, though it violates the existing conduct rules. About 27 years ago, the then Japanese ambassador called on him with a camera. The thought of retaining it never crossed his mind and he surrendered the gift to the State toshakhana. As observed by Mr. Buch, throughout India, senior civil servants have allotted themselves prime land. When he was Vice-Chairman of DDA, the Director in charge of housing societies detected 137 cases of fraudulent allotment including forgery and interpolation in Vasant Vihar alone. There are innumerable cases of senior officers' obtaining employment for their children in public or private service by unfair means (Buch, 1993).

The virus of corruption does not affect only an individual public servant, it infects and tells upon the society and the Govt. as a whole. Gunnar Mydral, the famous economist and author of Asian Drama described corruption as one type of social indiscipline which works as the biggest impediment to sustained economic development of the Asian countries. A very common form of corruption is tax-evasion which plagues the entire economy of a State. In a recently filed PIL before the Supreme Court, the famous consumerist and advocate of Common Cause, Mr. H.D. Shourie has expressed his sincere belief that if the taxes, levies, fees and charges are all fully recovered, and if there are no leakages, no misuse and wastage, not only would be functioning of governmental and administrative machinery at every level be smoother and more effective and the life of the people would improve, politics in the country would also be cleaner and more transperent (Shourie, 2000).

Individual corruptions are easy to tackle than collective or extra-individual corruptions committed or resorted to by a group or body or department. It is being recently argued that former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's conviction is fundamentally extra-individual, as it is not a single man's corruption. Rao extended the life of his government by purchasing votes on the floor of the Parliament. In other words, he presided over an illegal govt., all of whose decisions should be held to be illegal (Subrahmaniam, 2000). Where is the saving clause in the Constitution to save all such illegal acts and decisions of an illegal govt.? The legal consequence of such type of corruption is not defined and not imaginable. There are many other cases of this type.

It was reported in Telegraph dt. 8/4/97: *Come April and the racket thrives again. Government contractors and suppliers in the Northeast start making their annual beeline for false tax deducted at source (TDS) certificates. The certificates were reportedly issued in 1987 to some tribals (non-assesses) in Form no. 19C by non-existent officials of the Public Works Department of Arunachal Pradesh. Usually, TDS-certificates are issued to suppliers and contractors by government departments stating that they have been paid for execution of their contracts only after deducting two per cent from the total amount at the source as income-tax. It was estimated that in this way the racketeers could siphon off over Rs. 5 crore from the Central exchequer over the last two decades (The Telegraph - 1997).*

No law alone can cure a society, a govt. or a nation from the virus of corruption. No court can assume the role of the best doctor so that the medicine of legal consequences can have any sustaining effect. The dilemma voiced in St. Mathew seems to be of relevance: *"How shall the earth be salted when the salt itself has lost its savour!"* The fact that corruption is rampant in the politician-businessman nexus in Japan, that it is institutionalized in countries like U.S.A in the form of paid lobbying, campaign donations and priced dinners, is of no consolation to the people of India, who have fought oppressions for long years through Gandhiji's Satyagraha which set forth high moral codes in public life. Gandhiji's Satyagraha and Mao Zedong's *Three Principles and Eight points of attention* for the People's Liberation Army set the moral tone of the people. High ethical standard and fear of God amongst public servants and social sanctions against those who are corrupt can save a Govt. from the endemic virus of corruption. One can take a lesson from Wang's suicide to get rid of humiliation or can take a cue from Seoul businessmen's decision on 3/11/1995. As reported by Paul Shin from Seoul, business leaders, taking a lesson from a major slush fund scandal involving former South Korean President, Roh Tae Woo, vowed that they would no longer bribe government officials (Paul, 1995). The Santhanam Committee on prevention of corruption long ago observed. The atmosphere of corruption can be said to exist only in a society where there is someone willing to corrupt and capable

of corrupting. Let there be at least no one willing to corrupt or rather to carry the virus!

Before concluding let me recall the historical reply given by famous humanist Hellen Keller when she was asked, "What is worse than being blind?" The reply was: *"To have eyes and yet not to see!"* If the Govt., the society and we ourselves are unable to see and realize cancerous consequences of corruption in our public, social and private life, then we are worse than being blind! It is we who can lit the kindly light for the new millennium at its very dark but dawning time!

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Executive Magistrates: Their Role in Administration A Need for Amending Section 129 Cr. PC.

- Akshay Sood*

Executive Magistrates are a relatively new breed of Magistrates created by the new Criminal Procedure Code of 1973 in pursuance of Article 50 of the Constitution which provided for separation of executive from the judiciary. Even while this article was being discussed by the Constituent Assembly, some members had suggested that a limit of three years be incorporated in the article so that all states may carry out the separation within this period. Infact, the demand for separation of executive and judiciary had its origin in the nationalist movement also. The National Congress had, way back in 1886, emphasized the need for reform in regard to separation of functions of the state through a resolution. Montesquiue, the French philosopher emphasized the need for separation of executive and judiciary. He said, "There is no liberty, if judicial powers be not separated from the legislature and executive. When it is joined with the legislative, the life and liberty of the subject would be exposed to arbitrary control; for the judged would be the legislator; were it joined to executive power, the judge might behave with violence and oppression."

Section 3 (4)(a) and (b) of Criminal Procedure Code defines the nature of criminal cases to be taken up by Executive and Judicial Magistrates. The very definition of Executive Magistrates in Criminal Procedure Code shows that they are not expected to go into intricate matters of law where substantial appreciation of evidence is required. Infact they are more of Summary Magistrates, as they now are concerned mostly with summary type of cases which even though requiring judicious application of mind, do not involve intricate matters of law. In fact, under the new Criminal Procedure Code, the Executive Magistrates do not have the power of sentencing any accused for even a single day's imprisonment, as these powers lie with the Judicial Magistrates only.

The Executive Magistrates at present are vested with work and powers under Section 107, 109, 129, 133, 144 and Sec. 145 Criminal Procedure Code. All these sections of Criminal Procedure Code deal with prevention of mass public nuisances, prevention of cognizable offences and threats to law and order arising out of individual and collective streaks of lawlessness and violence. There are other sections also namely Sec. 97, 174 etc, where Executive

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Magistrates have certain duties to perform, but again these tasks even though important, do not require either substantial knowledge of law or substantial appreciation of evidence.

It is my considered view, however, that the work of Executive Magistracy has at most places, been relegated to the background in view of separation of judiciary from executive. The emphasis is now on developmental activities in public life and increasing terrorism and the serious law and order problems arising due to increased social tensions, complex modern weaponry and economic disparities in our society and country. In fact the day is not very far when executive magistrates may become an extinct species, a pale shadow of its hallowed past during the Empire days. The reasons for this are not far to be seen. Punjab is a very relevant example as the Executive Magistrates had a negligible role in curbing terrorism in the state. The Executive Magistrates over there were mute spectators to the efforts of Punjab Police to curb militancy. There was hardly an instance, where the Executive Magistrates responded to the gravity of the situation and pointed an accusing finger at the police under Sec. 174 Criminal Procedure Code or other provisions of law. In fact, the present scenario gives the impression, that while the "hard" crimes can be effectively dealt with by the Police through a "bullet for bullet" policy, the Executive Magistrates function as a façade for curbing the 'soft' crimes e.g. Sec. 145 Criminal Procedure Code is used as a remedy in neighbours disputes regarding property or Sec. 107 Criminal Procedure Code is used as a means to curb an affray between college students or other fighting sections of our society.

As regards the status of Executive Magistrates, the less said the better. Even though Naib Tehsildar and Tehsildar, at one time enjoyed a unique position in Govt. services, and are very often empowered with Executive Magistrates powers, their pay and perks are laughable, to say the least. Even though the Naib Tehsildar is an Executive Magistrate, he continues to be a Class-III non-gazetted official. Similarly, Tehsildars [Please read Executive Magistrates] have been overtaken by virtually all categories of officers e.g. BDOs, ADO (Agriculture), DFSCs, etc. in the new scheme of salaries structure as per the 5th Pay Commission.

This erosion of powers of the Executive Officers may be in the overall interest of the country as well as society, but the intention of this paper is to highlight the intrinsic/real value of Executive Magistracy as against the face value of the high sounding nomenclature Executive Magistrate.

The 'decline' in the 'powers' of Executive Magistrates is probably the inevitable result of the end of the Raj. It suited the British to have judicial powers vested in the Executive Officers, because of the repressive and regulatory nature of the British empire, whose objective was singular i.e to maximize the imperialist hold on the country. An independent judiciary would have defeated the efforts of the empire to control nationalist sentiments. Infact the present declining status of Executive Magistrates is a natural corollary to the excessive powers enjoyed by the then ICS, PCS and Revenue Officers,

which could often be misused by officers enjoying those powers. An extreme example of such misuse of power is of a SDM, before 1973 in HP, who also enjoyed Ist Class Magistrate Powers under the old Criminal Procedure Code. A teacher happened to unintentionally transgress the boundary walls of the lawns of the SDM's residence. This gentleman Magistrate got that teacher arrested by telephoning the police and got registered a case of trespass registered against him, a case that was triable in his court only! This was an extreme example of the ill effects of non-separation of executive and judiciary.

An important point that arises is whether we require the institution of Executive Magistrates at all while tackling serious riot situation/affrays. In Himachal Pradesh itself, we have seen several times that during public strikes, agitations like Mandal Commission riots, apple agitation etc. dual responsibility of Magistrates and Police Officers has resulted in utter confusion at times as there is a tendency for both the Magistrates and Police Officers to wait for the other to seize initiative in tackling law and order situation firmly. The Sub-divisional Magistrates/Executive Magistrates, have no effective control over the SDPOs/SHOs or other Police Officials and therefore even if written orders are lawfully passed for use of force to disperse an unlawful assembly, the real role is that of the police officials and the force to tackle the situation effectively, because the force normally responds to the commands of its superiors and that way Executive Magistrates have no control over the force, once a direction is given under Sec. 129. Imagine a scenario where an unruly mob tries to burn down a public building. The Executive Magistrate on the spot seeing the gravity of the situation, allows use of lathi charge to disperse the mob. Now the ball is in the court of the force to disperse the mob. Logically the motivation and alertness level of the force should be such that, once the mob is dispersed, it should retreat so that no unwarranted use of force is made. However several times, it has been seen that the force has become so charged and retaliatory that excessive use of force has been made and after that, public outcry of excesses becomes inevitable resulting in a situation where SDMs/ADMs/DMs etc. find it difficult to defend their actions.

The reasons why Executive Magistrates also have been given powers under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code is that, they being an element external to the police force, would act in such a manner that utmost restraint would be exercised while using force under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code. However, practical experience suggests that divided responsibility ultimately leaves behind a trail of allegations and counter allegations between the Magistracy and the Police.

Police Officials are often of the opinion that magistrates evade their responsibility imposed on them under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code. Several

Executive Magistrates in order to evade responsibility, do not permit use of force by orders in writing, on time, with the result that the force has no option but to be a silent spectator in dispersing unlawful assemblies.

One remedy to resolve the above dilemma is to empower only police officers to use force under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code. It may not drastically change the present scene in law and order maintenance but it shall at least ensure that only one agency i.e. the police is responsible for handling such contingencies. Infact this is what the Commissioner System of Policing is all about and experience shows that this system is there to stay in the Metropolitan cities. In fact, it should be expected that responsibility on only one agency i.e. police shall make it more aware of the need to be more restrained and responsible in handling unruly mobs. We shall not be witness to incidents like the one that happened in 1990 where a senior police officer allegedly threatened to shoot a Magistrate when the latter had dilly dallied in signing firing orders, after the police had already resorted to firing which had resulted in a few deaths and injuries in an unruly mob.

The reasons for my expounding the above proposition are several. The position of Sub-divisional Magistrate/Executive Magistrates is not analogous to that of the DM. The authority of SDM over Police is strictly limited to powers given to him by different laws, in exercise of judicial functions (Punjab Police Rule IIF). Section 3 of Police Act 1861 may be quoted in the context. "Except as authorized under the provision of this Act, 'no person, officer or Court shall be empowered by the state govt. to supersede or control, any police functionary". Thus many Executive Magistrates have a mistaken notion that they exercise executive jurisdiction over the police functionaries and several problems of departmental egos arise due to lack of understanding of their specific roles under law. The only exception is rule 14(56) of Punjab Police Rules whereby, with regard to unlawful assemblies, SDM has the power of DM and he has to be recognized by all police officers as the senior most police officer of the sub division, and he has the power to determine the method and degree of force to be used in dispersing unlawful assemblies.

The question, therefore, that arises is whether an Executive Magistrate is really required in tackling unlawful assemblies or preventing them. It is a fact that the police force neither has any respect of the SDM/EMs position, nor do other senior police officials have much regard for SDM's position, because he is not their real boss/superior. Very often, it creates piquant situations as the behaviour and functioning of the police is often in diametrically opposite angles. We hear of such situations as when the SDM did not order any use of force even when the police felt that lathi charge was justified on a violent crowd. The result was that when the police was bound to obey the senior most police official of the sub division i.e. the SDM in this case, the concerned Magistrate did not authorize use of force for his own reasons. In such cases, the responsibility gets diluted between the Magistrate and the senior most police official, with both looking at each other with suspicion, regarding the method of tackling violent mobs. A dilemma, that an SDM/Executive Magistrate

very often faces is that he does not know whether the police response in such violent law and order situations would be absolutely correct or not, because there are numerous instances where police, under stress, has gone berserk or over reacted (at least that is the opinion of the affected public and numerous enquiry reports). While a ADM, SDM/DM or Executive Magistrate would theoretically, order use of only appropriate force, the magistrate has really no control over the actions of police, once the police action has started.

Very often, Magistrates get the flak for ordering excessive use of force, even though it was not his intention and he was exercising his judicial power, under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code. We very often talk of parity of authority and responsibility, but an executive magistrate, in such situation, even though having legal sanction, does not have managerial/executive authority over the police force, in use of force to disperse unlawful assemblies. It is a fact that, the police, even though Sec. 129 authorizes police officials not below an SI to use force to disperse unlawful assemblies, very often, to avoid responsibility, wait for the approval of an Executive Magistrate to tackle such situation, to avoid their responsibility and duty under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code. If by amendment of above section, only the police officials are authorized to disperse unlawful assemblies, we shall be following a very eminent managerial principle, that of unity of command, as then only one agency of the executive i.e. police shall be held responsible for tackling such exigencies.

In this paper, I have sought to justify the withdrawal of power under Sec. 129 Criminal Procedure Code for Executive Magistrates and have made a plea that this power should remain with only one agency i.e. the Police so that only one agency of the Executive has the power and responsibility to disperse unlawful assemblies. This principle is already in vogue in the big cities under the Commissioner System of Police. In consonance with the modern times, states need to introduce amendments in the law so that the response of administration is quick and effective. I may also clarify that there is no need to withdraw power of Executive Magistrates under other preventive sections of Criminal Procedure Code viz. Sec. 107, 109, 133, 144, 145 etc because such role conflicts as discussed in the paper do not arise while lawful actions are taken under above sections. The exercise of power under above sections is subject to review by Judicial Officer of the level of Session Judge and by the High Court, which acts as a check on the misuse of above powers. Moreover, the Executive Magistrates because they try only summary cases, lighten the heavy burden of criminal cases in the courts of Judicial Magistrates, apart from helping prevent law and order breaches.

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Women Empowerment - Perspective and Approach
- Manoj Pant*

Introduction

The 74th Amendment of the Constitution of India, with the provisions for reservation for women in local bodies has enabled women to participate and contribute in effective governance of local bodies. Studies indicate 33% of households worldwide are headed by women. There is a recent shift from maintenance of families to successful governance of towns and cities by women. In fact, the process of urbanization has made a distinct positive impact on the indices of the socio-economic development among the Indian women by providing comparatively better education and health facilities and employment opportunities. These are reflected in the number of women centred schemes and programmes floated by the Government in the recent past. The Community Development Societies (CDS) under SJSRY, HHW under R.C.H., AWW under I.C.D.S. all point to the fact that the initiatives and drive of women for women have shown success in improvement and sustainable livelihood of women and society in general.

Inputs

The Government initiative has been primarily by way of promoting, primary health, child welfare, vocational training, working women hostels, benefits under TRYSEM, IRDP, DWCRA, DWCUA etc. Gradually in the eighth and ninth Five Year plans, the programmes have addressed the need of empowerment to participate in decision-making for the socio-economic development, by way of easy access to health and educational inputs, access to credit and microenterprise and self-help groups. The SJSRY (Swarn Jayanti Swarojgar Yojana) in urban areas has a special programme of Development of Women and Children in Urban Areas (DWCUA) and Thrift Credit Societies targeting the poor women groups for self-employment and income generation ventures.

SJSRY has opened a new dimension where local women groups are actively involved in identification and implementation of various asset creation schemes through Neighbourhood Committees and Community Development

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* Addl. District Magistrate, Asansol & Chief Executive Officer, Asansol Municipal Corporation.

Societies. It has not only become a source of earning for the poor women groups but also an element of empowerment thereby enhancing their self esteem in the society.

Similarly DWCUA is a special incentive to poor women groups of 10 or 12 members for setting up self-employment ventures suited to their skills, training levels, aptitude and local conditions. Each DWCUA group is also encouraged to form Thrift and Credit Societies and inculcate a sense of savings for use in need and emergency. The concept of DWCUA is not only limited to self-employment but it enriches the group members with leadership qualities, group dynamics and social belongingness.

Reproductive and Child Health Programme, a World Bank assisted health intervention scheme for the Urban poor women and children groups aims to empower them in identifying and deciding their health related priorities on a sustainable basis. The women groups constituting the Honorary Health Workers are selected from the Community for the purpose to assist the poor women in understanding the basics of health and family welfare issues towards good healthy living.

There has been recent initiatives towards recording the land right in favour of women or jointly, again stressing on the need of independence and self-esteem. Besides this various social welfare schemes of the Central land State Government are targeted towards welfare of women in need and distress like old age pension scheme, widow pension scheme, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Legal Aid etc.

The multifarious activities and schemes targeting towards poor women sometimes get lost in its own web of complexities. There is a need to have a system of "Convergence" whereby the outcome of all these interventions can be weighed vis-à-vis the benefits accruing to the society. The real empowerment of women will be testified by the success of the delivery of the benefits to the right person at right time and its proper utilization.

Capacity Building

Education and Capacity Building is the key to development and basic tool for empowering women towards sustainable livelihood. Sustainable livelihood is that which can bear the stresses and strains, viscitudes of natural calamities and withstand the period of crisis without severe difficulties and hardships. Education therefore should stress on improving literacy, gender sensitivity, equal opportunities, awareness generation, entrepreneurship, leadership, teamwork approach etc. It should inculcate the awareness about opportunities

in Contribution towards Urban Economy, its functioning and advantages of their participation in the governance. There should be attempts to provide easy access to credit, secure tenure to land for sense of pride, identity and security, participation in shelter design and implementation process, security from crime etc.

Gender Issues

The gender realities of today's society where living and working condition are shaped by social norms that treat women and men as different and where irregularities are obvious being supported by highly gender sensitive power that be, it becomes imperative to evolve on organization, and a forum to focus on activating women for sustainable solution for their future. The vulnerability of poor women can be distinctly seen as economic and social.

Large number of women group with their families migrate from Rural areas to Urban areas in search of employment opportunities, having pushed out of their houses due to hunger, unemployment, indebtedness, family complaints etc. With no better alternative, they find employments in informal sectors with low wages. High cost of living in towns and cities compel them to find shelter in poor slums, settlement or on pavement. Due to high degree of poverty they become prone to malnutrition, health hazards, natural hazards etc.

The slums, settlements of the poor households face deprivation of basic services also. The women and girls spend good time in collecting water to which they have no easy access. At times girls miss out from the schools for household chores when mothers work outside. Little children are left unattended and mal nourished. Poor sanitary conditions add to health hazards, which has direct economic repercussion. The expenses on medicines coupled with the mandays/working days lost increases the leaderships, leading to indebtedness, stress and strains and the vicious cycle of poverty goes on.

Empowerment

Socio-Economic empowering of women can transform their lives and that of the family by demanding a process of change. Empowering of women is a concept enabling women to make their own decision and set their own priorities in shaping the Course of their lives.

The key issues towards empowerment of women include :

a)   Clean, safe and healthy living Environment.

b)   Improved access to public health facilities.

c)   Education.

d)   Food Security.

e)   Housing rights with privacy.

f)   Access to civic amenities.

g)   Employment opportunities.

h)   Security from violence and intimidation.

i)   Access to Government Safety net Programme.

The above issues can be addressed by way of -

(a)   Education - Non-formal and formal.
(b)   Vocational Training Programmes.
(c)   Supporting Environment - Working women's Hostels etc.
(d)   Adequate Health Service - Primary health facilities, R.C.H., I.C.D.S. Interventions.
(e)   Self-employment programmes & income restoration programmes - DWCUA, Thrift & Credit Societies.
(f)   Leadership and motivation and Group Dynamics.
(g)   Positive intervention of the Urban Local Bodies for providing basic civic services.
(h)   Active involvement and participation of women in decision making.

Empowerment of women in real sense requires a multidimensional approach so that one focus does not miss on the other. A Convergence of such issues which directly/indirectly has bearing on the women empowerment needs to be addressed in a holistic manner rather in isolation. It is essential to have an approach of Single Window Clearance for women issues thus enabling them to put forward their grievances/problems and seek remedy at the earliest possible time.

Women Empowerment and Grievance Remedy Centres

As a single window approach toward women Empowerment and Grievance Redressal, it is proposed to set up a Centre which will act as Nodal Centre for addressing those issues and contribute in managing and mitigating the socio-economic and gender issues. The nodal centre can be termed as Women Empowerment and Grievance Redressal Centre (WEGRC).

The Head Office or Centre can be opened in the Municipal Corporation Offices with its sub-centres as per requirement, or may be a part of the administrative network at the District, Sub-division, Block Headquarters. This will help in bringing different wings of administration under one roof and act as a Coordinating Centre. The existing Official Machinery with some additional duties and realignments be used so that there could be no financial involvement. A Society can be formed with Mayor and Chief Executive as Chairman and

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│           │ │Security from│ │ Grievance │ │Health -RCH,│ │Infrastructure│ │Education - │
│ Legal Aid │ │Crime against│ │ Redressal │ │ ICDS, Pry.│ │   Asset   │ │ Capacity  │
│           │ │   women   │ │           │ │  Health   │ │ Creation  │ │ Building  │
└───────────┘ └───────────┘ └───────────┘ └───────────┘ └───────────┘ └───────────┘
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Social Welfare
Schemes &
Social Safety
Net Programme-
WIDOW PENSION,
OLD AGE PENSION
(NOAPS),
MATERNITY
BENEFITS
SCHEMES
(NMBS),
ACCIDENT
BENEFIT SCH.
(NABS)

W E G R C

Town
Planning

Housing

Information.
Dissemination on
rights and
opportunities

Providing
Backward &
Forward
Linkages

Self-Employment
and Thrift &
Credit Society
(DWCUA,
SJSRY)

Vocational
Training and Skill
Development

Working Chairman respectively with other active elected and official members and registered to give it a legal sanction. Active members of various Non Governmental Organizations working on such issues can be co-opted in the Society.

WEGRC will be an enabling mechanism to meaningfully address gender related issues and ensure gender equalities by making poor women groups aware of their right and opportunities and acting as a Resource Centre on gender issues. The schematic networking can be shown as below :

Conclusions

Empowerment of women is one of the key issues towards any socio-economic development programme. A single window clearance approach for addressing the women related grievances and also for attending, evaluating and monitoring the affects of different Government sponsored programmes and project would help in proper understanding of the gender issues. The Women Empowerment and Grievance Redressal Centres will work on Single Window Clearance Approach and thereby provide timely and adequate services and relief to poor

Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India
Concept, Practice and Future
- M. Naga Raju*

The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution of India is a framework of autonomy to provide for protection of the identity indigenous tribes and to prevent possible exploitation of the tribals by more advanced social groups in the tribal areas. This is an ingenious and innovative methodology, devised by the constitutional makers, to ensure equal opportunities to the tribes and to recognise their wisdom to develop and govern on their own.

The Bordoloi sub-committee tried to devise constitutional protection and define the terms of interaction with outsiders without weakening the base of states to ensure self-governance systems for the tribes, leveraging on their traditional wisdom, knowledge and social systems.

Broadly speaking, there are two categories of powers provided in the Constitution for the sixth schedule areas in the country. The first category can be termed as exclusive and the second as concurrent. What I mean by exclusive power is that on certain subjects the Autonomous District Council (ADC) was entrusted exclusive law or rule making powers, which were not given either to States or Union Government. These areas/subjects are: any forest other than reserve forest, allotment, setting apart, use and occupation of land, village or town committees/councils, town or village police, customary laws,etc.

Secondly, concurrent powers are those powers on which ADC can make rules or regulations on certain subjects: but at the same time the State government can also make laws, rules or regulations. In case, there are two laws by the ADC and the State on the same subject, the laws of the State will prevail over the ADC rules, to the extent of inconsistency. Primarily, the intention of the Constitution is to provide uniformity and consistency in these subject areas for the entire state. The subjects included in this category are primary education, roads, sanitation, etc.

On another plane, we may classify the powers, functions and authority of sixth schedule into regulatory and development. Regulatory functions are those, which sustain the tribal customary institutions, protect their distinct identity, culture and usages and prevent possible exploitation from advanced sections of population by regulating land issues, residence or settlement and social customs.

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To discharge the constitutional obligations as stated above, all the ADCs were also endowed with certain financial or tax levying power. There are eight sources of funds for any ADC. These are; land revenue, professional tax, taxes on trade, callings, tax on entry of goods etc.

Apart from these, there are certain enabling provisions in the sixth Schedule to make the ADCs more functional, autonomous and responsible. As per para 6 of sixth schedule, state government can entrust to the ADC, with its consent, certain subjects like agriculture, community development, fisheries, ponds, roads or any other matter to which the executive power of the state extends. As per this enabling provision, some ADCs were given powers beyond paragraphs 3, 5, 8 and 10 of the sixth schedule, by the respective state governments, especially, Karbi-Anglong and N C Hills autonomous council, by Assam government.

I may also add that certain protective mechanisms were provided in the constitution to safeguard autonomy and to protect the ADCs from interference or dissolution or suspension by designated authorities. Governor can suspend ADC for reasons specified but for not more than for one year, which is subject to legislative approval. In the case of dissolution, a Commission has to be appointed, an opportunity has to be given to the ADC and only then the Governor can exercise his/her authority.

If we look at the working of ADCs in the country for the last fifty years, we are confronted by many questions, criticisms and dilemmas; some may be fair, all may not be false and few are correct. While the Constitutional philosophy has undergone many changes, the sixth schedule has, to say the least, been qualitatively or quantitatively unaffected by its environment.

People's participation has completely changed the parameters of social change with the passage of 73rd & 74th Amendment Acts in the country. Probably, it is a watershed in the country, like the 1935 Act. But these changes have not affected the sixth schedule. It is too early, sociologically speaking, to say whether it is good or bad or correct or incorrect. While the 73rd & 74th amendments have brought development to the doorsteps and empowered communities and disadvantaged social groups in the society, they have also introduced many alien concepts of governance to the tribal communities which are not compatible to the customs, traditions and nature of tribal life. The impact this will have on their social norms and culture is difficult to judge at this juncture.

The second and perhaps most important transformation that is taking place in the human civilisation is a sense of history. Most of the values, which were dear to many of us, no longer appeal to us and the concept of universal citizen has grown tremendously, overshadowing the image of nation states and its boundaries. A world unfettered with any limitation, integration of production, supply, convergence of values, has changed not only the psychology of mind but its attitude to life.

The problem today is to work out a synthesis to reconcile exclusivity with change so as to ensure indigenous groups' distinct identity, culture and values in consonance with post modernity and its pervasiveness.

A shortcoming of many ADCs in the country is with regards to financial and functional empowerment and working relationships with respective state governments. Many of the ADCs complain that they are starved of funds deliberately, State governments do not cooperate in financial matters and that ADC's have more responsibility without commensurate funds or authority.

As stated earlier, the sixth schedule concept was designed as another layer of governance to protect tribal autonomy and culture and to prevent exploitation. The theory of decentralization of governance, though much talked abort at that time, had no parameters laid down. The powers and functions envisaged in 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts were not thought of at that stage, and consequently no provisions were kept for functions in the constitution, although they were mentioned under Para-6 as "community development". During 1990s there was perceptible reticence to the proposal of inclusion of sixth schedule in the amendment from autonomous councils themselves and so no changes were incorporated.

Originally, sixth schedule was provided to the tribal majority areas of Assam to address the fears of "tribal submergence" in the vortex of majoritarian politics and to gain the acceptance of the tribal populations for the newly independent country. Subsequently, these areas have become full-fledged states, but sixth schedule has been retained in these areas. Retention of application of sixth Schedule in states like Meghalaya and Mizoram is bizarre, to say the least. Application of sixth schedule to tribal areas in these tribal states has diluted the seriousness of discourse for a relook and has only acted as a political buffer to empower ADCs financially and administratively.

For several years, ADCs have been demanding more empowerment, functionally, financially and administratively. If we look at it more dispassionately and compare the powers vested with ADCs with those being exercised, it will reveal to us the seriousness of successive ADC authorities. Almost twelve powers given in the sixth schedule are not being exercised in the case of Tripura, even though more than 15 years have passed after sixth schedule formation. These important enabling provisions are: (a) Occupation, use or allotment of land other than Reserve Forest (b) Forest management (c) Practice of Jhum (d) Village or town committees or councils and holding of election (e) Appointment of chief and headmen (f) Inheritance of property (g) Marriage and divorce (h) Social customs (i) Administration of justice, establishment of courts (j) District Fund (k) Village or town police operationalization of these provisions could have addressed some of the grievances of armed extremist groups and led to peace in the state. Similar is the case with many other autonomous councils as well.

If we peruse the above non-exercised powers by the ADCs it is clear to us that the primary objective of sixth scheduled areas viz, protection of tribal life and customs, is totally defeated or ignored.

What is the agenda, which would strengthen the ADCs to discharge their obligations more efficiently and effectively? The first and fore most is the development of accepted norms of devolution of funds through all sources either by statutory means or strong conventions. Secondly, similar to 73rd & 74th Amendment Acts, development power and role should be entrusted to ADCs to mainstream tribal development. Thirdly, gender representation should be provided, statutorily, to tribal women for their social and general advancement. Fourthly, statutory limit on non-plan expenditure should be kept for balanced growth of ADC areas. Fifthly, ADC administrative culture and governing capacity should be strengthened and enhanced to deliver services effectively to the people. There is also a perception among the political class, chiefly tribal, of these states, that autonomous councils are platforms or launching pads for political ambitions at higher levels.

A perusal of manner and purpose of funds utilised by Tripura ADC, would reveal that about 46.20% of funds are spent on establishment and the rest on developmental schemes. The reason is that most ADCs see their employees as an end in itself and not as means for service delivery. The cost of service delivery in most ADCs is highly prohibitive and about the quality, the less said the better.

The following table gives an idea about the financial position:

Sl.No	Years	Expenditure on dev. schemes. In lakhs %		Expdt. on direction & admn In lakhs %		Total Expenditure.
1	1985-86	1361.57	92.3	113.48	7.7	1475.05
2	1986-87	2118.56	76.48	651.47	23.52	2770.03
3	1987-88	2657.00	76.41	820.45	23.59	3477.45
4	1988-89	2309.90	64.21	1286.10	35.79	3596.00
5	1989-90	1603.92	53.98	1367.10	46.02	2971.02
6	1990-91	1986.56	54.83	1636.44	45.17	3623.00
7	1991-92	2379.19	58.47	1689.81	41.53	4069.00
8	1992-93	2105.39	53.38	1838.19	46.62	3943.58
9	1993-94	1742.40	47.36	1936.43	52.64	3678.83
10	1994-95	1307.10	34.66	2463.44	65.44	3770.54
11	1995-96	1273.44	29.66	3019.18	70.44	4292.62
12	1996-97	1684.97	34.30	3226.65	65.70	4911.62
13	1997-98	2210.49	38.99	3458.35	61.11	5668.84
14	1998-99	1992.84	31.40	4053.43	68.60	6346.27
15	1999-2K	1907.95	25.82	5479.64	74.18	7387.59
	Total	28641.28	46.20	33040.16	53.80	61981.44

source; TTAADC, TRIPURA

In practice, autonomous councils receive funds from three sources: plan assistance from state or central governments, funds to meet the expenditure of transferred schemes and staff of state and revenue from own taxes, collected directly or shared with state. The first two depend on the magnanimity and capacity of the state governments, not to forget the cordial relations between the two and are a cause of bitter acrimony in the absence of agreed norms of devolution of funds. Not many councils have substantial sources of revenues, or even if they do, have not tapped these effectively so far.

The perusal of the quantum and trends of expenditure indicate that the councils are on their way to financial unsustainability. The percentage of expenditure on development is coming down at an alarming rate and there is no increase in revenue sources. Similarly the non-development expenditure is increasing at a very high rate. Most of this expenditure is on account of salaries only.

While human wants are unlimited, we have limited resources and means. We all have to strike a harmonious balance between our wants and means. Similarly, organisational objectives may be very high but depending on the strength and capacity and resources, prioritised targets have to be met. As a true autonomous body, ADC's should widen their own resource base and examine the means to raise resources to meet their obligations. Too much dependence on external authorities to fund the administration and the plans will take away much of their shine and also make them complacent and less accountable.

The perception of many state governments is that many ADCs flagrantly misuse the constitutional norms and feel shy of their responsibilities. They have created an institution overburdened with establishment expenditure, hazy administrative norms and diffused system of responsibility. They also perceive these bodies as political competitors to patronages of offices and goods.

However, we all have to look at this arrangement in the broad perspective of national goals, community identities and states integrity. While it can not be denied that autonomous councils need to be and ought to be adequately strengthened, financially and administratively, we also need to remember that there can not be any real autonomy until there is accountability without compromising the constitutional scheme and principles of governance.

There is a need to redefine the structural arrangements with adequate devolution of power and accountability to make the councils more relevant, representative and responsible. But till that is in place, the autonomous councils should work within the framework of the constitution to protect the identity, culture, language, and customs of indigenous tribes and to accelerate development in tribal areas in order to fulfill basic entitlements of every citizen of the autonomous district councils.

Land and Women in U.P. - Need for Legal Reforms

- Partha Sarthi Sen Sharma*

Any argument or line of reason is essentially based on certain assumptions or premises. It is essential to clearly define those assumptions to start with in order to get more clarity and order in the argument later. The substance of the argument advocated in the following passages is also based on such premises and it is important, at the nascent stage itself, to clearly define these premises.

The first premise is that today, in independent India, equality in the status of women in society is a desirable objective in itself and no further arguments are needed to support this objective. The second and most apparent premise is that the status of women in the Indian society in general is far from desirable, that large sections of our women population are still being subjected to varied degrees of exploitation, direct physical violation at worst and a simmering sense of injustice and deprivation at best. The third important premise is that although the reasons for the pathetic status of women in Indian society are cultural, historical and economic, still progressive and reformatory legal enactments can to a substantial extent act as catalysts in the process of social change. It is in keeping with this understanding that many important social reform laws have been passed from time to time from Sati prohibition in British India to Dowry prohibition of Independent India. The fourth most important premise is that no matter how many international women's days are celebrated, the real problem of equality in the status of women can not be addressed if women are not made economically self-dependent. It is this lack of opportunity in being a participant in the economic production processes in order to become economically self sufficient themselves, that makes women submit to institutionalised exploitation.

From the above discussion and analysis, it was felt as early as in the 1950s that some progressive laws should be enacted to give women an equitable share in the economic means of production to make them economically self sufficient and thus to promote the overall objective of improving the status of women in society. Based on such reasoning the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 was enacted which gave equal inheritance right to sons and daughters in the property of deceased Hindu male.

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However, in the state of Uttar Pradesh, this avowed objective is not being met to a large extent till today. U.P. has a largely rural, agriculture based economy. In such an economy, the principal, (but not the only one) means of economic production is agricultural land. In order to give women a sense of real equality and economic self-dependence, it is imperative that they have the right of inheritance over the agricultural land of the deceased Hindu male. However, in case of agricultural land in Uttar Pradesh, the Hindu Succession Act does not apply and instead succession to agricultural land is governed by the U.P. Zamindari Abolition & Land Reforms Act, 1950. According to this UPZALR Act, the daughters of the deceased male are denied any right of inheritance over the agricultural land of their father if they have a brother, or a widowed mother or a widowed grandmother or even a grandfather. To make this general order of succession more clear, the reader is advised to read the section 171 of UPZALR Act (which is appended as annexure I). Even a cursory look over the above mentioned section of the Act would testify that it is in complete contrast to the spirit of the Hindu Succession Act and all modern canons of Gender Equality which we profess.

Now, as far as the technicalities of law are concerned, the reason why the UPZALR Act, which is a state Act, overrides the Hindu Succession Act, which is a Central Act, is provided in section 4(2) of the Hindu Succession Law itself, which states: "For the removal of doubts it is hereby declared that nothing contained in this Act shall be deemed to affect the provisions of any law for the time being in force providing for the prevention of fragmentation of agricultural holdings or for the fixation of ceilings or for the devolution of tenancy rights in respect of such holdings."

There are indeed many arguments forwarded by people who are against any change in this archaic section of law. The original avowed purpose for retaining this exclusion of women from a share in the father's agricultural land was to prevent fragmentation of land holdings, and secondly to prevent people from taking advantage of such a provision to circumvent the ceiling laws. During that era of momentous changes, when the UPZALR Act was enacted and subsequently implemented, the enthusiasm and zeal of taking that first step in order to give the age old 'have - nots' a right over land may have blinded us to this sheer injustice to half of our population. This deprived half of our population also incidentally happens to be age old 'have - nots'. But now time has definitely come to question this. And the question to be addressed is whether the cause of women equality through equal right of succession over agricultural land holding can be subordinated to the avowed cause of prevention in fragmentation of agricultural land holdings. In other words, can the entire woman population of Uttar Pradesh continued to be denied right of succession over agricultural land on this pretext only. Any way, it is a matter of common knowledge that the sheer population pressure over agricultural land has indeed led to fragmentation of holdings, no matter how many legal

safeguards are enacted to prevent the same. Even a train journey over the vast agricultural hinterland of U.P. in a season when land is left fallow or when the land has just been ploughed would testify the truth behind the above statement. Moreover, if prevention of fragmentation of land holdings is such a great concern, then, can we tomorrow promulgate a law of succession by which only the eldest offspring of the deceased gets a right over land, irrespective of gender and deny all other younger offsprings any right of inheritance? The ridiculousness of the proposition would demonstrate the insensitiveness and injustice of the legal section.

It must also be borne in mind that Uttar Pradesh is by no means the only predominantly agricultural state of this country. There are other such states, and from West Bengal to Punjab the principle of inheritance of daughters over the land of deceased male applies. Surely the need to prevent fragmentation of land holdings can not be a concern only in U.P. By no means, is it being advocated that fragmentation of agricultural holdings should be allowed unchecked resulting in economically unviable holdings. But what is being advocated is that in order to achieve this end, a limit should be fixed on the minimum size of land holdings which would result from any potential division of holding - whether through succession or through transfer. Incidentally such a provision does exist in UPZALR Act already.

Another common argument which is often forwarded in order to defend the above mentioned legal provisions concerning succession to agricultural land holdings in U.P. is that daughters would get dowry and hence they need not get any share in the agricultural land of their father. However, this argument itself suffers from two intolerable fallacies. Firstly, by having such a law of succession, we are giving a virtual legal sancity to the despicable and illegal tradition of dowry. Secondly, dowry as a tradition is as much prevalent in urban U.P. as in rural U.P. So if the Hindu Succession Act is being applied in respect of property other than agricultural land then it stands to logic that existence of dowry cannot be a sufficient reason to deny the right of succession of daughters to agricultural land alone.

The last resort of the votaries of this law supporting the discrimination against women in U.P. would be the argument that the daughters of the family by custom would get married and leave the village of their father and hence they would not be able to till the land. However, it is a known fact that a large number of sons also leave the village of their father and migrate to cities in search of better possibilities. However they still retain their right of inheritance to the agricultural land of their father. Also, it must be kept in mind that this social custom of daughters of the family leaving the house of their father at the time of their marriage is not specific to the villages of U.P. alone. Since the principle of equal inheritance rights for sons and daughters is applicable in other states, it stands to logic that the same can and should be applied to U.P. also.

In conclusion, there is no reason to requestion the wisdom and reason behind the enactment of the Hindu Succession Act of 1956 based on the principle of equal right of inheritance for the sons and daughters of the deceased. The question that must be addressed today is; why should inheritance to agricultural land be kept outside the purview of this principle in U.P. on unjustifiable and flimsy grounds. There is an urgent need to rectify this apparent and utterly unjust provision of law so as to give the women of rural Uttar Pradesh their rightful shares over agricultural land, which is the principal means of economic production. This would provide them with a way to become economically self-dependent to a substantial degree, to get themselves a position of bargain and help them to raise their socio-economic status. Such a step would also amply demonstrate that the society in general and the powers that be, in particular, are really sincere in their efforts to alleviate the status of women in society and not simply paying lip service to the cause.

It is conceded that the step to reform laws to provide daughters with equal shares in the agricultural land of the deceased male by itself would not alleviate the status of women and would not change the social mores overnight. However, such legal reforms do act as a powerful catalyst in the process of transformation of the present society towards a more just, equitable and modern society of tomorrow.

ANNEXURE - I

Section 171 of UP Zamindari Abolition & Land Reforms Act 1950

General Order of Succession

Subject to the provisions of section 169, when a bhumidhar or asami being a male dies, his interest in his holding shall devolve in accordance with the order of succession given below:

(a)   the male lineal descendant in the line of descent in equal shares per strips:

provided first that the son of a pre-deceased son how low so ever shall inherit the share which would have devolved upon the pre deceased son, had he been alive:

provided secondly that, subject to the provision to the first proviso, the share of predeceased male lineal descendant will devolve upon his widow who has not remarried, and

provided thirdly that if no male lineal descendant in male line of descent is alive the inheritance shall be governed by clause (b);

(b)   widow and widowed mother widow of a pre deceased male lineal descendant in the male line of descent, who have not remarried:

provided firstly that co-widows will together get one share, and

provided secondly that the widow of a nearer descendant will exclude that of a remoter one in the same branch; and

(c)   [Deleted]

(d)   father

(e)   [Deleted]

(ee)   unmarried daughter

(f)   brother, being the son of the same father as the deceased

(ff)   unmarried sister

(g)   married daughter

(h)   daughter's son

(i)   brother's son, the brother having been son of the same father as the deceased

(j)   father's father

(k)   father's mother, who has not remarried

(l)   son's daughter

(m)   married sister

(n)   half sister being the daughter of the same father as the deceased

(o)   sister's son

(oo)   half sister's son, the sister having been the daughter of the same father as the deceased

(p)   brother's son's son

(q)   father's father's son

(r)   father's father's son's son

Approach for Propagating Water Users Associations for Participatory Irrigation Management - Some Personal Reflections based on an Indian State

- Rakesh Hooja*

I

Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM) is now being recommended the world over as a solution for many problems of designing and operating irrigation systems in a sustainable manner. Indian's National Water Policy of 1987 had also recommended such efforts based upon the creation of associations of water users. However, it is only with the organization of a National Conference on PIM by the Government of India in June 1995 that a real impetus has been given to this work throughout the country. Before that we only had some isolated cases of water users bodies being associated alongwith the irrigation bureaucracy in the management of irrigation schemes. During the course of the year 1995-96, 14 Regional Conferences on PIM were organized throughout the country and a large scale training programme has also been sponsored by the Ministry of Water Resources, which organized a second National Conference on PIM in January 1997. Pilot projects have been initiated at many places, including in Rajasthan, and much thinking is being generated about legal, technical, organizational and viability related issues which may influence the success or failure of joint irrigation management efforts whereby water users bodies and the irrigation (or Command Area Development - CAD) bureaucracy may come together into partnerships of various sorts for the management of irrigation schemes.

It is in the above context that this writer thought he would setforth in this paper his personal views, (based on experience of managing, CAD schemes, perusal of relevant literature regarding PIM in India and abroad, and attendance in workshops, seminars and conferences) of how to propagate Water Users Associations and make them successful in the context of one Indian state - Rajasthan[1] . It is felt that the suggestions being setforth in this paper would be applicable throughout India and may also perhaps have relevance for much of the developing world.

However before the readers proceed further we would like to caution them that while farmers' participation in irrigation management may help to solve many problems, it is not a panacea for all the difficulties that may be encountered in managing irrigation schemes. Many issues would have purely

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[1] Those interested in more details of what is being attempted in Rajasthan may refer to Rakesh Hooja "Participatory Irrigation Management Efforts in Rajasthan" in Ramesh K. Arora and P.C. Mathur (ed.) Administrative System of Rajasthan Institutional Landmarks, Aalekh Publishers, Jaipur 1998.

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technical solutions. Many others would be much as may require governmental action either directly within the irrigation system management or in the form of influencing the broader environment within which the irrigation system is functioning. However the successful implementation of PIM in India would go a long way towards improved water management and better irrigation system management with all the resultant benefits.

We now turn to setting forth an approach which we think would prove practical in making Water Users Associations an effective instrument of Participatory Irrigation Management.

II

There should be no uniform prescription of what tasks a Water Users Association (WUA) should perform. Each WUA should be free to evolve its own idea of the task that it may want to perform through a process of learning from its experience as it experiments with the various responsibilities that it may decide to take on upon itself.

WUAs or Farmers Water Management Committees could accordingly take up some or all from amongst the following functions[2] :

(a)   Water distribution, rotational canal running and warabandi - ensuring that water reaches all members as per their due shares.

(b)   Operation and maintenance.

(c)   Collection (and assessment) of water charges and other special charges that WUAs may levy.

(d)   Resolution of local disputes amongst members - if necessary, setting up of an internal system of penalties and other disincentives or incentives.

(e)   Agriculture extension and farmers training.

(f)   Management of inputs and credit supply to members.

(g)   Irrigation extension and propagation of better on-farm water application and better intra-outlet command water management.

(h)   Recommending of cropping patterns suitable for WUA farmers.

(i)   Encouraging and taking up of conjunctive water use, or community lift irrigation, and charging for the same if done on a

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[2] This list tentatively set forth by the author at a PIM Conference in Jaipur in October 1995 was picked up and included in a somewhat summarized and paraphrased manner, along with some of the ideas set forth by me at the conference as "objectives of PIM" by Rakesh Hooja in INPIM Newsletter No. 2, March 1996. The present paper contains the developed ideas whose embryonic form had been summarized in INPIM Newsletter. The author's ideas have been further developed in Rakesh Hooja Integrated Irrigation Management. Need for Multidisciplinary Command Area Approach and Improved Farmer Management Interface forthcoming 1998 from Arihant, Jaipur. It could be said that I am advocating a "cafeteria" approach whereby each WUA may select the functions it wants to undertake and the organizational form it wants to adopt.

community basis.

(j)   Drainage.

(k)   Provision of drinking water from canals.

(l)   Soil testing/water quality testing.

(m)   Post harvest practices (grading, packaging, storage, marketing).

(n)   Design and construction of new works (irrigation works, OFD works, drainage works) as well as rehabilitation or deferred maintenance works.

(o)   Maintenance of commercial, financial and water accounting records.

(p)   Any other task as agreed upon by the members.

Of course every WUA would perforce be performing the function of providing an interface between the farmers and the government agencies.

Infact the nature of a particular WUA would depend not only upon the manner in which it gets initiated and the quality of the prime movers behind the formation of the WUA, but also on many other factors.

One such factor could be whether the WUA is being set up in a system which is managed by an integrated, multidisciplinary CAD organization, or whether the WUA would have to separately interact with the irrigation department, the agriculture department, the ground water department, the rural development agency, the land revenue administration and other government departments and agencies working in the command area of the irrigation system.

Another factor could be whether or not the warabandi system and a warabandi culture already exists in the irrigation project. The example of Chambal-Rajasthan CAD Project informs us that the achievements can be much more dramatic when a WUA comes up in an area lacking in a tradition of warabandi. In the Arnetha WUA the water saving was substantial (a reduction of 32 days of watering from 79 days to 47 days) as was the increase in area cultivated (an increase of 145 acres from 660 acres to 805 acres). In an area where warabandi already exists the initial impact may not be so dramatic. However even in such areas the scope exists for better water management which could lead to more optimal returns of the individual members of the WUA as also for the WUA as a whole based upon more equitable and dependable water supplies.

Similarly a WUA set up before construction starts which can comment on the need for modification in the designs and oversee the construction and then continue with other tasks would behave in a very different manner from a WUA set up after construction which would be more concerned with operation, maintenance and sustainability of operations.

A WUA functioning only below the canal outlet level would operate very differently from one operating above the outlet level, or from one trying to deal with issues both above and below the outlet through either a system of sub committees for each WUA created for each outlet command, or a system of a federation of WUAs below the outlet coming together to deal with common issues relating to one minor, or a branch canal.

The flexibility that should be allowed to a WUA to determine its own functions should also be extended to the form of organization that a WUA wants to create or adopt for itself. There are those who feel that a WUA needs to be a legal entity from its very inception. Hence one comes across advocates of the WUA registering as either a cooperative society, or as a registered society under the registration of societies act, or as a company. Others suggest that the CAD Department, or the Irrigation Department should formulate its own separate rules for registration of WUAs. On the other hand many prospective members of WUAs seem to prefer setting up of an informal group, a step also recommended by many irrigation and rural development administrators, experts and NGOs. The problem of registration as a cooperative, or as a registered society or as a company is that the concerned registering body is not attuned to the problems of irrigation and water management. Hence the by laws for such registration and the system of related inspections may eventually end up hindering the WUA rather than helping it to perform its tasks. Further by registering a WUA at the onset the members would restrict or limit the scope of the WUA from evolving, growing, taking up new functions and new organizational structures. It may be appropriate to suggest that prospective members first set up an informal group and later on register it with either registrar of cooperatives, or registrar of societies, or registrar of companies, or with the concerned authority of the Irrigation Department or CAD Department as the case may be. One alternative could also be to permit the cooperative officer in the CAD project, or any other designated officer of the CAD, or irrigation, or agriculture department to be authorized to register WUAs as cooperative societies. However (whether an informal group, or registered somewhere) the WUA should be recognized by the CAD Department or by the Irrigation Department (as the case may be) for purposes of receiving water from the project/department. For this a MOU (specially designed for each WUA with ample scope for flexibility and change based on experience of working the MOU) between the CAD or Irrigation Department and the WUA should form part of the recognition provided to the WUA. If the MOU is not with an integrated CAD Department, then an MOU with the Irrigation Department and supplementary MOUs with the Agriculture and Ground Water, etc. departments, may also need to be signed.

Since the WUA would need to have some rights to receiving a certain supply of water, the WUA should invariably be based on a hydrologically based area unit (outlet command, minor canal command), and should have atleast 60% of the area of the command and 60 % of the farmers represented on it with the right of all other farmers in the command to join the WUA

remaining inalienable. The WUA could of course differentiate between members and non-members as regards charging of fees and provision of services and benefits. However all members and non-members would have a right to receiving their share of the water, with non-members being charged a slightly higher rate since they would not be contributing to the WUAs management.

A mechanism for arbitration of disputes, if any, between the government department officials and the WUA would also need to be evolved. Here also if it is an integrated CAD Project the differences would need resolving between only one government agency that is the CAD Project and the WUA. For non-integrated projects the government side to the dispute could be the irrigation, or agriculture, or land revenue etc. departments, or a combination of some or all of them - and the arbitration mechanism would need to be much more complex.

As WUAs take over many functions and the management of canals, the government CAD Department or the Irrigation Department (as the case may be) would have to gear itself to look more to construction and management of the dams and the main canal system, (perhaps even to the construction of minor canals and to OFD and drainage works), providing technical advice, training, introduction of new technologies, major repairs (if required), creation of an organization for interfacing between the WUA and the government and for motivating or catalyzing the formulation of WUAs etc. Here again while for an integrated CAD Project various functional wings of the CAD organization could be geared and coordinated for brining about PIM, for unintegrated projects a number of departments would have to be reoriented to deal with PIM. (It may be added that in Rajasthan CAD Projects have integrated organizations consisting of Irrigation, Agri. Extension, Agri. Research, On Farm Dev., Ground Water, Cooperatives, Drinking Water, Afforestation, Roads, Settler Motivation, Drainage, Planning & Monitoring, etc. related wings all working under a single project organization which reports to a separate CAD & Water Utilization Deptt. at State Govt. level).

The WUAs would need to be permitted to fix and levy water charges which are not lower than the government fixed water rates as also to fix other service and user charges for the WUA to levy.

Based on the performance of WUA as regards all members (and non-members) receiving their due shares of water even at the tail of the canal, or of canals being maintained upto a particular minimum standard previously agreed upon between WUA and government, or (where the WUA also undertakes recovery of irrigation charges) upon the percentage of recoveries made, some proportion of the receipts to government of irrigation charges should be returned to the WUA for the tasks to be taken up by it.

Many WUAs would function with the government continuing to manage, operate and maintain the canals. However some WUAs would be willing to take over a particular canal(s). In such cases either the government would have to bring the canal upto a particular standard before it is turned over to the WUA (conducting deferred maintenance and rehabilitation or

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modernization of the canal, reduction or removal of oversized and unauthorized outlets, re-determining of canal capacity, fixing of tail guages and measuring devices, as well as proper outlets like APMs etc.), or government would have to suggest to the WUA and agree with it as to what sort of improvements would have to be undertaken by the WUA and, in lieu of such improvement to be taken up by the WUA, the government would have to agree to make available to the WUA its share of the irrigation charges for a certain number of years. Government would also have to make available irrigation, agriculture and ground water etc. related technical advice, and also perhaps some machinery etc. to the WUAs if the WUA undertakes the canal rehabilitation and modernization work. Major repairs would still have to continue as a government responsibility, though minor repairs would be the responsibility of the WUA and if the government undertakes the same, then government should receive payment from the WUA for the work.

As regards deferred maintenance and rehabilitation/modernization of canals, some pilot projects should be taken up where such rehabilitation precedes formation of the WUA but is taken up where farmers agree to form a WUA upon rehabilitation. Some other pilot projects should be taken up with WUAs being set up first and rehabilitation being subsequently considered, designed and undertaken by WUA and government jointly. Such pilots would need to be taken up in both integrated CAD projects and in non-integrated projects, as the resultant experiences may differ.

The post turn over role of the government vis-à-vis the WUA needs to be spelt out in quite some detail[3] .

Experience also seems to show that the local (panchayat) body and the WUA cannot be one and the same. The local body has many other non-irrigation related functions, and its boundaries also are not coterminus with the command areas of either a water course or a canal. Hence local leaders have concerns and priorities that differ from (or may even come in conflict with) those of the WUA. Also the interaction between members of WUAs need to be more frequent and intense than the interaction of the local populace with a local panchayat body.

Hence the system of WUAs that this writer envisages as being desirable is as follows :

WUA below the outlet (or a sub-committee of the WUA)

$\updownarrow$

WUA above the outlet

$\updownarrow$

(possible association or federation or WUAs at minor or branch level)

$\updownarrow$

representation of WUAs, as different from representation of local bodies, Pradhans, Pramukhs, MLAs, MPs in the Water Distribution or Water Regulation Committees.

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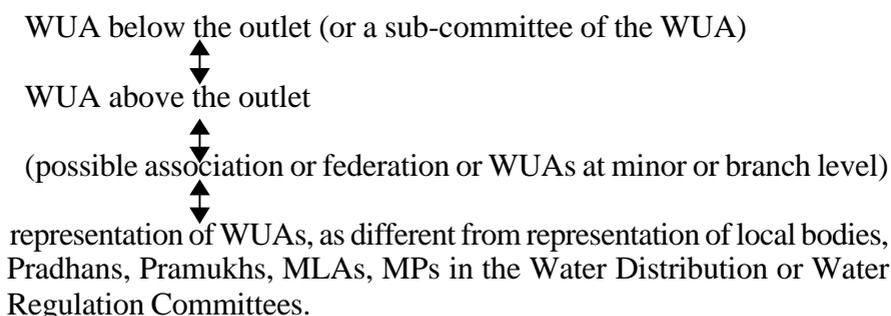
[3]Some idea of the government's role has been provided in a post National Conference on PIM (1997) paper on propagating PIM (based on a Conference Group Report) by Rakesh Hooja forthcoming in the next issue of Prashashnika (HCMRIPA, Jaipur)

For CAD Projects, in the Command Area Development Authority (CADA) in addition to representation of the officers representing different secretariat-administrative departments and the executive-field departments and project officers, and Collectors, MPs, MLAs, Pradhans, Pramukhs, and nominated farmers, some representatives of the WUAs in the command area should also be made members. However this would serve the purpose only for integrated CAD projects. For non-integrated irrigation schemes perhaps a multi departmental, multi-disciplinary coordination committee would need to be created for each irrigation scheme, or for a group of irrigation schemes in an area, and alongwith officers and some panchayat non-officials, representation of WUAs would need to be provided for in the multi disciplinary Coordination Committee.

At the State Government level it would be desirable to have a PIM cell created at the Secretariat level in the Command Area and Water Utilization Department. Two or three multi disciplinary PIM teams should also be created in the CAD & WU Department which could be sent-from project to project to motivate and facilitate the WUAs and to act as catalysts for PIM. These Team could be used to visit and service not only CAD Projects but also non-CAD Projects. For CAD Projects the PIM cell in the CAD & WU Department would be the coordinating and nodal point for all PIM related activities. However for the non-CAD Projects the Irrigation, Agriculture and Ground Water Departments would also need to create and officer-in-charge for PIM in their executive departments so as to facilitate and propagate PIM. The PIM Cell of CAD Department and the PIM incharges in other departments could also interact with NGOs, experts, retired officials regarding further steps to be taken to further PIM. The Multidisciplinary PIM Team of CAD Department and the officer-in-charge of PIM in each other concerned department would have to work at creating local interface mechanisms between government and the WUA or the Farmers in the Command area. NGOs could also prove helpful in this work.

A standing High level Group for Participatory Irrigation Management has already been set up at the State Government level in many states like Rajasthan to ensure inter-departmental coordination.

Going by the experience of Chak Committees in CAD IGNP and Catchment Committees in CAD-Chambal Rajasthan, it is also felt that there should not be any effort to create a large number of WUAs in a short time, nor to try and to hurriedly cover an entire project by WUAs. Thus numerical targets for creation of WUAs should not be fixed. This would only lead to the creation of associations on paper rather than of effective WUAs. Instead the effort should be to propagate PIM and to let effective WUAs emerge at their own speed, in their own style, with their own objectives and tasks as well as their own organizations. The effort should be that initially some pilot WUAs emerge in the integrated CAD Projects and similarly some pilot WUAs come into being in the non-CAD Projects. The experience with them would enable

the government to reorient its working in such a manner that genuine irrigation agency - farmer partnerships in irrigation management may emerge[4].

Similarly going by past experience the effort should be to try and discourage formal elections within the WUAs but to try and have concensus based selection of WUA leaders to perform the management functions. This may help to control the emergence of factionalism amongst the members of the WUA and thus contribute to greater sustainability.

Similarly it has to be recognized that financial and infrastructural support may enable WUAs to be initially created, but unless major social, institutional and HRD support is made available, sustainability would not be achievable. PIM must not be looked upon as a means to help canal or CAD officers in performing their duties, but as a measure to evolve a sustaining joint management partnership. It should be based not on departmentally or functionally segmented efforts and strategies, but upon a holistic, comprehensive and integrated multidisciplinary approach and strategy aimed at optimal use of our precious water resources in the State.

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[4] For a debate between 'Big Bang' approach versus a slow and steady approach to propagating genuine PIM the reader could refer to the last 2 years issues of INPIM Newsletter being supplied by EDI Washington on through counting chapters of INPIM. (For Indian PIM which also has copies of the INPIM Newsletter one may contact L.K. Joshi, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India)

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Development of Roof Top Water Harvesting System in Darjeeling

- Rajesh Pandey*

Abstract

This paper examines the problem of water scarcity in the hilly areas in general and particularly the remote and far off locations within the district of Darjeeling in West Bengal. Darjeeling is well known for its Tourism and Tea but the problems being faced by the villagers are not very well documented. This paper is based on the intervention made by the district administration for mitigating the hardship of the common villagers by suggesting a very simple, cost effective, easy to implement and replicable solution through dovetailing of rooftop water harvesting system with the existing Rural Development Schemes. The methodology for the preparation of the project involves Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises at the Gram Panchayat level and involvement of local NGO's at the scheme formulation level.

At the time of transfer of the author from Darjeeling, this scheme was sent in the form of a project proposal for the approval of the Planning Commission by the district administration as a special intervention in the form of Special Central assistance.

Introduction

Darjeeling being a hill station, has always faced water crisis almost through out the year, barring some months of the monsoon season. The crisis has been felt for drinking water purpose, for other house-hold uses, for use in irrigation, cattle requirement (as cattle rearing is one of the major agricultural activities of the rural hinterland) and for various other needs. The crisis is felt acutely in the areas under tremendous population pressure and heavy commercial activity such as the municipal sub-divisional towns of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong. While regular efforts are being made by municipal authorities and Public Health Engineering department under the Darjeeling Gorkha Autonomous Hill Council (DGAHC) to tackle the problem, a long term and sustainable solution still remains elusive. Much of the effort has gone in planning huge projects with high cost implications while the usage of low cost technology has found less importance in the scheme of things. Though water harvesting & watershed schemes have been identified as an important

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activity in the hill region, they lack focus and support required at the ground level. Studies which have been done in this field have not percolated down to the block or gram panchayat level for planing and development. It is particularly appalling to note that though the water crisis exists in the entire district, there has been very little effort to prepare a co-coordinated policy for alleviating the extreme hardship of the people living in villages since most of the efforts and resources have been channelised towards providing solution to the water scarcity in the municipal areas of Darjeeling town and other sub-divisional towns.

In this background, planning and development of small and local sources of harvesting water assumes great significance. One such scheme is the ***Roof-Top water-harvesting*** system. It is a common knowledge that availability of water is not a problem in the hills since Darjeeling gets rainfall for 215 days on an average in a year. The real question is to harness it and store it for subsequent use. Housetops in the hills are invariably sloped to drain out the water faster then the usual flat roof. Water draining down the roof can be collected very easily through a channel running parallel to the down-edge of the roof and thereafter channelised to a storage tank or a ground reservoir. For the poor households this will require an additional expenditure on water tank or constructing a reservoir. It was therefore proposed that a community based water-harvesting scheme shall be prepared in all the areas as far as practicable. This requires implementing this scheme in a cluster-based manner. Items required for this water harvesting system are:-

a)   Iron/plastic water tank for individual schemes.
b)   U-shaped tin channels to be fixed at the down-edge of the roof tin.
c)   Plastic/cast iron pipes to connect the roof channel to the storage tank.
d)   Construction of community ground water reservoirs covering 10-12 households.
e)   Suitable cover for the reservoir.
f)   Periodic disinfection of such stored water.

Rainfall Data for Darjeeling District

As mentioned earlier, the Darjeeling hills receive very heavy rainfall for almost 215 days in a year on an average. The rainfall data, which is normally recorded at the blocks and sub divisions is easily available with the District Magistrate's Office.

Since this scheme has been devised mainly to harvest the rainwater, it is very important to first look into the various rainfall related data for the district. Rain fall Data for the last 3 years for the 3 hill sub-divisions of the District of Darjeeling (Sub-Division Wise) is as given below:-

Year	Darjeeling	Kurseong	Kalimpong
1998	2803.94 mm	3973.55 mm	2445.59 mm
1999	2716.89 mm	2378.83 mm	4120.01 mm
2000	2153.10 mm	3366.40 mm	1641.28 mm
Average	2557.90 mm	3239.50 mm	2735.60 mm

As is evident from the data given above, the average rainfall in the district ranges from 2558 mm in Darjeeling to 3239.50 mm in Kurseong. The rainfall in individual locations may vary to a slight extent but ultimately the above figures can give a basis for some calculation.

As per location investigation it has been ascertained that an average rural household generally uses 2 (two) bundles of G.C.I. sheets on their roof (each GCI sheet measuring 8 feet x 21 feet approx.) thereby giving a total roof top catchment area of 16 feet x 21 feet = 336 feet (approx.).

This catchment area converted into metric unit comes to:
4.87 M x 6.40 M = 31.168 sq. metre (approx).

Now, if we keep 31.168 sq.m as our basic roof top catchment area then the Sub-Division wise annual rainfall received by each rural household can be worked out as follows. In these calculations we are not considering Siliguri Sub-Division, which is in the plains and foothills, and where alternate sources of drinking water are easily available.

a) Darjeeling Sub-division
The average annual rainfall in this Sub-division is 2557.9 mm or 2.5579 metre.

Therefore considering the above mentioned roof catchment area, we can use the formula as below to arrive at the average annual rainfall which can be harvested through the above roof area:-

4.87 m x 6.40 m x 2.55 m x 1000 = 79,478 litres (approx.).

So the average annual rainfall received by a rural house or a rooftop catchment's area comes around to 79,478 litres for Darjeeling sub-division.

Assuming that the average requirement of water for a person per day is 10 (ten) litres, then the daily requirement of water for a family of 6 persons comes out to be equal to 10 x 6 = 60 litres.

Thus, at the above rate, the yearly requirement of water for a family of six members comes to 60 x 365 = 21,900 litres, which is 27% of the total water, received through such rooftop harvesting.

Normally the water crisis is most severe during the dry season, i.e. during the period when the rainwater is not available. The total requirement for a family of 6 can be calculated as follows for the 150 dry days to be 10 x 6 x 150 = 9,000 litres which is only 11% of the total water received through such rooftop harvesting.

Therefore we can see that the water requirement for the whole year for a family is only 27% of the rainfall water received by the family through the rooftop. On the other hand if we assume that the requirement of the family is only during the

dry season then this comes to only 11% of the rainfall received by the family through the rooftop. Thus, it is very clear that if the rainwater is properly harvested then this can pave the way for a sustainable and a cost-effective solution to this long-persisting problem and misery of the hill district.

b)   Kurseong Sub-Division

The average annual rainfall in this sub-division is 3239.5 mm or 3.2395 metre.

Therefore considering the above mentioned roof catchment area we can use the formula as below to arrive at the average annual rainfall which can be harvested through the above roof area:-

4.87 m x 6.40 m x 3.2395 m x 1000 = 1,00,672.64 litres.

On calculation it is apparent that the requirement of a family of 6 persons for one year can be met by harnessing only 22% of the rooftop rain water. The requirement for the dry season of 150 days comes to only about 9% of the total rainfall received through the roof of the concerned household based on the above average rainfall data.

c)   Kalimpong Sub-division

The average annual rainfall in this sub-division is 2735.6 mm or 2.7356 metre.

Therefore considering the above mentioned roof catchment area we can use the formula as below to arrive at the average annual rainfall which can be harvested through the above roof area:-

4.87m x 6.40 m x 2.7356 m x 1000 = 85,088.64 litres.

So the average annual rainfall received by a rural house from its rooftop catchment area comes to around 85,088 litres for Kalimpong sub-division.

Here again, if we see the calculation percentage-wise then it would imply that the requirement of the entire family of 6 persons for the year can be met by harnessing only 26% of the roof-top rain water. The requirement for the dry season of 150 days comes to only about 11% of the total rainfall on the roof of the concerned household.

Even considering the lowest rainfall data for the 3 sub-divisions in the 3 years for which data has been collected it would appear that -

i)   In Darjeeling sub-division 67,108 liters of water can be harnessed in the year of which only 32.63% is the requirement for the full year.

ii)   In Kurseong sub-division 74,134 liters of water can be harnessed in the year of which only 29.54% is the requirement for the full year.

iii)   In Kalimpong sub-division 51,155 liters of water can be harnessed in the year of which only 42.81% is the requirement for the full year.

Rain-Water Harvesting Scheme

In order to harness the excess rainwater and to use it during the lean and dry season a tank or a reservoir has to be constructed which will be used to store the water. Keeping in view the uneven and unpredictable nature of distribution of rainfall month-wise as well as on a daily basis throughout the year, the storage tank or reservoir will be required to have a capacity of at least 10,000 litres for a compact community cluster of approx. 10 households, so that even if there is no rainfall for a continuous period of 17 days the reservoir will be in a position to meet the daily requirement of the community. For individual beneficiaries where the formation of cluster is a difficult proposition or there is no suitable land available for the construction of a reservoir of 10,000 litre storage capacity, it is proposed that individual tanks with a capacity of around 1,500 litres should be sufficient to cover a stretch of about 25 to 30 dry days for a household of 6 persons.

In order to keep the entire scheme as simple as possible it is proposed that the rainwater from the individual rooftop area can be collected through a gutter channel fitted at the edge of the roof top from where it can be channelised through a U-shaped funnel into a plastic/cast iron pipe and through it ultimately to the reservoir/tanks through a suitable pipeline.

In the hills there are innumerable natural springs and jhoras, which are perennial and semi perennial in nature. Therefore, based on suitable local knowledge this reservoir can be supplemented by small jhoras and natural springs wherever they are available so that the total dependence on the rain-water during the dry season can be reduced. In such places where the natural springs are available, pipelines can be drawn from the spring up to the reservoir. It has been seen that the use of Bamboo as a water - pipe has been quite effective both cost-wise as well as from the point of view of maintenance. Some check-dams can be constructed using a minimal masonry work as far as practicable to store the water of these streams. Thus, local knowledge is a must for harnessing the water of those perennial streams.

Again, in places where large tanks with capacity of 10,000 litres or more are not viable and practicable due to non-availability of suitable land or for any other reason, a plastic poly-pond can be considered as an alternative water-harvesting structure. This structure is basically a tank dug in the earth having a big surface area and having a thick plastic poly sheet forming the separation between the water and the earth. However, it must be borne in mind that this water which is stored in the Plastic-poly pond can primarily be used only for the non-drinking purposes. Further, these ponds can also be constructed in the areas as mentioned

above along with the RCC reservoirs, for use of the community for non-drinking household, irrigation, cattle and other purposes.

One basic premise in the entire project is the necessity of a GCI sheet rooftop. However, in various remote locations of the district people still have thatch roofs to a very large extent. Therefore it is essential that these thatch roofs are also converted to GCI sheet roofs. One option is that the thatch roofs of those houses especially falling under the potential areas of the project may be converted into GCI sheet roofs, as and when possible, under various developmental schemes in a planned way. This may be given a priority by the various Gram Panchayats and the Blocks while implementing development schemes. As an example, the Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) which is being implemented through the Gram Panchayats can have the Upgradation component earmarked for conversion of existing thatch roof houses into GCI-Roofed ones.

Once the water is stored for a considerable period of time, the disinfection of this water is very essential. As per the **"Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality"** issued by **The World Health Organisation, Geneva,** Normal Condition of Chlorination (i.e. a free chlorine 0.5 mg, per litre, at least 30 minutes contact, PH less than 8.0 and water turbidity of less than 1 NYU) can bring about over 99% reduction of E. Coli and certain other viruses. Thus, chlorination can be considered as a very cost effective and usable disinfection method. It has been ascertained that 1 (one) tablet of chlorine can purify 1 (one) litre of water or 8 to 10 drops of zeoline-200 (liquid) can purify 1 (one) litre of water. Thus, this disinfectant will have to be used periodically on the basis of the quantity of usage, the daily water drawal from the tank/reservoir and the rate of replenishment. Primarily speaking, disinfectant will have to added at the rate as given above whenever the drawal from the tank is made on a periodic basis. In the case of very interior and far flung rural areas where neither chlorine nor zeoline is available then 1 (one) teaspoon of bleaching powder can be used in diluted form to purify 50 litres of water. However it should be used as an alternative and not as the primary disinfectant.

Scheme Implementation in Darjeeling

In order to have a smooth implementation of the schemes under the water harvesting project, the district administration made an indicative earmarking of the funds under the centrally sponsored scheme of JGSY for the financial year 2000-2001 (which was routed through the Development Blocks/Gram Panchayats) for procuring the materials and skilled masons in all those identified potential areas, while the labour component was to be voluntarily contributed by the local beneficiaries, so that the local people's participation was ensured for wider adaptability and acceptance.

Because of historical reasons Darjeeling district has almost 30% of its Landmass covered by the tea gardens. This means that a large chunk of the district population lives in Tea Garden areas where strictly speaking the responsibility of providing safe and potable drinking water to the inhabitants is upon the Tea Garden management under the provisions of the Plantation Labour Act. For such areas it was proposed that since these areas also fall within the Gram Panchayats, the schemes for water harvesting will be taken up by the Gram Panchayats in consultation with the Tea Garden Management. The land for construction of the storage reservoir will be identified by the Garden Management. Similarly, in view of the fact that provision of drinking water to the workers is the prime responsibility of the Tea Garden Management, these schemes will have to be funded by the Garden Management. However, to fill up the critical gap, funds can be earmarked by the District Administration for these areas also on a need based approach.

In order to have a wider involvement and to enlist the co-operation of the various local NGO's, three working groups related to the different aspects of the project were formed as follows:-

Group-A-dealing with the P.R.A. methodology and the training aspects;
Group-B-dealing with the aspect of water harvesting for drinking purpose and;
Group-C-dealing with the aspect of water harvesting for non-drinking purpose.

These groups were assigned specific areas for co-ordinating the activities relating to Rain water harvesting. Further, the working groups would also interact with the Gram Panchayat functionaries on a regular basis. These groups collect the feedback from the various nodal persons at the G.P. level, which can be used for the proper implementation and for monitoring of the project. For this purpose the Gram Panchayats were asked to identify one person for each Gram Panchayat as their nodal person who could be either a Panchayat member or any official or any other citizen who could take the responsibility and challenge and who had the desired level of competence.

Although the basic concept and the guidelines can remain the same, the project may undergo slight changes and variations from place to place depending on the location and topography and also because of differences in the needs and requirements of the people of different regions etc.

Training Mechanism

The Training of the resources persons in this subject was held at the respective **Block headquarters** along with the five-day residential training of the Panchayat functionaries. In fact, the training of Gram Panchayat functionaries was due since the Gram Panchayat elections in May, 2000 which had returned almost 1600 Gram Panchayat members including Prodhan and Upa Prodhan for the 3 Hill Sub-divisions involving 112 Gram Panchayats. As all the G.P. level Panchayat

functionaries attended the training, there was better interaction among the trainees and the trainers. Out of these five days of training one day was exclusively reserved for **Roof-Top Water Harvesting Project** related inputs. A core group consisting of different NGO's, volunteers & others imparted the training. **Participatory Rural Appraisal** being the basic approach for collection of data/local information for devising the scheme, maximum interaction between the trainees and the trainer was attempted.

During the training there was an **ice breaking session** using water as the main theme where the G.P. functionaries and the nodal person were trained on the selection of target areas and also the indicators as already mentioned. Also the panchayat members were asked to **prioritize** their developmental needs vis-a-vis their **water-scarcity problem** according to their area and need and were asked to suggest solutions accordingly.

The nodal persons were trained to coordinate the whole process of collection and compilation of the indicators and data at the Gram Panchayat level. The trainees were encouraged to submit only the accurate and factual data. It was emphasized that slight variations of the scheme and project estimate will be allowed keeping in view the different location and topography.

During the training a session on the role of the community in solving its own water problems using various examples was also conducted. Further, different types of water management and water harvesting techniques were suggested and presented to the trainees who were to select the most relevant practice for their respective areas. **Finally,** after the training session each Gram Panchayat was asked to decide on a plan of action most suitable to their respective areas, as the **solutions regarding water management are area and location specific**.

Since the training of the G.P. level Functionaries was mainly focused on the clarification of the concept of Rain-Water Harvesting Techniques and preparation of a preliminary database in respect of the villages, the functionaries were provided necessary inputs to conduct **PRA** (Participatory Rural Appraisal) exercises in their respective jurisdictions.

As mentioned earlier, to take this project to the grass-root level it was decided that the nodal person will be selected G.P. level wise and a date will be fixed for the village level meeting by this nodal person where the villagers are invited and their presence is properly recorded. During this meeting the villagers prepare a very basic village map in which they identify:

a)   The hamlets with a cluster of 10 or more houses,
b)   Existing water sources,
c)   Potential water source,
d)   Whether the houses of the hamlets have GCI sheet roofing or thatch roofs,
e)   In case of hamlets having GCI roofing then a suitable land for storage tank/ reservoir,

f)   In case there is no GCI sheet roofing in the hamlet then any suitable alternative water source, if any,

g)   Approximate month wise rainfall data of the village.

Once the PRA exercises have been conducted at the village level for collecting the desired data and information village wise, the concerned Block Development Officers collects the maps and reports from the G.P. level nodal persons and after necessary checking and compilation, forward it to the District Magistrate's Office, Darjeeling for creating suitable data base about the existing of water resources and other information.

Funding of the Project

The project can be funded through one or the other government programs such as those connected with rural development, particularly the Indira Awas Yozana, Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yozana and other poverty alleviation programs. Construction of roof channels and individual tanks can be made mandatory for the houses to be built under Indira Awas Yozana. Similarly in areas where thatch roofs exist suitable instructions can be issued to the Panchayats to undertake the **Upgradation schemes** under IAY for providing GCI roofs.

Funding for construction of community reservoirs can be made from JGSY. Funds under NWDPRA, SCP, TSP and Special Central Assistance Scheme are also available which can be allocated sectorally for water harvesting scheme. Government of India has recently announced a national policy on rainwater harvesting system, which will be implemented by the **National Drinking Water Mission**. Suitable assistance can, therefore be tied up with the National Drinking water mission also for implementation of the scheme on a larger scale.

Conclusion

Water is essential to sustain life, and a satisfactory supply must be made available to citizens. In remote areas of the hilly region, water scarcity is a major problem and many a times, the rural womenfolk have to travel even three to four kilometers to get drinking water, that too from sources like natural springs or jhoras, which may be perennial or may not be so. In places where such source of water is not existent perennially there is a potential hazard of usage of unsafe water, which can lead to other health related problems. This project was implemented in Darjeeling district with the support of the NGO's and Gram Panchayats on a very small scale by earmarking a small fraction of the funds under JGSY for Water Harvesting related scheme. It has to be kept in mind that the implementation of this scheme without proper steps for disinfection of the collected and stored water will lead to other health hazards. Thus every effort should be made to achieve a drinking water quality as high as practicable.

A Study of Capacity Building under Sector Reforms Programme For Providing Drinking Water in West Tripura District
- V. Thulasidas* & Manish Kumar**

Introduction

The Sector Reforms Project has been introduced in selected districts of the country, including West Tripura district, on an experimental basis. It is part of the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission. The Project envisages community participation in creating and maintaining drinking water sources and sanitation facilities. It re-defines the role of the government from the earlier model of a provider to that of a facilitator. The Sector Reforms Project envisages a Mission approach, requiring creation of institutions that are relatively more independent and focused. The Project is driven by the demand originating from within the community in contrast to the erstwhile practice of thrusting a source on the community without involving them. The Project envisages high level of people's participation for making them self-reliant in due course of time. It aims at capacity building at the village level and creating awareness. In short, the objectives of the pilot Project are the following;

a) Increasing community participation and creating awareness that water is a resource which has to be paid for. The operational and maintenance aspect of the source created would be the responsibility of the community. The community needs to consider imposition of user charge for maintenance of the source.

b) Creating adequate water sources in the district within a specified time-frame of two years.

c) Granting autonomy to the village in choice of source and manner of its implementation.

d) Creating gender sensitivity towards drinking water problems since mostly it is women who are involved in the matter.

e) Emphasizing quality of source so that it is sustainable and safe for drinking purpose.

f) The model should be replicable in other districts of the State/Country.

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Initiation of the Project

West Tripura District has an approximate population of 15 lakhs. It is densely populated and more than 25% of its population belong to Scheduled Tribes. A major section of the population lives below poverty line, specially in the hilly areas. The district is remotely located in the national context and, by implication, the benefits of modern technologies are late to arrive here. There were 3824 villages in 420 Gram Panchayats of 15 Blocks of West District when the Project was initiated. Out of these, 2194 were 'fully covered' (FC), 1459 were 'partially covered' (PC) and 171 villages were 'not covered' (NC) as on 1st April, 2001. However, these statistical figures do not necessarily indicate ground realities. The classification of villages as FC, PC and NC is based on the criteria of the Ministry of Rural Development that one hand pump will ordinarily deliver 12 litres of water per minute and such a source will be sufficient to meet the needs of 250 persons. In West Tripura District many hand pumps discharges much less.

The District adopted the Sector Reforms Project in the financial year 2000-01. The District Water and Sanitation Mission (DWSM) was constituted as per guidelines of Sector Reforms Project and registered as a Society with its own bye-laws. The ground work consumed some time and effective implementation could start only from November 2000, onwards. The total cost of Project sanctioned for the Mission is Rs. 28.19 crores of which Rs. 7.70 crores was received in March, 2000 as the first installment. A separate bank account is maintained for the Mission operated jointly by the Executive Engineer, PHE and the District Collector. The Mission began implementing the drinking water component of the Project in the first phase.

The Project implementation requires to take place in the following stages;

i)   A Society has to be formed and registered.
ii) The members of the society, officials and non-officials, have to be sensitized with sector reforms concept.
iii) The panchayati raj institutions have to be sensitized with sector reforms concept.
iv) The people in rural areas have to be sensitized with the sector reforms concept and their confidence won. They have to form Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) and mobilize public contribution for taking up source creating activities.
v)   The members of the press and NGOs and other opinion makers have to be sensitized and their confidence won.
vi) The office procedures for various formalities have to be evolved so that it meets the requirements of effective delivery and monitoring.
vii) Deployment of staff and their training has to be arranged.

Creation of Institutional Framework at District Level

There was confusion in the initial phase of constituting the Society. The guidelines required the Head of District Council to lead the Mission. The geographical area of West Tripura District has two District Councils - one under the 72nd Amendment of the Constitution and the other exclusively for tribal areas under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. The matter was resolved by securing the co-operation of both the Councils in a series of informal meetings. The Chairman of the District Council under the Panchayati Raj, the Zilla Sabhadhipati, took over as the Chairman of the Mission. Suitable representatives of the District Council for Tribal Areas were also inducted in the Mission with assurances that the interest of tribal areas would be protected without compromising the powers of District Council for Tribal Areas. The members of the District Water and Sanitation Mission met on several occasions from November, 2000 to January, 2001. The meetings were held more frequently in the initial stage so as to bring clarity about the concepts of the Project and evolve a workable model in the context of the State of Tripura. The issues confusing the Mission in the beginning were the following;

a) The members representing Tripura Tribal Area Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) area, which has maximum problem relating to drinking water, felt that their interest would be compromised vis a vis the other District Council under Panchayati Raj (Zilla Parishad).

b) Whether the VWSC are to be created for each source or one for each Gram Panchayat? What about Gram Panchayats which fall under the jurisdiction of TTAADC also?

c) What will be the relationship of the VWSC with the Gram Panchayats? Will it be independent of it or will it form part of it with a certain degree of autonomy?

d) Whether purchase of all material (such as cement, iron rods etc.) is to be made by the VWSC on their own or certain part of it should be made centrally? Many of the VWSC's would be in remote areas where such material would not be easily available.

e) Whether NGOs are available in the State to assist in the Project implementation?

One of the issues that came up for discussion was the marginal role of Blocks and Panchayat Samiti under the Project. The Village Water and Sanitation Committee, a village level organization, was to directly communicate with the District Water and Sanitation Committee, the executive wing of DWSM, a body at the District level. This threw up unusual problems of administrative nature such as identifying the signature of the members of VWSCs formed, monitoring of the works, distribution of materials etc. The DWSM was of the opinion that an excessive centralization at the district level would make the implementation difficult.

Some members of the DWSM were against the idea of routing the proposals of VWSC through the Panchayat Samitis. The Mission guidelines provided flexibility to the DWSM for evolving a mechanism best suited to the district. Accordingly, it was decided that District Water and Sanitation Committee (DWSC), the executive wing of the DWSM, shall involve Block Development Officers and the Zonal Development Officers of the District Council for the administrative aspects of Project execution such as scrutiny, monitoring, distribution etc. A Block Water and Sanitation Committee was accordingly constituted with the mandate to monitor the progress of the work and take up sources with high capital cost that covered several Gram Panchayats. The decision making power at village level, it was decided, would rest solely with the VWSC, which, in any case, would also function as a Committee of the Gram Panchayat for drinking water. Further, it was felt that NGOs capable of undertaking the responsibilities under the Project were not available in the District. The areas with acute drinking water problems are affected by insurgency making it difficult for NGOs to have a meaningful presence.

Creation of Institutional Framework at Village Level

The concept of Sector Reforms envisages a major role for the Village Water and Sanitation Committee. The actual implementation of Project is also left on to their wisdom. The officials and engineers were skeptical that such freedom would be practical. There was fear of money being defalcated. The technical members questioned the ability of the villagers to execute the Project on their own. Hence, in the first stage, officials at different levels whose cooperation was critical to the success of the Project were sensitized about the rationale behind Sector Reforms Project. The fear of defalcation was addressed by making suitable guidelines that do no interfere with the independence of the VWSC but allows space for preventive action if a report is received. The suspicion of technical incapability was addressed also. The local labourers had constructed a large number of sources in remote areas of the District in the past and many of them had, thus, acquired the skill for such works. These included construction of ring-well, sanitary well, Mark III etc. Further training was proposed to be imparted at the Block level for the VWSCs. As regard the high capital cost sources such as deep tube well, it was decided that technical supervisors shall be detailed for monitoring the progress. The line department i.e. Public Health Engineering, shall closely inspect the execution of these works. The fund will also be released in installments so that the works are conducted fairly and only after proper inspection reports are received that the subsequent installment would be released.

Involvement of the Panchayati Raj Institutions

The acceptance by the people was the greatest support needed for the Project. The Panchayati Raj Institutions played an invaluable role in this regard. The Sabhadhipati of the Zilla Parishad, also the Chairman of DWSM, personally

attended a few workshops at National level and strongly propagated the Project theme on his return. He was well received at the lower levels despite initial hesitation. People had for long been taking water as an assured service to be provided by the government and the idea of paying for it seemed hard to accept. However, the efforts of the Zilla Parishad and the Panchayat Samiti created a conducive environment. All the 15 Blocks in the District held exclusive workshops on the Project in the month of December, 2000, where 'Pradhans' of all the villages were invited. Leaflets were distributed in local dialects, Bengali and Kok borok, explaining the salient features of the Sector Reforms concept. The Project was discussed by the people in the Gram Sangsad organized for Gramodaya, an annual exercise of participatory Planning at the village level. The plans of Gramodaya are finally compiled at the Block and District level to formulate the Block and District Plan. As a direct consequence to the discussions, Village and Water Sanitation Committees were formed in many Gram Panchayats and contribution obtained from people for creation of water sources of their preference. As on 31.3.2002, the villagers had constituted VWSC in 400 out of the 420 Gram Panchayats.

Efforts were also made to sensitise the Press with the Sector Reforms concept and the Zilla Sabhadhipati held a press conference especially for this purpose. Although the initial reaction of the Press was not positive, they have not been averse to the concept after many of their doubts were dispelled.

Development of Office Management Systems

The Office management aspect of the Mission was the next great hurdle in the implementation of the Project. Although the budget of the Mission is considerably high, the Mission guideline is to re-deploy existing manpower. The district administration being short of manpower found this task very difficult. The risk of Departmentalization was also high. The Mission approach implied a faster, non-departmental mode of operation. The initial selection of Member Secretary of District Water & Sanitation Committee, the key man in the Mission hierarchy, was an Executive Engineer of the Public Health Engineering but he was asked to hold this responsibility as an additional charge. Incidentally, the concerned Executive Engineer was also the most busy Officer of his department being a Drawing & Disbursing Officer and scarcely had time for the Mission. As a consequence, he was dependent much on the support of his departmental staff for running the Project. Most of the staff supporting him scarcely understood the difference in approach between the present Project and the schemes they were implementing earlier. Their Office system was also not equipped to deal with the volume of documents being received from VWSCs and the procedure of monetary transactions involved. The documents and requests being received from the villages were consequently getting misplaced or lost. The DWSC was unable to sanction Projects in the absence of requisite secretarial support. The first Project was sanctioned in the

month of February, 2001 in the village of Twithumpui in Teliamura Sub-division. It was for construction of a ring well. Subsequently, in the month of March, 2001, a Project for Deep Tube Well was sanctioned for Dukli Block.

In the month of May, 2001, an analysis of the Mission's performance indicated that although the DWSC had sanctioned many Projects and accepted formation of many VWSCs, the number of Projects for which money had actually been released stood at two only. An urgent need was felt to address the lacunae in the Office management. This was important because after successful Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities, the demands for various sources were fast flowing in. The villagers had deposited their contribution in the Banks in many cases and were getting restive at the delay in receiving the Mission's contribution. If the money was not released soon, they could become disillusioned. Taking the above into account, it was decided to seek the service of the Executive Engineer, PHE, on full time basis in the Office of the District Water and Sanitation Committee. The matter was taken up with the State government and soon an Executive Engineer was posted in the Office of the DM & Collector (West) with directions to assume the responsibility of Member Secretary, DWSC, operating from the Collectorate. In the meantime, observing that the Mission would need to address the demands generated by 420 Gram Panchayat and 172 ADC Villages, a DWSC Cell in the Office of the DM & Collector was opened with five dedicated secretarial staff to look after Sector Reforms Project exclusively. Anticipating that manpower shortage would not be easy to overcome, the DWSC decided to computerize its entire operation. A software was developed with the assistance of National Informatics Centre (NIC) to manage the data electronically. The Software maintains vital information in respect of a VWSC and also executes clerical functions such as reflecting the total cost of a Project, the materials component and the mandays component of the cost, generation of sanction orders, managing cost estimates on localized basis etc.. Files of separate colours for the Blocks were introduced to make file retrieval and storage easy.

Standardization of Project Management Processes

The procedure of the DWSC to sanction a Project was standardized. An application form was designed containing terms and conditions of the Sector Reforms concept and circulated to all Gram Panchayats. The application form, modeled as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the VWSC and the DWSM, was to be submitted giving all relevant details and expressing acceptance of the terms. These applications are channelised through the Block Development Officers (BDOs) or the Zonal Development Officer (ZDO), TTAADC, who authenticate the signatures and verify other facts stated by the VWSCs before sending the same to the DWSC Cell. A checklist is provided to the BDOs/ZDOs, TTAADC, to assist them in making systematic verification. The

BDOs process applications received from all 420 Gram Panchayats in the District, and are entrusted with the responsibility of forming one VWSC in each Gram Panchayat. The ZDO, TTAADC, processes requests from 172 ADC villages and has been entrusted with the responsibility of forming one VWSC in each ADC village. The DWSC Cell scrutinizes the applications and places these in the meetings of the DWSC for clearance. After the clearance is granted by the DWSC, the MOU is signed and a Memo issued to the VWSC acknowledging the acceptance of the VWSC formation. The memo contains a unique, computer generated identity number for the concerned VWSC which they would require to quote in future correspondence. The requests for drinking water sources are received along with the proposal for the constitution of VWSC as well as subsequent to signing of MOU. The documents are checked to confirm if 10% contribution has been deposited in the Bank account with reference to the standard estimate for the source.

The community contribution is obtained by the VWSC in cash but the VWSC may also cover the cost of contribution, fully or partially, by assurances of free labour from the community. When the documents are found complete in all respects, the same is placed in the meetings of DWSC. Sanction orders for approved works are generated through a computer software. The material component of the work order is divided into two parts. Some of the material components are not locally available, and if the purchase of the same were to be entrusted to the VWSC, it was feared that large scale theft from the existing sources could result, for sale to the VWSC through the secondary market. The responsibility of supply of such material had been fixed on Executive Engineer, Rural Development, through his store purchase. The store materials were supplied and stocked in the Block Office, from where the VWSCs lifted them to the work site. However, the supply through Stores was subsequently abandoned on the request of the Panchayati Raj bodies in view of delay in effecting supplies.

Standard estimate has been prepared for sanction of projects which are Block-specific. It is based on past experience in creating such sources. In case of innovative sources, the Executive Engineer, PHE examines the cost estimates technically. It was felt that there could be cost over runs in the interior areas of the District where communication links are poor. Therefore, the BDOs have been empowered to recommend up to 10% of extra cost incurred in excess of the standard estimates in case of interior areas after being satisfied of the need for the same. He would conduct an inspection for such need through a technical staff available in his office. Detailed guidelines were issued to the Block Development Officers, the Village Water & Sanitation Committees and the Banks on the operational aspects.

Analysis of Project Achievements & Policy Recommendations

a)   The acceptance of Sector Reforms concept by the Panchayati Raj institutions is the key to its successful implementation at the village level. Hence, the IEC activities should concentrate on this aspect. The community has already collected Rs. 64 lakhs by July, 2002 under Sector Reforms in West Tripura District, of which Rs. 52 lakhs is in cash and the balance as labour. This was possible because of the Panchayati Raj institutions and their ability to mobilize public opinion in favour of Sector Reforms. Further, the IEC activity must also aim to alleviate fears of technicians and other government officers who have been traditionally involved in creating water sources in order that they extend full support to the reform process. **Well-concerted IEC activities are important for the reforms to take roots.**

b)   The total number of sources existing at the start of the project and one year later is as tabulated hereunder:

Sl No	Period	Shallow Tube Well	Mark II & III	Sanitary Well & Ring Well	Deep Tube Well	Remarks
1.	Sanctioned during 2001-02	4520	40	820	6	
2.	Existing sources in March, 2001	7800	4636	3258	NA	Ring wells and shallow tube wells were discouraged.

        The above table indicates the low demand for high capital cost sources such as Deep Tube Well. Preference was for cost effective technology such as Shallow Tube Wells servicing about 9 to 10 households. However, in tribal areas, even though water table is lower, the demand was for ring wells in preference to Mark II and III. The reason is attributable to high content of iron in water discharged through Mark II and III in comparison to ring well. Incidentally, the shallow tube well and ring well were discouraged until the Sector Reforms Project began. The wisdom of the community in choosing the safe water source best suited to them is time tested and ought to be respected generally. **The Mission should facilitate decision making at the village level by providing adequate inputs on key issues such as cost involved, life span, etc.**

c)   As regards high capital cost source such as deep tube wells and overhead tanks, the village level institutions have to be better sensitized about the economics of investment. The cost of a deep tube well is almost Rs. 18 lakhs and it serves about 1500 families in Tripura. The time taken for construction is approximately 18 months. The contribution of community for such a source is Rs. 1.8 lakhs

which appears formidable in the context of the high poverty levels in the State. However, the cost can be made very manageable if contribution is spread over the life cycle of the Project. As for example, if each family were to contribute Rs. 5.00 only per month for the Project life cycle, the total amount collected would be (1500 X 5 X 18=) Rs. 1,35,000/-. In addition, the community can also contribute free labour for laying of pipeline and the estimated cost for labour in the standard estimate comes to nearly Rs. 60,000/-. **A judicious mix of cash and labour contribution can easily enable the community to choose a high capital cost source.**

d)   Similarly, an overhead tank costing Rs. 25 lakhs can also be constructed near a deep tube well for which community contribution of Rs. 2.5 lakhs would have to be raised. It can increase the coverage by at least 1000 families in addition to 1500 families that a deep tube well is ordinarily servicing. Assuming that it will take 2 years to complete the overhead tank, and each family pays Rs. 5.00 per month during the project cycle, the total collection will stand at (2500 X 5 X 24=) Rs. 3.00 lakhs which is sufficient for the community contribution. **It is essential that the collection of contribution from the community be simplified for high cost strategies and adequate publicity be given to this aspect for infusing confidence in the community lest they should abstain from such strategies out of misplaced fear of high contribution involved.**

e)   The maintenance of sources is an important criterion for sustainability. In March, 2001, prior to Sector Reforms, there were 7800 shallow tube wells in the district out of which 534 were unserviceable, accounting for 6.85% of the total. In March, 2002, there were 8759 shallow tube wells out of which 1788 were unserviceable, accounting for 20.5% of total. This quantum jump in unserviceable sources was on account of the sudden transfer of responsibility for maintenance to the community as envisaged in the Sector Reforms policy. It would be prudent if old sources, created prior to Sector Reforms, are maintained in the traditional way for the first year of the Sector Reforms before responsibility is transferred to the VWSCs. The Panchayati Raj institutions in Tripura have devised means of collecting community contribution for maintenance by levying a charge of Rs. 1.00 per family per month. They had accumulated a fund of Rs. 3.5 lakhs by March, 2002 by this means. **Maintenance strategies must receive high importance in the Sector Reforms process.**

f)   A User Committee has been formed for each source and these are composed of women since they have the greatest stake in the provision of drinking water. It is expected that the involvement of women in drinking water source creation and maintenance would make the process more sustainable in future. **Involvement of women is key to the success of Sector Reforms in drinking water sector.**

Micro Issues to be monitored at District Level for Success of the Mission

The following micro issues, to be closely monitored by the DWSM, is vital for the success of reforms process;

i.   The actual implementation of work is inspected systematically by the BDOs and other field functionaries.

ii.   Guidelines for the VWSC are duly followed.

iii. Returns are regularly submitted by the BDOs to enable monitoring at the district level.

iv.   Training is imparted on regular basis at the block level.

v.   User committees are formed with women and decisions taken on future maintenance.

vi.   Store materials are distributed expeditiously.

vii. Utilization of reports are received on completion of projects.

viii. Innovative sources are designed and propagated. These must be cost effective.

ix.   Water recharge and harvesting is also taken seriously by the community.

x.   Water quality is periodically tested and village level knowledge for such checking imparted.

xi.   Ensuring that more high-capital cost sources such as deep tube wells etc. Are in demand because they provide safer water and have longer life span.

xii. Provision of drinking water sources in schools be encouraged with active participation of students.

xiii. One time maintenance of old sources constructed prior to sector reforms be undertaken taking 10% contribution, and then the sources handed over to the VWSCs for future maintenance exclusively by the community.

xiv. Contribution of Rs. 1.00 per family per month be collected regularly by the VWSCs for sustaining creation and maintenance of drinking water sources.

Conclusion

The Sector Reforms concept has found acceptability in West Tripura District despite initial reservation on various accounts. The supportive role of the Panchayati Raj institutions contributed invaluably towards creation of a conducive environment. The public contribution is being received mostly in cash and also as free labour where poverty is endemic. Innovative sources have been taken up in some Blocks. The preference has been in favour of low cost, low gestation period sources. There is need to create awareness and confidence among people to take up high capital cost sources which provide very safe drinking water and are more durable.

Total Literacy - Myth and Reality

- Yogananda Sastry Chaturvedi*

Abstract

The Total Literacy Campaign, a spark ignited in Ernakulam District of Kerala spread to the entire country with a hope to convert the entire populace into full fledged literate without visualizing the need for Post Literacy and Continuing Education until the TLC has been completed in almost 3/4ths of districts of the country. Several suggestions to this effect were not much cared for and a situation came when persons at the help of affairs realized a need for PL & CE. The adoption of IPCL as a technique for imparting instruction in the shortest span proved a damp Squibb since not many really understood the nuances of IPCL strategy. Training imparted to the volunteers was not conceived accurately and more particularly training an illiterate adult is a more complex task - both an art and a science. If training the adult to provide literary skills is possible in a week or 10 days there appears to be no need for research and training institutions and colleges of education in the universities investing precious time and resources. The example of Kerala for replication has done lot of damage to the entire campaign since educated unemployed youth were aplenty available on voluntary basis for serving for short duration. But this was not the case in the rest of the country. The district administration at every place desired to prove one up man ship and roped in the district administration willingly or otherwise for running the programme. External evaluation also became an eyewash merely to secure central grants and the methodology suggested had lot of flaws. Due to decisions taken neither by bureaucracy nor by academicians of currency value.

The whole exercise deserves a deeper and cool re-look to recast the structural and functional roles of persons in addition to generating real demand from the persons for whom the programme is meant. Generation of statistics projecting growth rate is easier than achieved. The current focus on right to education and ban on child labour when

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are enmeshed into the education expansion programme like the district primary education and other similar efforts would surely fetch better results with a hope that atleast the future generation will not require a literacy campaign of this nature and this magnitude.

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The author started the career in NCERT way back in 1967 moved to National Institution of Nutrition in 1969 joined the National Institute of Rural Development in 1975, was on deputation to the Govt. of A.P. during 1987-91 as Joint Director, Behavioral Sciences and returned to National Institute of Rural Development. In all the author has more than 75 publications both in Indian and foreign journals in areas of Education, Health and Nutrition, Rural Development, Organizational Behavior/Organizational Development with an experience of over 35 years.

The total literacy campaign, which has been under implementation for almost a decade, made some impact in some parts of the country. Pursuant to the success witnessed in the Kerala State in Ernakulam District, one district after another took up the challenge. While in Kerala it was only a problem of converting the residual illiterates numbering 24 per cent into full literates in the rest of the country it was just the reverse where nearly 24 percent of the population was literate and the rest of the huge mass represented the illiterate group. The break from traditional center based approach for which structures were created in all the state as a part of the national adult education programme took place with the campaign mode. This in itself was a metamorphosis in the world of adult education. Since the District Collector became the fulcrum of activities, the entire administration at the command of the Collector could be pressed into service and the concept of voluntary participation took deep root due to the overwhelming enthusiasm and participation of people. At this stage one should not lose sight of the historical facts that have contributed to expansion of education in Kerala. Even before the British rule, the Maharajas in Kerala, Travencore/Cochin or other places gave utmost priority to education. Also, the spread of Christianity in Kerala facilitated establishment of educational institutions, triggering literacy expansion. The third and the most important point is the realization that education would become a handy vehicle for migration, became the driving force. Kerala being a small state geographically and the density of population being high necessitated migration to other parts.

While in the rest of the country, persons migrated as unskilled laborers, people from Kerala migrated with education as their specialization, which facilitated their finding job avenues in almost all sectors where educational qualifications and skills are required.

As each district started the campaign attempting to replicate the methodology adopted in Ernakulam of enlisting participation based upon voluntarism, it became a problem as the instruction process commenced. The number of months spent in environment building sapped the energy of the officials and other participating agencies and by the time real instruction commenced, people were not able to demonstrate equal quantum of enthusiasm as was shown in the beginning. Since in Kerala educated unemployed youth were available aplenty, securing volunteers to teach the illiterate was not a problem. In the rest of the country it was like walking on a treadmill to locate educated persons to provide instruction on voluntary basis, more particularly at the timings suitable for the learners. The primers were prepared by the state resource centers following a proto-type. IPCL technique was decided upon without field trials and neither the functionary nor even the volunteers were fully conversant and convinced of the efficacy of the IPCL technique. There were instances where the volunteers switched over to teaching through alphabets as is done in the formal system. The quantum of training provided for the volunteers was also done in a hurried manner, so that nobody understood the nuances of instruction. One basic question lurking in the mind of everybody engaged in adult education is, whether training/teaching is such a simple skill which can be acquired in a matter of just 10 days that too in three phases to enable the volunteer to attain perfection in teaching techniques. Should that be a case, the universities, the training institutions and the colleges of education are wasting their time in arranging longer duration training programmes. The paradox of this situation made a mockery of the adult learning process itself.

With the experience of evaluating the total literacy campaign in about 10 districts in the country in addition to conducting a large number of training programmes for the functionaries at different levels on the methodological issues, it can be said that the adult education department which should have been the fore runner in the campaign, is relegated to less important position instead of being at the steering wheel. The Collector and the revenue department ran the show until they were tired. Subsequently the adult education department has been asked to take over the management after the damage is completed. As can be expected, several districts Collectors took this as a prestigious and challenging programme involving their ego to demonstrate their one-up-manship. During the evaluation, a few aspects, which were swept under the carpet earlier, were noticed and the figures reported as usual got exaggerated. During the process of evaluation, the district administration which was fully geared to assist the external evaluators in the process, also did considerable homework in the form of running special sessions for the neo-literates to concentrate on the primers and more particularly on the

three aspects of reading, writing, and numeracy. The external evaluation, which was made mandatory, has been helpful atleast in compelling the learners to relearn and practice atleast to retain the acquired skills until evaluation was completed. As is common in general elections, in literacy campaign evaluation too, rigging is a common sight mainly to push up the figures of success rate. We had the experience of witnessing graduates also indulging in impersonation for the neo-literates.

Literacy being what it is, that too acquired at an age under peculiar conditions from volunteers who were much younger in age group serving as teachers was not demand driven but pushed down the gullets by the administration, became a bitter pill, which was vomited after the evaluation was over. Post literacy and continuing education were not visualized as fait accompli at the time of planning the total literacy campaign but were subsequently thought of, as many of the neo-literates were on the verge of forgetting whatever little they acquired during the course due to disuse atrophy.

As the saying goes among musicians "if you do not practice for a day you know the difference, if you do not practice for two days the critics notice the difference and if you do not practice for three days the audience notices the difference". May be this is much more applicable to adult learning or functional literacy rather than confined to music alone. The yawning gap between completion of the third primer, the evaluation and the commencement of post literacy sessions has been so wide that in practice a great majority of neo-literate slid back to illiteracy due to disuse atrophy of the acquired literacy skills. The organizers of the programme ought to have visualized the need for incorporating certain criteria for bringing the learning to sustainable levels. The entire progamme has been started on an adhoc and made shift arrangements but not on solid foundation. The hurry demonstrated every day by the district administration to complete the three primers, lost sight of the need to have a look back at the achievement vis-à-vis the problems experienced by the volunteers as also the learners. Not that nothing is achieved in the process it is believed that the quantum of expenditure per learner has been brought down considerably because of not paying anything to the volunteers who rendered the instruction when compared with the center based approach where the instructor was paid regular honorarium. The opportunity costs when worked out including the mandatory dovetailing of the routine functions into the literacy campaign monitoring system proved much more expensive not just in terms of the investments in POL but indeed in relegating the purpose for which they are employed to a second place since the District Collector coerced everybody to toe the line. Looking from yet another angle the urgency of the movement of files has not been given priority and the costs due to the delay got escalated to higher magnitude.

Viewing from the angle of the volunteers these are also drawn from the same socio-economic conditions and are no way in a better condition than the learners. During the evaluation undertaken by NIRD we made it a point to obtain

the views of the volunteers mainly with an intention to measuring the motivational levels. In almost all the districts the common problem was the volunteers requesting the government to consider payment of atleast Rs. 100/- as honorarium per month to sustain their motivation. Looking at the magnitude of the problem on an average per district there were 3.5 to 5 lakh illiterates for coverage, which meant 35,000 to 50,000 volunteers to be roped in to accomplish the task. Going by the demand or expectation from the volunteers for payment of Rs. 100/- would mean anywhere between Rs. 35 lakh and Rs. 50 lakh per district per month. Viewing from one more angle the entire campaign is dependent upon free service rendered by the volunteers and the minute he/she ceased to function, the entire structure crumbled. In other words, starting from the Secretary to Government of India incharge of the literacy mission down to the supervisor just above the volunteer, everyone of them is a paid employee on regular basis and it is only the volunteer who is supposed to demonstrate utmost patriotism "Mera Bharat Mahan". This type of duplicity at the approach itself is something which is eating into the morale of the volunteers. Added on to this problem is the payment of honorarium to the volunteers engaged in non-formal education. The knowledge that some people for a similar work are being paid in itself is a demotivating factor for many of the volunteers and in some places the dropout rate among the volunteers is much more than among the learners. In our evaluation report of Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh (1992) we made a specific recommendation that instead of providing a token honorarium of a paltry amount and perpetuating by their dependence on the progamme of this nature there should be an Entrepreneurial Development Programme (EDP) for these volunteers so as to enable them to get motivated to continue to take part in instruction in addition to finding a permanent solution to problem of their hunger. It may be added that NIRD in collaboration with NISIET organized a three-week EDP for 80 volunteers in Chittoor. The programme was received very well and we were given to understand that atleast 40 per cent of these people provided training under EDP, established their own units and are able to eke out their living without having to depend upon the state for providing employment. It should not be difficult for other districts in the country to emulate this methodology so as to benefit not only the campaign but also render yeoman service to the educated unemployed youth who are otherwise tempted to join hands with radicals/anti-social elements and take to arms. When perspective planning is done in consultation with the persons who can provide ideas of this nature, the problem of youth unrest can be addressed with earnestness and can provide employment options for them without having to depend upon the government for support.

The problem of enrolment at the time of commencement of the campaign itself is questionable since in the districts evaluated by NIRD, we found that nearly 40% of the enrolled illiterates represented the bulk of former school dropouts who at various stages of schooling dropped out due to several factors. Due to this the problems were of two different types one to that extent the real illiterates could

not be reached out and two, the former school drop outs became faster learners than the real illiterates due to which the real illiterates were inhibited and the dropout rate among these people was higher than that of the former school dropouts. In other words, the former school dropouts and the major bulk of illiterates have hijacked a major portion of the campaign.

Evaluation

Before the Ghosh Committee and subsequent other committees brought out their prescriptions for evaluation much water had already flown under the bridge. The idea that the learning should be sustainable and minimum levels of learning at acceptable competence level are to be determined is not a matter in dispute. The criteria adopted by different organizations did matter in the outcome. For example, NIRD made it a point to recruit graduates and post-graduates in social sciences, trained them in interview techniques, had trial run and then carried out the final investigation. It must be mentioned here that even between the graduate and post-graduates much difference was noticed in their level of understanding, method of interviewing eliciting the response and recording. NIRD also had some fool proof mechanisms to catch imposters through dictating a few words, which are impossible to be written correctly by real neo-literates. The trained investigators were able to identify imposters and work out the difference between such imposters and real neo-literates. It may be stated that the differences in the scores obtained in all the three areas were highly significant statistically. Yet another measure was to put a question to the learner as to how many days it took for him/her to hold the slate pencil/pencil in proper position. The real illiterates who are otherwise engaged in manual labour handling crowbars and axes would naturally find it difficult to handle smaller instruments, which demand finger dexterity.

One wonders what type of precaution is taken by the different organizations engaged in evaluation of the total literacy campaign. While Dave committee recommended 50% marks in each aspect and an aggregate of 70% to declare a person literate or otherwise, Arun Ghosh Committee added on to the problem by prescribing 5 to 10% of the universe to be used as sample for the study. One wonders about the sanctity of the cut off points at 50% and a higher level aggregate in the context of masters degrees being awarded even for persons securing about 35 per cent of marks. It would have been more rational to encourage the adult learner through fixing achievable targets resulting in reinforcement of their confidence and strengthening of the desire to learn further. But by the prescribed limits the neo-literates are sure to be discouraged and in order to avoid failure they are made to resort to clandestine means. NIRD made it a point generally to limit the sample size to around 1 per cent in keeping with the prescribed sampling procedures. It may be recalled that as long as no unit of the universe is left out and every unit has equal opportunity of being picked for inclusion in the sample, the size does not matter. With this as the thumb rule, NIRD never had any problem of finding any one of the units not represented in the sample. In order to adhere to

the Arun Ghosh Committee recommendations of having a sample of 5 to 10 per cent, say in a universe of about 5 lakh learners, it would be a sample of 25 to 50 thousand learners to be examined. In order to cover this size of sample the number of hands engaged would be quite large and many organizations were made to engage the volunteers or the teaching community for administering the test and the outcome is anybody's imagination. The strength of an evaluator lies in integrity, honesty and sincerity rather than attempting to please the bosses, be it their own organization or the district administration.

The academicians should remember that when too many investigators are engaged in collection of data; apart from their own biases, non-sampling errors also vitiate the findings to the extent of distorting the picture. In many cases either the volunteers themselves or the teaching community were engaged for administering the literacy proficiency test to the neo-literates which in itself defeats the objective of engaging an external agency for evaluation.

Turning to the continuing education efforts; in one of the districts the district administration arranged for a meeting of the officials who were engaged in organizing the campaign. During the address the Collector indicated with a sense of pride that in order to facilitate continuing education efforts the district administration/ ZSS is spending at the rate of Rs. 10,000/- per day towards supply of two news papers to the JCK/JSN. The response of the author of this paper was to question the relevance of spending such huge amounts touching Rs. 3 lakh per month for supply of just two newspapers. If only the campaign succeeded in convincing the people about the significance of education and the environment building efforts raised their self-esteem levels, it would not be necessary for the outside agency (Government) to supply the news papers. At this stage it was suggested to the Collector that if each learner spends at the rate of 10 paise per day and when there are 50 learners at the JCK/JSN the amount would be about Rs. 150 per month.   This can buy the two newspapers and the Government can spend this amount for better purposes. Going by the figures, nearly 3/4th of the districts in the country have reached the post-literacy stage and if each district is spending at the rate of 3 lakh Rupees per month towards purchase of newspapers it would mean a plan budget just wasted on the supply of paper without ensuring them being read by the intended target groups. It was further mentioned to the Collector that even the total literacy campaign should have made the learners spend on the primers rather than provide them free of cost. In this country it is everybody's knowledge that whatever is given free is worthless. At least in the post-literacy stage certain element of payment on part of the learner could be incorporated which is positive sign in the direction of converting the campaign into people's movement.

The policy of the Government of India of insisting upon completion and receipt of external evaluation report along with the proposals for continuing

education and post-literacy campaign has by itself created much avoidable gap. During this process many of the so called neo-literates have forgotten whatever little they learnt which resulted in rendering the post-literacy efforts a futile exercise. As is known to everybody, though environment-building efforts are expected to trigger demand for the campaign, the expected results are not uniform throughout the country. May be to some extent a sense of realization on part of parents has been achieved in terms of recognizing the significance of education for their progeny. Almost every year the drive for enrolment into the schools by the education department under the supervision of the district administration is done. Special attention is accorded for enrolment of girl child and more particularly from among the dis-advantaged communities. The story does not end in achieving 100 percent enrolment. In reality one finds the dropout rates at staggering levels.

The problem has not been addressed the way it should have been. It is unfortunate that despite passage of five decades after attainment of independence the country has not attempted to usher in changes in the school calendar. The British rulers who were unable to bear the summer heat and migrated introduced summer vacation to our country, which gave them a twin advantage. One, that they were able to go to cooler places and two, it was the season for their own agricultural operations. What obtains in our country is that India being a pastoral society, does not generate much work during summer (until advent of employment generation schemes during off season). People are idle during summer and the amount of cash flow into their hands is meager. The impact of limited cash flow is much more pronounced in the dietary intake of women and children. Yet another paradox is, when the bell rings for agricultural operations after the on set of monsoon, simultaneously bell also rings for the reopening of the schools. This is the crux of the problem for low educational achievements or high illiteracy rate in the country. The poor man whose mind set is conditioned to living with inter-generational-illiteracy, does not attempt to stretch the imagination about the usefulness of education. On the other hand, the difficulty to defer gratification of the primary physiological need, namely hunger, makes the poor person to think of putting the child to the work which would enable him to eke out his/her living. Even when the poor man is convinced about the enrolment of the child into the school, in the peak season wages during the active agricultural operations period, the parent himself advises the child to skip the school for a few days to gain the higher wages to add to the family pot. The fall out of this situation is an understanding generated in the child which makes him/her think that truancy is an approved act and that parents do not penalize for skipping the school. The child who is withdrawn for a few spells for participation in agricultural operations as child labour finds himself not being able to cope with the demands of the vocational pursuits. A greater danger arises from this situation since the child finds it infra dig to attend the school and secure lower ratings for his performance. This puts the child off and compels him to drop out of the school. The situation of the girl child is much worse where she

is never enrolled because of her need to assist the mother in domestic chores or to take care of the younger siblings. Even in cases where girls have been enrolled, they too are not spared from participating in agricultural operations for earning wages. A further damage is done due to the practice of child marriage bringing together the school dropout teenage boy and the girl who never stepped into the school. As things happen naturally, poverty weds poverty and poverty begets poverty. It is only in the celluloid world that the rich hero comes in a big car to the poor man's hut and marries the pretty girl.

As an alternative strategy, the synchronization of school calendar with the agricultural calendar is suggested mainly with the intention of providing an opportunity to the poor man's child to learn and also earn to add to the family pot. For this, what is required is to keep the schools open during summer, offer mid-day meal both to attract children who are otherwise semi-starved due to financial compulsions of the family as also to bridge the calorie gap. The schools should close down for vacation when the bell for agricultural operations rings with the onset of monsoon. Thus, the poor man's child is not made to skip the school or miss the classes in the trade off. As a policy shift particularly for the rural schools, participation in the agricultural operations should constitute a part of the curriculum to enable every child irrespective of the family and its economic background. As a time passes, vocational training in on farm and off farm sectors would prepare the children to choose the line as per their aptitude. Once the children are kept busy in the school up to the legally and medically approved age of marriage, the problem of child marriages gets solved. Thus this paradigm provides solution to several problems like a) non-enrolment, b) enabling child to earn and learn, c) prevention of stagnation and dropout, d) child marriage, e) improvident pregnancies and the accompanying high rates of mortality, f) agricultural production becoming cheaper due to participation of student community which would help the nation in holding the price line. Finally, the literacy rate of the country would naturally rise to a level comparable with any developed country. Lastly, there would be no need for organizing adult literacy programmes further. The country has experimented with several innovations and this would not cost any additional amount and on the other hand would contribute substantially to optimizing the returns from the investment made in education, health, family planning and agriculture. To achieve better literacy rates with the present approaches in vogue, it would at least take another 50 years under certain uncertain assumptions like arresting the population growth, preventing dropout rate, ensuring universalisation of education and allocation of at least 6 percent of the budget for education - which constitute a part of the pipe dream.

Mukhya Vahini - Information and Decision Support System for the Chief Minister

- Arvind Shrivastava*

Introduction

All of us have experienced situations in our offices where the required information is not readily available, there are data gaps hampering proper analysis and understanding of issues and inconsistency makes us doubtful about the veracity of data.

For proper analysis of data, we require systems for storage and processing of data. Lack of proper information makes evaluation of performance of an individual or a system quite hazy and hampers planning and forecasting. "All that you have to do is to measure something and people respond." #

Lack of proper information is one important cause for poor quality of public debates. Freedom of expression without proper information could be a dangerous concoction. But our existing information systems don't make us feel confident enough to share information with public freely.

The common element in all the above situations is the lack of a robust and effective Information System - probably one of the most important problems affecting effectiveness of the government programs.

As David Osborne says in "Reinventing Government" -

What gets measured gets done,
If you don't measure results, you can't tell success from failures,
If you can't see success, you can't reward it,
If you can't reward success, you are probably rewarding failure,
If you can't see success, you can't learn from it,
If you can't recognize failure, you can't correct it,
If you can demonstrate results, you can win public support.

There is a paradigm shift in the way organizations function. Control structures are giving way to cooperative knowledge sharing. Governments cannot remain immune to these changes. But for adopting these changes, we require systems for

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# Reinventing Government - David Osborne.

collecting good quality information not only to measure performance but also to plan for better results.

Systems need to improve and grow if they are to survive. While it is the market that destroys dinosaurs of the private sector, elections do the same to governments. But to improve, we need to take decisions; we need to ask "why" questions and they can be supported only on strong foundations of "what" questions. *Mukhya Vahini* is an attempt in this direction.

Objectives

The project was taken up with the following objective -

To provide necessary and timely information of good quality to the CM and his office
Resulting in a downstream effect of
Strengthening and modernizing information systems of the departments
And consequently
Improved response to citizens' petitions & satisfying their information needs
Resulting in
More focused monitoring and review of the working of the government.

This is a fairly comprehensive and complex objective. It may be clarified that while conceptualizing the system itself, it was well understood that the process of development of the system would be long & arduous. Therefore development was to be done in stages.

Backdrop

The complexity of the task set upon becomes clearer when one places these objectives against the backdrop of available information systems in the government.

Premise 1: *The Institutional Memory in Government is weak*

Governments are repositories of huge volumes of data arising out of their ubiquitous role but this data is stored in a disjointed and disorganized manner.

The tools and techniques used in government to store and process this data are outdated. This results in reliance on personal memory where some people become important only because they have been there for long. Apart from encouraging development of vested interests, it acts as a natural barrier to change.

Premise 2: *While there is a lot of data, there is a general lack of information*

Typically, governments do not have standardized systems to filter data and organize information. The reporting formats lack completeness and vary frequently hampering proper analysis.

Mostly, governments do not have clearly defined performance parameters and service delivery standards. So there is no need-based development of information systems.

Prerequisites

There are some necessary prerequisites for developing a good information and decision support system.

Prerequisite 1 : *Need of a good information system is directly related to the clarity of objectives*

What you would like to see is directly related to what you would like to do. With the government having large width and depth of responsibilities, it becomes very important that it remains focused at various levels. It needs to have clearly defined objectives; the amount of detail will increase as one goes down in the hierarchy but it should dovetail into the overall objective.

Prerequisite 2 : *Development of a robust decision support system is directly related to desire for good governance*

Just as an advice is as good as the receiver of the advice, a decision support system will be as good as the desire to take good decisions. Generally, the decision support systems evolve with use. And the way in which they do so is directly related to the element of objectivity and logic associated with decision making.

The point is that development of information system is neither a technological decision nor an investment decision but plain and simple ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION. The critical issue is not whether you have sufficient technical expertise nor whether you have enough money but whether you want to improve or not.

Here, let me hasten to point out that the information system is not the panacea of all the ills but certainly a very strong beginning.

In the specific context of development of Information and Decision Support System for the Chief Minister, one reality that we had to keep in mind was that the government has a defined administrative structure with many delegated roles and authorities and with collective responsibilities. Ensuring their involvement would naturally bring some drag in the development process. But it was agreed to trade off the speed of development with long-term sustainability. This implied that we made use of the strengths of these structures rather than ignoring them.

Issues

The following issues were to be handled while developing the system to make it useful, effective and sound enough for further evolution.

Issue 1: *Quality and timeliness of information*

To make a new system acceptable, it was important that the system demonstrated its usefulness. And this made reliability and timeliness of information critical.

Issue 2: *Usage - pressures of time, usefulness and focused presentation*

There are lots of competing demands on the time of the Chief Executive of a state. With this limitation, the system had to prove itself by providing information quickly, with just sufficient details and in an easily understandable manner.

Issue 3: *Sustainability*

This is that phase of the system where it stops requiring driver and goes into "auto-drive" mode. This typically happens when responsibilities are well distributed, efforts required to update the system are minimized and individual memory gets converted into institutional memory. In effect, the system gets internalized into the administrative structure of the government. Once the system starts provoking critical questions from the user, it moves to the next higher/improved level.

Tackling the Issues

The issues pointed out above overlap sufficiently. A number of steps were taken to find satisfactory solutions to the above-mentioned issues. These were as follows -

1. The system was developed through a process of consultation with the concerned departments. The process of consultation was standardized for various modules. It involved fixing performance parameters, identifying data requirement for those and setting up a mechanism for updating the data regularly. Single point contact as nodal officer was identified.

2. Wherever there were information systems already available, we attempted to draw out our requirement from these systems.

3. The Secretaries of departments were kept informed about the system and its requirements. The assumption was that the Secretaries would keep themselves informed about the data being sent and verify it once in a while.

4. The ultimate objective was to remove exclusivity in due course and allow the system to be used by the departments. It was hoped that this might also work like core of the department's (future) full-fledged information system.

5. The system was developed as two-way communication exercise and not as a one-way supervision. This was sought to be done by providing options to the department to provide opinions, views and suggestions etc.

6. In order to ensure ease of transfer of data, data entry software were installed in the departments with electronic data transfer.

7. Graphics and GIS were to be used to put information across clearly and in a quickly understandable fashion.

8. The ultimate goal was to provide this information to public once the system was stabilized.

Structure of the project

The system was broken into a number of modules each with a nodal officer in the CM office. The structure of the project can be represented pictorially as below -

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                    ┌──────────────────────┐
                    │      CM  Office       │
                    │   Computerisation     │
                    └──────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
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 │ PEP including│  │  CMRF    │   │   MED    │   │  DIST    │
 │    ATR      │  └──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────┘
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 │ DS-I to CM │  │DS-I to CM│   │Media Officer │  │PS to CM  │
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 ┌──────────────────┐                              ┌──────────┐
 │ Nodal officers   │                              │  DCs     │
 │ various departments│                            │  CEDs    │
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                         │ Information  │
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│PS to CM││PS to CM││DS (Cabinet)││Special Officer (C)││DS-II to CM ││PS to CM  │
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│DS (B & R)││ Nodal Officers   │                   │DPAR (AR) ││Directors I&C,│
│   FD     ││various departments│                  └──────────┘│IT and tourism│
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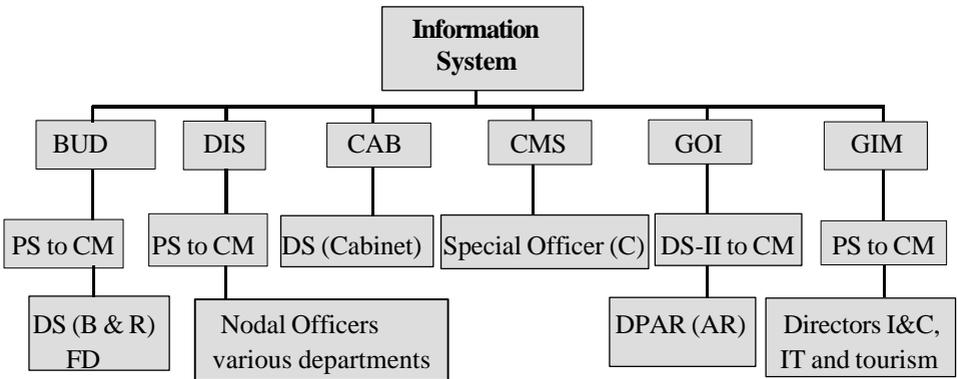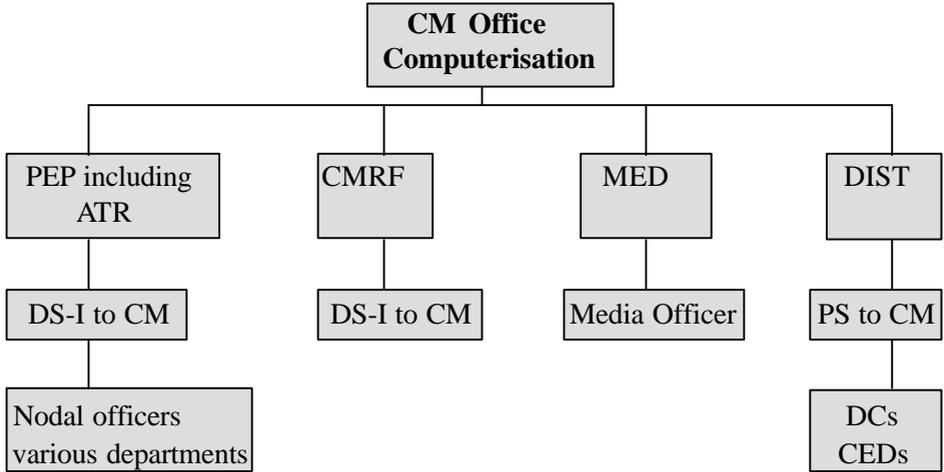
The breaking up the system into two parts - CM office computerization and Information System - was done arbitrarily out of administrative convenience. The above acronyms are explained below -

Module	Function	Nodal officer in CM office	Data inflow from
PEP	Monitoring petitions	Deputy Secretary to CM-I received in the CM office	Department nodal officers
CMRF	Releases from CM's Relief Fund	Deputy Secretary to CM-I	CM Office
MED	Media interaction from the CM office	Media officer in CM office	CM Office
DIST	Monitoring important issues of the district	Private Secretary to the CM	Various Secretaries and Deputy Commissioners
BUD	Status of action taken on budget announcements	Private Secretary to the CM	Finance Department
DIS	Monitoring various performance parameters of the departments	Private Secretary to the CM	Various departments
CAB	Issues coming before the Cabinet	Deputy Secretary (Cabinet)	Cabinet Section
CMS	Information system for CM's constituency	Special Officer (constituency)	Taluka Officers
GOI	Monitoring proposals pending with GOI	Deputy Secretary to CM-II	Various departments and Resident Commissioner
GIM	Follow up of mega private sector projects	Private Secretary to the CM	C&I, IT and Tourism department and entrepreneurs

Status as in March, 2002

Module	Status
PEP	Computerized database of all petitions has been created, web site for updating the action taken on petitions by the departments is operational, public window to accept petitions and provide information on response has been set up. LAN based updating from departments also launched.
CMRF	Entire process of validating and processing applications under CMRF has been automated.
MED	System study is completed.

DIST	Web site for updating 15 most important issues of the districts, action taken by departments on those and review report of Secretary-in-charge has been launched.
BUD	Database on budget announcements and status of their implementation set up. LAN based updating has been launched.
DIS	10 departments were selected for reviewing performance based on some fixed parameters. Data updating has been done by the departments using the software provided for this purpose and is transferred through floppy.
CAB	Processing of files and papers in cabinet section has been computerized.
CMS	Database of socio-economic and demographic parameters and development works taken in CM's constituency has been set up with RAS based data transfer from the constituency.
GOI	Database for monitoring proposals pending with GOI is set up, RAS based data updating from Karnataka Bhawan and LAN based updating by the departments has been started.
GIM	Web site to follow up mega-private sector projects with facility for the entrepreneur to see and suggest corrections to the status of his project, provide comments and suggestions and for the Industries Department to follow up his project through various levels of clearances is ready for launch.

The Future

The future of the system as a full-fledged decision support system will depend upon the stabilization of the information system at the first place. This requires satisfaction on the following counts -

·   Are we collecting necessary information?
·   Are we collecting enough information?
·   Is it flowing regularly?
·   Is it reliable?

The next stage would involve understanding significance of information and being able to ask questions which transcend from the realm of "What" to "Why". In addition the following will need to be incorporated into the system.

·   Historical data and data warehousing facility
·   External and Internal linkages between the data
·   Planning and forecasting models

But as pointed in the beginning itself, the process is long-drawn. Straightening of the information system itself involved change in the mind-set of people and change in the way they work. But the positive side is that the sheer ease in working that a good information system brings about, more often than not helps in faster adoption and change in the later phase of development. Hopefully, a good information system will catalyze development of a rational and objective decision support system.

Second Generation Amends To Panchayati Raj: A Suggested Framework

- K. Siva Subrahmanyam*

Notwithstanding the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution, the subject of 'local government' till date continues to be a 'State subject' by virtue of its inclusion in List-II of the Seventh Schedule. The 73rd Amendment accorded Constitutional status to the panchayats and made it obligatory for the States to: (a) provide for a three-tier structure of panchayati raj in the States with a population of not exceeding 20 lakhs; (b) conduct elections to the panchayats every five years in the manner specified, under the overall supervision and control of the State Election Commission appointed by the Governor; (c) reserve seats and offices of chairperson in panchayats to women, SCs & STs; and (d) appoint a finance commission at the State-level for every five years. Also it specifically lists the disqualifications for membership in panchayats, and adds a sub-clause to Art. 280 enlarging the functional domain of the National Finance Commission. Despite this, there are several instances where the States did not rigorously adhere even to some of these mandatory Constitutional prescriptions on some plea or the other. Among the provisions of this Amendment which are not mandatory, the most important relate to the basic issue of devolution of responsibilities, requisite powers and resources on the panchayats. Art. 243 G & I which deal with this issue made such a devolution 'discretionary' for the States.

The Union government, by virtue of Art. 40 read with Art. 12 of the Constitution did not so far shirk its responsibility of performing its 'promotional/facilitative' role in strengthening the panchayats through a series of laudable measures. From the very emergence of a three-tier structure of panchayats in late-1950s till the 73rd Amendment Act was brought into force, the Union government has been displaying its unreserved commitment to decentralised democracy in the Indian rural sector. The All-India Panchayat Adhyakshas' Sammelan organised by the Ministry of Rural Development can also be considered as yet another significant initiative of the Union government in this direction. However, the National Declaration for Local Self-Government that emerged therefrom is a sad reflection on the pathetic plight of the panchayats in the country. Of course, a mere decade of Indian rural local government is too short a period in the long Indian history to expect miracles in the areas of devolution and institutional empowerment. Nevertheless, the charter of 15

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'demands' contained in the Declaration amply demonstrates that during the first post-73rd Amendment decade, the expectations aroused by the Amendment were not met to a large extent. This is particularly true of 'devolution' which is a package consisting of five elements, referred to as '5Fs', comprising functions, finances, functionaries, follow-up, and freedom. In all these five core areas, the performance of the States can not certainly be considered very satisfactory during the last decade.

The appalling experience gained during the previous decade indicates that there is a virtual lack of 'politico-administrative will' on the part of the States to strengthen their panchayats by endowing the latter with appropriate responsibilities, resources, requisite staff support and adequate freedom in decision-making. Though several State Panchayat Acts provided for a list of responsibilities for their respective panchayats, State governments did not frame appropriate guidelines nor did they issue the necessary executive rules/orders as regards their actual transfer to the panchayats. In some cases, the items listed as "functions/responsibilities/duties" of the panchayats are couched in vague terms. A glance at the bewildering variety of these items reveals that they are a combination of 'sectors', 'sub-sectors', 'broad activity in a sub-sector', and 'sub-activities/specific responsibilities in a broad activity'. Such a 'shopping list' of the functional domain of the panchayats in many cases lacked role clarity. There are however sporadic attempts by a few States to transfer some of the responsibilities and powers of their line departments to the panchayats through notifications or government orders. Even here, not all such notified responsibilities and powers were actually transferred to the panchayats. Where such transfer took place, the necessary resources, staff support and freedom in decision making at the local level were not granted to the panchayats.

The State line departments in some cases still perform the responsibilities cast on the panchayats or continue to exercise powers of supervision and control over the schemes and personnel transferred to the latter, in some cases with the 'administrative approval' of the panchayats. Moreover, several of the responsibility entrusted to the intermediate and district level panchayats are such that they do not involve these institutions in the process of actual planning and implementation of schemes. Equally disheartening is the fact that in a few States, the involvement of the panchayats in the State sponsored programmes/ schemes which in some cases were dovetailed with the schematic funds of the Centrally sponsored rural development programmes, is either marginal or totally absent. Instead of empowering the panchayats by entrusting to them the planning and implementation of schemes under some of these 'populist' programmes, the schemes are got implemented by the line departments or ad hoc stakeholder groups or the DRDAs. Also it is most unfortunate that in some States some of the basic civic services which traditionally belong to the panchayats like maintenance of street lighting, provision of drinking water supply, sanitation and drainage, primary health care, etc., have not been entrusted to the panchayats. Instead, some of these services, if at all, are

provided by the State line departments or parallel agencies. Even the DRDA functions independent of the panchayats in most of the States, though in a few states chairpersons of the district panchayats are made the ex-officio chairpersons. The tendency to make the chairpersons of the panchayats ex-officio presiding officers of the stakeholder committees or ad hoc agencies or DRDAs can not be equated with the involvement of the institution of the panchayat as a body corporate. Privileges or powers granted to the political chiefs can not take precedence over the imperative need of institutional empowerment. Moreover, some of the schemes which belong to the functional canvas of the panchayats are being executed by the line departments/agencies of the government under the Central and State schemes of Local Area Development of the MPs and MLAs, in several cases. As regards the District Planning Committees (DPCs), the performance of the States is rather deplorable. Except in 12 States, the DPCs are not constituted as per the Constitutional mandate. Even where they are constituted, their efficacy is still in doubt.

The scenario is truly disquieting. There is no doubt that neither the political elite of the State government nor its bureaucracy is favourably disposed to the very idea of decentralisation. In the context of multi-party coalition/regional party based governments or governments with a slender majority of their supporters in the State legislatures, the State governments seem to 'please' their flock of legislators through greater empowerment of this category of political elite even in matters that legitimately, or sometimes legally, belong to the domain of the panchayats. On the other hand, State bureaucracy is happy with this arrangement as the State legislators, not the elected chiefs of the panchayats, are perceived to better serve their career interests. This mutual dependence between the government officials and the State legislators though serves their mutual interests, acts against the broader interests of decentralisation. Given an option, many State government officials would not obviously be inclined to work with or under the panchayats. Where they are posted to work under the elected chiefs of the panchayats, instances are galore where they are at logger heads with the latter, which presages future difficulties.

While unfettered freedom in decision making at the panchayat level is not desirable, excessive and stringent control and supervision by the State governments over the panchayats does not facilitate and promote initiative and innovation at the local level. Already many Centrally sponsored schemes have their own guidelines which stipulate the 'do's and don'ts' for the panchayats. These apart, the conditions attached to, and the procedures prescribed for, the exercise of the assigned powers by the panchayats do not enable them to enjoy adequate freedom and functional autonomy in deciding their own priorities in revenue and expenditure management. In addition to large chunk of the grants paid by the States to the panchayats being tied in nature, several restrictions are placed not only on their revenue powers but also on the use of their general revenues. Ceilings are imposed not only on

their tax rates but also on the percentage of their general revenues to be spent on different items like civic amenities and the salaries of panchayat staff. The exercise of powers by the panchayats is made subject to prior approval of the State government or its specified bureaucrats. Control is exercised also on the levy of certain imposts or revision of their rates. It is the statism that prevails in every sphere of activity of the panchayats, rather than subjecting their operations to stringent formal audit. Functional autonomy, subject to broad framework of certain guidelines, is therefore the perennial cry of the Indian rural local government.

In the context of panchayats, the second-generation amendment to the Indian Constitution should therefore aim at removing some of the obstacles that stand in the way of empowerment of these institutions. Against this backdrop, the areas where the existing Constitutional provisions demand a dispassionate review and realistic revision are described below.

1.   Gram Sabha

Art. 243A assumes existence of a Gram Sabha in the Indian rural sector, and accordingly it merely provided that it "may exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as the Legislature of a State may by law, provide". The Article does not however make constitution of a gram sabha in the villages mandatory though provision for such Sabhas and their powers and functions exists in the pre-73rd Amendment Panchayat Acts of several States.

The State Panchayat Acts enacted during the 73rd Amendment era, while providing for the gram sabha also specified their powers, functions, frequency of their meetings, and the quorum requisite of their meetings. Broadly speaking, in terms of the various State statutes, the powers and functions of gram sabha relate basically to the following: (a) review of progress of various developmental programmes/schemes being implemented, particularly by the village-level panchayats; (b) selection of beneficiaries, schemes and their location; (c) assistance in implementation of various developmental schemes/ programmes in the village level panchayats through people's contribution in cash, kind or labour; (d) approval of plans of the village level panchayats, including proposals for additional taxation; and (e) control over the village level panchayat through social audit of its annual accounts, budget, audit report, report of the vigilance committees, and stakeholder/self-help groups, and (f) seeking appropriate clarifications from the chief functionaries of the village level panchayats, where necessary.

In fact, the gram sabha is considered as a 'watchdog' of village democracy facilitating people's participation in decision making in development process. This 'social audit' by the village voters, unlike the formal institutional audit mechanism, was sought to achieve the twin objectives of transparency and accountability. It was conceived as an effective mechanism of empowerment of the people. Last year, the State of Madhya Pradesh has gone

one step ahead of its counterparts by transferring several executive responsibilities and revenue powers of the village panchayats to the gram sabha, through amendment of their Panchayat Act of 1993, a measure not only retrograde but also against the express provisions of the Indian Constitution.

The relevant State statutes also prescribe the frequency of gram sabha meetings which varies between one (Tripura) and four (Assam, Bihar, Kerala, MP, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and UP), though it is mostly twice in a year in several other States. Moreover, where certain State sponsored 'innovative' programmes/schemes are launched, State governments concerned also insist on the involvement of gram sabha in the identification of schemes/ beneficiaries. There are inter-state variations in regard to the quorum prescribed by the State Panchayat Acts for gram sabha meetings. The quorum varies between 5% (West Bengal) to 50% (AP) for the first meeting of the gram sabha. In MP, the quorum is 10% of which one-third must be women. In Kerala, it is 50 persons for the ward sabha. In Maharashtra, the quorum is 100 persons or 10% of the electorate, whichever less. There is however no quorum prescribed for the adjourned meetings in several States. Apart from the requirement of quorum, gram sabha meetings are adversely affected on account of their unwieldy size, timing, and venue of the meetings.

In March 1999, the Union government requested the chief ministers of all the States, and UT Administrators to initiate measures to revitalise the gram sabha during 1999-2000, and issued a few guidelines in this regard. These guidelines state that (a) every habitation or a group of habitations may be designated as a 'village' for purposes of constituting gram sabha; (b) the relationship between the gram sabha and the gram panchayat may be the same as between the legislature and the government. The panchayat should be made accountable to the gram sabha in unequivocal terms. The members of the panchayats should hold office only so long as they enjoy the confidence of gram sabha, (c) the gram sabha should have full powers for determining the priorities for various activities/programmes in the village, and approval of the gram sabha should be made mandatory for taking up any programme in the village. Certification of expenditure and also about propriety in financial dealings should also be made mandatory and the gram sabha be made responsible for these items; (d) the management of natural resources including land, water and forest by any authority whatsoever should be made subject to the concurrence of the gram sabha. In particular, consultation with the gram sabha should be made mandatory before acquisition of land for public purpose and other forms of land transfer; (e) participation of women, SC and ST members in the gram sabha should be made mandatory with suitable provision for their presence in the quorum of gram sabha meetings; (f) the gram sabha should be vested with full authority to manage all affairs concerning intoxicants; and (g) the gram sabha should have the power to evolve its own procedure for conducting its business including decision making.

The wide ranging powers of gram sabha in Schedule-V Areas were explicitly stated in the Panchayats (Extension to the Schedule Areas) Act 40 of 1996, according to which their role encompasses managing natural and community resources, possessing ownership rights of minor forest produce, etc. Though the scope of the powers of gram sabha in these areas is not contingent upon any State legislative action, States may have to amend their existing subject laws in conformity with this act of 1996.

Some of the guidelines issued by the Union government on the subject of gram sabha seem to be out of tune with the guiding role which a gram sabha is expected to play. No association or assembly of voters, after it elects their representatives to a formal institution like the panchayat should be allowed, except in extraordinary circumstances, to undermine the efficacy of the institutions concerned, particularly those having Constitutional status. Equating the relationship between the gram sabha and the gram panchayat with the State legislature and the state executive is certainly not appropriate, if not irrelevant. When we do not have the system of 'recall' for the elected representatives of the State and national legislatures, it would be foolhardy to make the gram panchayats responsible to the people every time. The voters should not be equated with the elected ward members of the panchayats who alone, like the MLAs and MPs, possess the right to decide who should be their leader, in all cases where the sarpanch is indirectly elected by the elected ward members. Even where the sarpanch is directly elected, in the present context, the system of 'recall' of the sarpanch will have undesirable repercussions. The Madhya Pradesh experiment of 'recall' of the members and the sarpanch of a gram panchayat by the village assemblies is not only a step in wrong direction but also fraught with several dangers. Another guideline requiring certification of expenditure and propriety in financial dealings (of the panchayat) to be made mandatory for the gram sabha would also land the panchayats in awkward situations as this function normally belongs to the statutory auditor. The Union government would therefore do well not to specify the functions of a gram sabha. Instead, it may leave this issue to be resolved by the State legislatures themselves.

At this juncture, it must be realised that we are expecting too many 'results' and 'ideal' situations from the institution of gram sabha. In several States, the control and supervision of gram sabhas is restricted mostly to the activities and financial management of the village level panchayats. States unjustifiably require the hapless, illiterate/semi-literate, ignorant and gullible sarpanches of the village level panchayats, many of whom belong to economically and socially disadvantaged sections of the rural society, to perform functions which even the State legislators shudder to undertake. Moreover, the total expenditure of the village panchayats constitutes a small fraction of the combined expenditure of the other tiers of panchayats, State line departments, and the Union government in the villages. The present day village community is no longer a cohesive unit. It is a faction ridden heterogeneous

cultural entity divided on lines of caste, party, economic power and social status, and consists of people of conflicting interests, varied needs, and differential access to the benefits offered by the higher-level governments. Political patronage of a few through distribution of doles, a widespread feeling of alienation and frustration among the enfeebled poor, lack of access to information regarding the possible benefits of the governmental programmes, and bureaucratic corruption have virtually reduced the voluntary participation rates of the village adults in the gram sabha meetings. While the meetings of the sabhas take place simply on 'paper' in several cases, at least a few people are mobilised through offer of incentives to attend these sabhas in other cases, particularly by the government officials who are required to conform to the targets fixed for them by government fiats. In developed and prosperous localities, gram sabha meetings are being reduced to absolute bedlam, while in the backward localities which are not faction ridden, the poor, much to their chagrin, have to maintain stoic silence and feel fatalistic fearing backlash from, and leaving the ground to, the traditional powers. The involvement of lower level bureaucracy with gram sabha meetings quite often results in a rise in the expectation levels of the local people. These lower rung officials, on the other hand, feel helpless in redressing the grievances of the people, due to bureaucratic procedures. Added to this lamentable scenario, in some States, one has to cope with a large army of 'leaders' who belong to different stakeholder committees/associations constituted by the State government. These ad hoc committees, in several instances, work parallel to the village panchayats due to lack of linkages between them. The emergence of numerous local leaders in the rural sector also leads to thin distribution of the limited government funds over a wider canvas. Surely, gram sabha is partly rendered ineffective due to the diverse personalised pecuniary interests of these miniscule stakeholder committees. States do not repose trust in the Constitutional entities of elected panchayats. Instead, they seem to be eager to deal directly with millions of beneficiary/stakeholder committees, each consisting of a few individuals with the powers that be dominating them. In the process, panchayats have lost not only their powers, functional domain, and in some cases their resource base, but also their pre-eminence as institutions of local governance. Their identity is thus threatened by the inimical stakeholder committees on the one hand, the heterogeneous assembly of village voters in the name of gram sabha, and the nonchalant attitude of the State government on the other. It is incredible that the gram sabha is being viewed as the panacea for all the ills of a complex rural society. Expecting a gram sabha to work miracles in the areas of planning and implementation of all developmental programmes/schemes could turn into another banana skin for the panchayats. These are the harsh realities we can not run away from, and they demand pragmatism and positivism, not a doctrinaire approach.

This realistic situation needs immediate correctives with a view to protecting the broader interests of the well-established and traditionally accepted formal institution of gram panchayat at the local level. Such correctives should

uphold the supremacy of the village panchayat. First, the respective roles of a gram sabha and a village panchayat should be clearly identified and defined. The 'village assemblies' should be convened each quarter by the sarpanch of a panchayat village wise or habitation wise, for the purpose of sharing information, consultation and discussion with the people, and for receiving advice on planning and implementation of schemes, local resource mobilisation, utilisation of panchayat resources, etc. Under no circumstances should the sabhas be allowed to usurp either the legitimate and legal, functional and fiscal domain of the panchayats or the prerogatives of the panchayats as institutions of local self-government. Arming these sabhas with executive functions and/ or revenue raising responsibilities, as the MP government chose to do, would greatly undermine the efficacy of the panchayats and therefore does not deserve to be emulated. In the long run, such experiments will prove counter productive to the cause of local government. In fact, the consensus arrived at the gram sabha could serve as a 'guide', not as a 'command' to the de jure decision making units of local government. Second, to make the participation of women in gram sabhas a virtual reality, a sub-quorum for the presence of women for conducting deliberations should be prescribed. Third, all SHGs/CBOs and other stakeholder committees or associations should be made to work under the umbrella of the gram panchayat alone. A couple of leaders of important stakeholder committees/SHGs/CBOs functioning at the village level can however be made 'invitees' to the meetings of the panchayats, if necessary. Therefore, 'promotion of self-help groups' can also be made one of the responsibilities of the panchayats. Such promotion can be in the form of formation of groups, and distribution of governmental assistance to them. The SHGs/CBOs should however be made accountable to the panchayats to the extent of accounting for the governmental assistance received by them. The States should therefore channelise their funds meant for such groups through the panchayats, and ensure that these two institutions work in tandem. So far as the gram sabhas are concerned, they can however be charged with the responsibility of reviewing the performance of these committees/SHGs/CBOs. Finally, incentives for 'performing' panchayats could also be thought of to promote competitive spirit among the panchayats, and to motivate them to do a good job in this area.

As regards the amendments to be made to the existing provisions of the Indian Constitution, while the State Panchayat Acts can take care of several details relating to the functioning of gram sabha, Art. 243A relating to gram sabha may be substituted as follows:

" (1) A gram sabha shall be constituted in every village level panchayat at such level or levels within its territorial jurisdiction, and in such manner as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide.

  (2) The gram sabha shall perform such functions, and exercise such powers, and be convened as many times in a year, as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide.

Provided that the quorum requisite of the meetings of the gram sabha, including the sub-quorum for the women, if any, shall be such as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide. "

2.   Constitution of Panchayats

After clause (2) of Art. 243B, the following may be inserted as clauses (3) and (4) respectively.

" (3)   All ad hoc committees or associations of people, including the Self-Help Groups and Community based organisations, other than non-governmental organisations, constituted at the village level shall work under the supervision and control of the panchayats.

(4)   Each panchayat shall carry out its activities through such subject/standing committees as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide."

3.   Structure of Panchayati Raj

A three-tier structure suits the needs of the Indian districts which are fairly large in terms of population and area. Strictly speaking, the most important tiers should be the district and village level panchayats. The entire framework of panchayati raj can not be conceived without the village level panchayats. These traditionally and societally accepted local institutions should therefore continue regardless of the existence of the other tiers of panchayats. Similarly, the district level panchayats are also very necessary since they constitute the district level governments charged with the responsibilities, inter alia, of preparing and implementing the district development plans. As for the intermediate level panchayats, they can be made the implementing agencies of the schemes entrusted to them by the district level panchayats, even where they are not assigned with certain other specific responsibilities of their own. The intermediate level panchayats could act as the 'agents' of the district level panchayats for the execution of schemes of development plans that benefit more than one village panchayat. This however does not preclude allocation of specific responsibilities, if any, to them. In addition, the intermediate level panchayats can also be made the co-ordinating, reviewing, supervisory and advisory bodies in respect of the activities of the village panchayats. Therefore, a three-tier structure of panchayats, as envisaged in the 73rd Amendment Act, needs to be continued.

4.   Composition of Panchayats & Election of Chairpersons

The introduction of 'territorial constituencies' for the district and intermediate levels for purposes of directly elected members under the 73rd Amendment Act has resulted in several difficulties for the States. When the States are not able to devolve appropriate responsibilities and powers on the 'institution' of panchayats at various levels, it is incredible how the directly elected members could expect powers and authority for themselves. There are numerous instances of these members demanding powers, atleast on par with the chairpersons of their lower level panchayats. The entry of these members has also removed

the organic linkages that existed under the old dispensation. Moreover, against the then existing total of about 2 million elected members to the panchayats (ward members of village panchayats and the chairpersons of the three levels of panchayats), the 73rd Amendment had unnecessarily added another one million elected members through the medium of territorial constituencies for the intermediate and district level panchayats. Obviously the country in general, and the panchayat sector in particular can not afford, let alone sustain, the existing 3.3 million elected panchayat functionaries. Experience has abundantly shown that the directly elected territorial constituency members are redundant, and their contribution to institution building is so far minimal. In pure economic terms, costs of their election and training, payment of honoraria, TA and sitting charges to them are a drag on the limited resources of the States. It is therefore desirable to dispense with this category of local leaders.

Besides, there are a few States which are 'manufacturing' limitless number of 'leaders' through stakeholder committees/SHGs/CBOs already. At the village level, there is a great deal of confusion on the issue of a cohesive and collective leadership. Too many formal/informal leaders will certainly spoil the performance of the Constitutional institution of panchayats as well as the tranquility in the villages. It must therefore be emphasised that all formal stakeholder committees/SHGs/CBOs should be brought under the umbrella of panchayats. They should all be made accountable to the panchayats through which alone all funds to these Committees should be released and to which these committees should be made accountable. Though the Constitutional provision relating to the territorial constituencies and their members demands a serious review and suitable correctives, it is doubtful whether the present era of political patronage would facilitate this change.

As regards the mode of election to the panchayats, with the proposed abolition of territorial constituency members for the intermediate and district level panchayats, the main actors will be the elected members of the village panchayats and the chairpersons of all the three levels of panchayats. For the village panchayats, their members will be elected directly by the people from the territorial divisions/wards into which each of these panchayats is divided. This form of direct democracy has been traditionally and legally prevalent in most States in the country and hence need not be altered.

Though Art. 243C(5) in the Constitution provides discretion to the States regarding the mode of election of the chairperson of the village panchayat, it however stipulates that the chairpersons of both the intermediate and district level panchayats shall be elected by and from amongst their respective directly elected territorial constituency members. As stated earlier, this arrangement has led to mushrooming of elected 'leaders', which deserves to be reversed.

Theoretically, there are four options for electing the chairpersons of the intermediate and district level panchayats. They are: (a) election of the chairperson of each level of these panchayats directly by the people; (b) indirect

election of the chairperson of a higher tier panchayat by the elected chairpersons of the immediately preceding tier of the panchayats; (c) indirect election of the chairperson of a higher tier panchayat by all the chairpersons of all the preceding tiers of the panchayats; and (d) indirect election of the chairperson of a higher tier panchayat by the chairpersons as well as the members of all the preceding tier(s) of the panchayats.

Among these options, the first one may not be suitable for the panchayats as this arrangement makes the chairperson practically independent of the members of the panchayat. Moreover, direct election by the people to the intermediate and district level panchayats besides becoming unwieldy, is likely to lead to increased friction between the chairpersons of these panchayats and the MLAs and MPs, since both are directly elected by the people themselves.

Without dealing with the rationale of each of these available options, suffice it to say that in the broader interests of decentralised democracy, it is desirable to increase the size of the electoral college for the election of chairpersons of the higher tier panchayats with a view to making it more broad based and representative. A careful analysis of the merits and demerits of each of these possible options in the present day context indicates that it is necessary to amend the existing Constitutional provisions relating to the election of the chairpersons of the panchayats in such a way that the chairperson of a village level panchayat is indirectly elected by the directly elected members chosen from the territorial divisions/wards in the panchayat. The chairperson of an intermediate-level panchayat, on the other hand, can be indirectly elected by an electoral college comprising the elected members of all the village level panchayats, including their chairpersons, from amongst them. In the case of election to the office of the chairperson of a district level panchayat, the electoral college may comprise all the elected chairpersons of the village and intermediate level panchayats. They may elect one of the elected chairpersons of an intermediate level panchayat as the chairperson of the district level panchayat concerned. This arrangement facilitates establishment of organisational, administrative and financial linkages among the three levels of the panchayats, which is unfortunately missing under the existing dispensation.

It should be clearly noted that the 'composition' of the intermediate and district level panchayats, and the 'electoral colleges' of these panchayats for purposes of electing their respective chairpersons would be different. The role of the elected members of the village panchayats, other than their chairpersons, would however to limited to the election of the chairpersons of the village and intermediate level panchayats.

As for the representation of the State and national legislators in the panchayats, they can be made 'invitees' of the district level panchayats alone. They may perform both an 'advisory' role in the district panchayat and the role of an 'ambassador' outside, to protect, plead and promote the interests of the

panchayats they represent. Similarly, States may also be empowered to provide for representation of stakeholder committees as 'invitees' to the meetings of any or more levels of panchayats. However, it should be ensured that all these invitees do not possess the 'right to vote' in the panchayat meetings.

Accordingly, Art. 243C in the Constitution deserves to be suitably amended on the following lines:

(A)   In the proviso to clause (1), for the words "panchayat at any level", the words "panchayat at the village level" may be substituted.

(B)   Clause (2) may be substituted by the following clauses (2) to (4).

" (2)   All the seats in a panchayat at the village level shall be filled by persons elected from single member territorial divisions/wards in the panchayat area, and the population of each such division/ward in the panchayats shall, so far as practicable, be the same throughout the district.

  (3)   All the seats in the panchayat at the intermediate level shall be filled by the elected chairpersons of the village level panchayats within its territorial jurisdiction.

  (4)   All the seats in a panchayat at the district level shall be filled by the chairpersons of the panchayats at the intermediate level within the jurisdiction of the district level panchayat."

(C)   Clauses (3) to (5) may be substituted by the following clauses numbered (5) to (7):

"(5)   The Legislature of a State shall, by law, provide for the representation-

        (a)   of the members of the House of the People and the members of the Legislative Assembly of the State representing constituencies which comprise wholly or partly a panchayat area at the district level in such panchayat;

        (b)   of the members of the Council of States and the members of the Legislative Council of the State where they are registered as electors within the area of the panchayat at the district level in such panchayat;

        (c)   of the chairpersons of the ad hoc stakeholder committees/ associations, and community based organisations, including self-help groups functioning in the panchayat area concerned;

        (d)   of the persons with specialised knowledge or experience in local government, in the panchayats at the intermediate and/or district level panchayats.

                -    as 'invitees' to the meetings of the panchayats.

(6)   All the elected members of a panchayat, other than those specified in clause (5), shall have the right to vote in the meetings of the panchayats.

(7)   The chairperson of -

(a)   a panchayat at the village level shall be elected by the members directly elected by the people from territorial divisions/wards of the panchayat;

(b)   a panchayat at the intermediate level shall be elected by an electoral college consisting of the elected members, including the chairpersons, of the village level panchayats within its territorial jurisdiction from amongst the chairpersons of the village level panchayats; and

(c)   a panchayat at the district level shall be elected by an electoral college comprising the elected chairpersons of the panchayats at the village and intermediate levels in the district, from amongst the chairpersons of the intermediate level panchayats in the district.

Provided that a vacancy in the office of the chairperson of a panchayat shall be filled within a period of not more than three months from the date of occurrence of the vacancy."

5.   Reservation of Seats and Offices of Chairpersons

Art. 243D of the Indian Constitution provides that seats and offices of the chairpersons shall be reserved for women and SCs and STs. Similarly, it makes an enabling provision for the reservation of seats and offices of chairpersons for the backward classes at the discretion of the State legislatures. With the abolition of the territorial constituency members at the intermediate and district level panchayats in terms of the model proposed in the previous paragraphs, reservation of seats in favour of women, SCs and STs could be made only at the village panchayat level. In respect of offices of the chairpersons, such reservations could however be continued at all the three levels of panchayats. Where the office of a chairperson of a panchayat at any level reserved for a woman or a member of the Scheduled Castes or Tribes falls vacant during the term of the panchayat, on account of resignation, death, removal, or otherwise, the vacancy should be filled by another person belonging to the same reserved category within a maximum period of three months. Care should however be taken to see that if the seat or office of a chairperson reserved for a Scheduled Tribe can not be filled for lack of their representation in the panchayat concerned, the vacancy may be allowed to be filled by a member of the Scheduled Castes, and vice versa.

The existing provision relating to the discretion of the State legislatures to provide for reservation of seats and offices of chairperson of panchayats to members belonging to the backward classes, on par with Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes can be retained. In all such cases, a minimum of one

third of such seats and offices should also be invariably reserved for women belonging to this category. Also it is necessary to ensure that the total number of reserved seats and offices of chairpersons of the panchayats at different levels for different categories does not exceed fifty per cent of the total number of such seats or offices in each State.

Accordingly Art. 243D of the Indian Constitution may be modified as follows:

(A)   Clause (1) may be substituted by the following:

"(1)   Seats shall be reserved for
     (a)   the Scheduled Castes; and
     (b)   the Scheduled Tribes;
     in every panchayat at the village level, and the number of seats so reserved shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to their respective population in that panchayat area bears to the total population of that area, and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different divisions/wards in a panchayat at the village level."

(B)   In clause (3) after the words "in every panchayat", the words "at the village level" may be inserted. In the same clause, the words "constituencies in a panchayat" may be substituted by "divisions/wards in a panchayat at the village level".

(C)   In clause (4), the words "at the village or any other level" may be substituted by "at all levels".

(D)   In clause (6), the words "any panchayat" may be substituted by "the panchayats at the village level". In the same clause, the words "backward class of citizens" may be substituted by "other Backward classes".

6.   Duration of Panchayats & Tenure of Members

The existing provision in the Constitution provides for a five year duration for the panchayats. Art. 243E(1) reads that "every panchayat, unless sooner dissolved under any law for the time being in force, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for its first meeting and no longer". Art. 243E(3) stipulates that "an election to constitute a panchayat shall be completed (a) before the expiry of its duration specified in clause (1); and (b) before the expiration of a period of six months from the date of its dissolution provided that where the remainder of the period for which the dissolved panchayat would have continued is less than six months, it shall not be necessary to hold any election under this clause for   constituting a panchayat".

Art. 243E(4) further provides that "a panchayat constituted upon the dissolution of a panchayat before the expiration of its duration shall continue only for the remainder of the period for which the dissolved panchayat would have continued under clause (1) had it not been so dissolved".

These provisions make it very clear that the Constitution uses the singular while referring to panchayats. The dissolution of all panchayats en

masse at any or more levels and constituting new panchayats in their place within a maximum period of six months is thus violative of the letter and spirit of the Constitution. Besides, the Constitution did not explicitly provide for the tenure of office of the elected chairpersons of the panchayats with the result that in States like Karnataka and Maharashtra, the tenure is reduced to only a few months. Such an arrangement is not conducive to continuity in leadership in the panchayats. It is therefore necessary to explicitly specify that every elected chairperson and member of a panchayat shall continue till the expiry of the prescribed duration of a panchayat. In all cases of resignation, death, removal or otherwise of the chairperson or the member, as the case may be, election to the vacancy should be held within a maximum period of three months except where the remainder period of the term of the former member or chairperson is less than six months.

In the light of the above considerations, Art. 243E needs to be amended on the following lines.

(A)   Clause (1) of Art. 243E may be substituted by the following clause

"(1)   Every panchayat, unless sooner dissolved under any law for the time being in force, and every chairperson elected according to the due process of law, unless sooner causes a vacancy or removed, shall continue for five years from the date appointed for the first meeting of the panchayat and no longer".

(B)   Clause (3) may be substituted by the following:
"An election to constitute a panchayat or to fill a vacant seat or office of the chairperson of a panchayat shall be completed -

(a)   before the expiry of the duration of the panchayat specified in clause (1);

(b)   before the expiration of a period of six months from the date of dissolution of the panchayat, and of a period of three months from the date of occurrence of vacancy in a seat or office of a chairperson, as the case may be.

Provided that the vacancies arising out of resignation, removal, death or otherwise in the seats and offices of the chairpersons of panchayats reserved for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women shall normally be filled by the category of persons for whom the seats and offices of chairpersons were originally reserved, for the remainder of the term of the panchayat.

Provided further that where the remainder of the period for which the dissolved panchayat or a member of chairperson of a panchayat would have continued is less than six months, it shall not be necessary to hold any election under this clause for constituting the panchayat or electing the member or the chairperson, as the case may be.

> Provided also that where adequate representation of the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes is not found in a panchayat to fill the vacancy originally reserved for either the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, the vacancy may be filled by a member belonging to the Scheduled Tribes or Scheduled Castes, as the case may be".

7. Devolution of Powers, Authority and Responsibilities

Among the various provisions in the Indian Constitution relating to the panchayats, Art. 243G is by far the most crucial as the entire decentralised democratic edifice of panchayati raj is conditioned by it. Undoubtedly, devolution of appropriate and adequate responsibilities, authority and powers, constitute the touchstone by which the efficacy of the panchayats can be assessed. The provisions of this Article are indeed a recognition of the States' prerogative in the empowerment of the panchayats. This provision merely reiterates the Constitutional arrangement already in vogue, and hence does not add anything new. It is in the nature of a 'permissive' provision for the State legislatures to statutorily endow the panchayats with powers and authority necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. By implication, this provision makes the State legislatures responsible for the empowerment of the panchayats. The powers, authority and responsibilities to be entrusted to them must be statutory in character, the object sought to be achieved being making the panchayat institutions of self-government. However, what constitutes 'self-government' at the local level, and the nature and extent of powers, authority and responsibilities that are to be granted to the panchayats to ensure such coveted 'self-government' are left to be decided by the State legislatures. States are thus provided an opportunity to make their own subjective judgment in the area of empowering the panchayats.

A careful reading of this Article indicates that the State legislatures can, by law, endow the panchayats with powers and responsibilities in respect of (a) preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; and (b) implementation of schemes entrusted to them including those pertaining to the 'matters' listed in the Eleventh Schedule, for economic development and social justice. The implications are quite obvious. First, panchayats are to be involved in the preparation of plans as well as in the implementation of schemes. Second, the plans to be prepared and the schemes to be executed by the panchayats must serve the broad goals of economic development and social justice. Third, the schemes to be entrusted to the panchayats for implementation may also belong to the 'matters' listed in the Eleventh Schedule.

In practice, the performance of the States in this direction is by and large unprepossessing. Most States did not bother to make fresh endeavours to translate the spirit of this Article into virtual reality. There is strong political and administrative hostility to the cause of strengthening the panchayats in many States. Sadly, the list of 29 'matters' in the Eleventh Schedule sent false

signals to the panchayats which consider that the States are statutorily obliged to transfer to them all 'subjects' relating to these 'matters'. This signal aggravated the discontentment of the panchayats.

In several major States, the Panchayat Acts, preceding and succeeding the 73rd Amendment Act, have provided for several responsibilities to the panchayats, particularly to those existing at the village and intermediate levels. Unfortunately, the executive wing of the States has not honoured the statutory provisions by sheer default in transferring the specified responsibilities to the panchayats, or by their failure in the preparation of necessary guidelines, and nonchalance towards staff support and funds to the latter. The powers granted to the State executive under the 'subordinate legislation' have only resulted in excessive and unwarranted State control and supervision over the functional autonomy of the panchayats. Also, the States, contrary to the legislative intent, have either remained silent or taken a series of measures which ultimately reduced the relevance of the statutory provisions and efficacy of the panchayats as units of local governance.

The States would therefore do well to review their existing Panchayat Acts and see whether the responsibilities and powers already assigned to the panchayats are actually transferred to the latter. If not transferred, they may examine whether such transfer is handicapped for want of government guidelines, or whether the guidelines issued earlier themselves are hampering such transfer. The foremost task is to ensure that the existing statutory provisions relating to devolution of responsibilities and powers to the panchayats are given effect to. Next, States should examine whether the panchayats are endowed with adequate powers, staff and funds to perform their statutorily assigned functions. If panchayats do not have adequate access to these prerequisites, expeditious action needs to be taken by the States to meet these requirements of the panchayats.

States may also explore the feasibility of devolving on the panchayats additional responsibilities of development. The responsibilities must be very specific, with no ambiguity governing them. States may identify the specific activities/schemes pertaining to each development sector, keeping in view their status in the functional or asset hierarchy for being transferred to different levels of panchayats. For instance, specific activities relating to rural roads, drinking water supply, drainage and sanitation, street lighting, health care, school education, markets, poverty alleviation, etc., can be identified for being transferred to the panchayats on the basis of "subsidiarity" principle. Alongside of it, States may also ensure that the requisite staff and resource support is made available to the panchayats to enable them also to shoulder these new responsibilities effectively.

Next, States should ensure that all levels of panchayats are involved not only in planning functions, but also in the implementation of schemes. This does not mean that all functions entrusted to the panchayats should

necessarily involved planning and execution of schemes. The entire exercise of devolution should be such that no panchayat at any level is made a mere coordinating, advisory and reviewing institution. Moreover, States should frame broad guidelines for the benefit of the panchayats in respect of schemes or activities entrusted to the latter, and such guidelines should not stifle local initiative and local decision making process. In other words, ample space and flexibility should be allowed to the panchayats in taking decisions on their own in regard to planning and implementation of the schemes or activities entrusted to them. Besides, States may ensure that functions and powers granted to the panchayats are not unilaterally withdrawn without prior consultation with the latter and without any valid justification.

An important issue that needs to be resolved at this juncture relates to the desirability of amending the Constitution to provide for a 'local list', analogous to the Union and State Lists. The basic structure of the Indian polity is two tier consisting of the Union and State governments. In several federations, the subject of 'local government' usually belongs to the sub-national/regional/provincial governments, and India is no exception to this general rule. Transfer of certain responsibilities from the State to the local governments finds justification by the superiority of the latter in the performance of certain governmental functions which are mostly 'localised' in nature. In the context of panchayats, prescribing and reserving certain spheres of activity for their exclusive domain through a local list will again call for reservation of certain revenue sources for them. Even then, there is bound to be a mismatch between their own resources and expenditure commitments. Considering the revenue raising abilities of the panchayats, they invariably continue to depend on State aid to a large extent. Moreover, if the panchayats do not perform the listed functions or do not use their fiscal powers, a 'local list' may not enable the higher level government to arrest such situations. Besides, States may not be favourably inclined for the inclusion of a separate 'local list' in the Constitution. In view of these considerations, it is not desirable to have a separate and exclusive 'local list' in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

Alternatively, the 'matters' in the existing Eleventh Schedule could be replaced by a new list of 'matters' to be reserved for the use of the panchayats. These new matters comprise certain matters, including revenue items, specified in the Lists-II and III of the Seventh Schedule. States and the Union government may therefore identify specific activities, agencies, and schemes relating to these select matters for being statutorily transferred to the panchayats. For evolving a consensus on the transfer of the specified matters from the State and Concurrent Lists to the panchayats, the Union government may convene a meeting of political parties, State Chief Ministers, officials of the relevant ministries of the Union government, and local government experts before bringing in a Constitutional Amendment Bill before the Parliament.

It should be clearly recognised that the amendment to Art. 243G should be such that, while reserving certain matters to the functional domain of the

panchayats in the Eleventh Schedule, the supremacy of the States in these areas is not adversely affected. As the States have to be assured of their exclusive jurisdiction over the subject of local government, they must be accorded the role of a 'big brother'. Therefore, the Constitution should explicitly provide that it shall be lawful for the States to withdraw these matters from the purview of the panchayats in the event of abuse of powers, misuse of funds or default in expected levels of performance. Similarly, the Union Government would have to ensure that the implementation of all their Centrally sponsored rural development schemes, addressed to poverty alleviation is entrusted only to the panchayats. This demands bringing the DRDAs under the overall control of the district level panchayats.

Accordingly, Art. 243G of the Indian Constitution deserves to be amended in the following manner:

"Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Legislature of a State shall by law endow the Panchayats with such powers, authority and responsibilities as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government, and such law shall also contain specific provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities on panchayats at the appropriate level, subject to such conditions as may be specified therein, with respect to

a)   preparation of plans for economic development and social justice;
b)   provision of services to the people and measures for poverty alleviation in the rural areas;
c)   implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them, including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule; and
d)   mobilisation of resources for local development.
        Provided that the Legislature of a State may, by law, transfer such institutions to the control of the panchayats subject to such conditions and limits as may be specified in such law;
        Provided further that the District Rural Development Agency of a district shall function under the overall control and supervision of the panchayat at the district level;
        Provided also that the Legislature of a State may, by law, withdraw any 'matter' or activity or scheme or institution from the functional domain of the panchayats for reasons specified in the said law.
        Provided in addition that the State or Union government may entrust to the panchayats at any level, or a district level panchayat may entrust to the panchayats at the intermediate and village levels, schemes for implementation; and in all such cases, the panchayat so entrusted with such implementation of schemes shall be provided with necessary funds and staff support".

8.   Powers to impose taxes, etc., & Constitution of Funds

In terms of Art. 243H, State legislatures are empowered to statutorily (a) authorise a panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate specified taxes, duties,

tolls and fees, and prescribe their procedure and limits; (b) assign to a panchayat specified taxes, duties, tolls and fees levied and collected by the State government for specified purposes subject to conditions and limits, if any, prescribed; (c) provide for making specified grants-in-aid of the panchayats from the Consolidated Fund of the State; and (d) provide for the constitution of specified Funds for crediting all moneys received by or on behalf of the panchayats, and for their withdrawal.

This provision, as in the case of Art. 243G, is again 'permissive' in nature. It also reiterates the dispensation that was already in vogue during the pre-73rd Amendment period. At best, this provision makes the State legislatures responsible for providing, for the revenue raising powers of the panchayats, sharing of State revenues, payment of grants-in-aid, and constitution of Funds either by the panchayats or by any other agency on behalf of panchayats. The executive government per se is therefore not authorised to usurp these powers of the State legislature.

Since responsibilities and resources are interlinked, meticulous care has to be taken to ensure that the devolution of responsibilities is accompanied by adequate financial resources to the panchayats. Such a meaningful match between responsibilities and resources can be attempted only by assuring the panchayats of a minimum core of resources commensurate with their responsibilities. This in turn calls for a constitutional provision requiring the State legislatures to statutorily assign a few local taxes, duties, tolls and fees; share the net proceeds of a few State taxes; and make specified grants to the panchayats. The object of making this provision is to assure the panchayats of a minimum quantum of their own autonomous revenue, and grants-in-aid.

Nevertheless, considering the normal reluctance of the panchayats to levy taxes entrusted to them, States have to be endowed with the right to withdraw any fiscal power granted to the panchayats if the latter fail to adequately and properly exercise the powers granted to them. Unless this condition is stipulated, failure of a panchayat in levying taxes and non-taxes transferred to them from out of the State List not only results in loss of revenue to the panchayats, but also in denial of access to such revenue for the State governments. An allied requirement is that States should desist from entrusting to the panchayats such imposts as are considered to be of nuisance value or considered politically inexpedient. Besides, where the State government proposes to withdraw any revenue power from the purview of the panchayats, a 'tax/revenue-rental' arrangement can also be worked out between the State government and the panchayat(s) concerned under which the latter could be assured of the net proceeds of such revenues to be administered by the State government.

The revenue matters specified in Lists II and III of the Seventh Schedule which are proposed to be incorporated in the Eleventh Schedule may be divided into two categories, namely, (i) taxes, duties, tolls and fee to be statutorily

reserved for the panchayats for their exclusive use; and (ii) taxes, duties, tolls and fee which are administered by the State governments but whose proceeds are to be statutorily shared with the panchayats on the basis of the recommendations of the SFCs. Each State may be given the discretion to determine the nature of revenues which it wants to reserve for its panchayats as well as the State revenues which it intends to share in part or in full with their panchayats.

Art. 243H may therefore be modified in the manner specified hereunder:

"The Legislature of a State shall, by law,

a)   authorise a panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate such taxes, duties, tolls and fees, including those listed in the Eleventh Schedule, in accordance with such procedure and subject to such limits.

Provided that it shall be lawful for the Legislature of a State to withdraw any tax, duty, toll, or fee from the fiscal domain of the panchayats for reasons specified in the said law.

Provided further that the State government may, by law, transfer the net revenue from the taxes, duties, tolls, or fee withdrawn from the fiscal domain of the panchayats, on the recommendations of the Finance Commission constituted under Art. 243I.

b)   assign to a panchayat such share in the taxes, duties, tolls and fees levied and collected by the State government, including those listed in the Eleventh Schedule, for such purposes and subject to such conditions and limits;

Provided that where a State government levies and collects any revenue included in the Eleventh Schedule, the net proceeds of such revenue shall be transferred to the panchayats on the basis of the recommendations of the Finance Commission constituted under Art. 243I.

c)   provide for making such grants-in-aid to the panchayats from the Consolidated Fund of the State; and

d)   provide for constitution of such funds for crediting all moneys received respectively, by or on behalf of the panchayats and also for the withdrawal of such moneys therefrom.

-       as may be specified by law;

Provided that Parliament may, by law, establish a separate non-lapsable fund for the provision of loans to the panchayats for taking up remunerative enterprises".

9.   Finance Commission & Audit of Accounts

Constitution of a Finance Commission at the State level by the Governor within one year from the commencement of the 73rd Amendment Act, and thereafter

at the expiration of every fifth year to review the financial position of the panchayats and to make recommendations in regard to revenue sharing of the specified State taxes, determining the revenues that can be assigned to the panchayats, the payment of grants-in-aid of the panchayats, etc., is one of the mandatory provisions of the Indian Constitution. Accordingly, the first generation finance commissions (referred to SFCs) have been appointed in all the States. Except in Bihar, the first SFCs have already submitted their reports. In 16 States, the second generation SFCs have also been appointed as per the Constitutional requirement. However, our experience with the first generation SFCs reveals that (a) some States have taken an unduly long time in taking action on the recommendations of their respective SFCs; (b) in many States and UTs, serving or retired senior level bureaucrats are appointed as Chairman and/or members of the SFCs, which are supposed to consist of subject specialists; (c) many States have not taken appropriate follow up action on the accepted recommendations of their SFCs in terms of administrative, financial and legislative measures; (d) there were frequent changes in the composition of the SFCs during their span of life affecting continuity in their approach; (e) many States have not honoured their commitment to release resources to the panchayats, even in cases where budgetary provision was originally made; (f) the life span of the SFCs in several States is either too long or too short; (g) the time frame of the recommendations of the national and State level finance commissions do not coincide; and (h) many SFCs seem to have not clearly understood their role vis-à-vis Art. 243I(1)(a)(i) which requires them to recommend the principles for sharing with the panchayats of only such State revenues as are specified by the State legislature, by law, in terms of Art. 243H(b). The Eleventh Finance Commission has also made several important recommendations relating to the composition and working of the first generation SFCs.

Areas where the existing Constitutional provisions relating to the finance commissions and audit of accounts need amendment relate to: frequency of appointment of the SFCs, their terms of reference, follow up measures on the SFC recommendations, role of the national finance commission in strengthening the panchayat finances, and audit of panchayat accounts. The amendments could be as follows:

Art 243I:
(A)   In clause (1), after the words "every fifth year", the words "or earlier" may be inserted.
(B)   In sub-clause (a)(i) of clause (1), after the words "the net proceeds of", the words "all or any of" shall be inserted. Similarly, in the same para after the words "which may be", the words "or which are to be" may be inserted.
(C)   In clause (4), after the words "before the Legislature of the State", the words "within a period of six months from the date of receipt of the recommendations of the finance commission" may be added.

(D)   After clause (4) of Art. 243I, the following may be inserted as clause (5).
      "(5) The Governor shall also cause an action taken report on each recommendation of the finance commission, along with the annual financial statement of the State, to be laid before the Legislature of the State".

(E)   In sub-clauses 3 (bb) and (c) of clause (3) of Art. 280, for the words "on the basis of", the words "with due regard to" may be substituted.

(F)   After sub-clause (bb) and (c) of clause (3) the following proviso may be inserted.
      "Provided that it shall be lawful for the Union government to withhold the grants earmarked to panchayats and municipalities of a State under sub-clauses (bb) and (c) above, on ground of non-compliance of the State with the Constitutional provisions".

(e)   At the end of Art. 243J, the following proviso may be inserted:
      "Provided that the Union government may by rule provide for the manner of maintenance of accounts by the panchayats and for their audit with respect to any or all of the Centrally sponsored schemes implemented by the panchayats, and the grants to local bodies paid to the States as per the recommendations of the finance commission appointed under Art. 280".

10.   Sharing Expenditure on Elections to Panchayats

Under the existing dispensation, States are required to find the necessary wherewithal for conducting elections to panchayats and municipalities. Since the onus of responsibility to promote local government rests also on the Union government, the latter may be required to provide assistance to the States for this purpose. The quantum of such assistance and the conditionalities of sharing the election expenses between the States and the Union government, if any, may be left to be determined by law by the parliament. Nevertheless, it is necessary to make the Central assistance to the States contingent upon timely elections to the panchayats and municipalities. The financial burden involved in conducting the elections to the panchayats under the existing dispensation would be substantial, largely due to the elections to the seats of territorial constituency members. If these seats are dispensed with, as suggested in the earlier paragraphs, the election costs would be significantly reduced.

      With a view to providing some relief to the State and also to motivate them to conduct elections to the panchayats as per the schedule envisaged in the Constitution, the following clause can be added to Art. 243K as clause 5.

      "(5)   The expenditure incurred by the State governments in conducting elections to their panchayats at various levels shall be shared by the Union and State governments in such manner and subject to such conditions and limits, as the Parliament may, by law, provide.

      Provided that the assistance from the Union government shall be made

available to the States only if elections to the panchayats are regularly conducted in the normal course".

"ELEVENTH SCHEDULE
(Art. 243G and 243H)

I.   Matters from List-II of Seventh Schedule

1.   Public Health and Sanitation, and Dispensaries, including levy of 'user charges' (6).
2.   Purchase and sale of intoxicating liquors (8).
3.   Relief of the disabled and unemployable (9).
4.   Burials and burial grounds; cremation and cremation grounds, including levy of fees for their use (10).
5.   Libraries, including levy of fees, cess or tax for their use (12).
6.   Roads, bridges, ferries and inland water ways, including levy of 'user charges' (13).
7.   Agriculture including protection against pests and prevention of plant diseases, including levy of fees, cess, or surcharge on the beneficiaries (14).
8.   Prevention of animal diseases, and veterinary hospitals and dispensaries, including levy of fees for their use (15).
9.   Pounds and the prevention of cattle trespass (16).
10.   Water for drinking purposes and minor irrigation, including levy of 'user charges' (17).
11.   Inland fisheries, including levy of fees or rentals for their use (21).
12.   Markets and fairs, including levy of fees on users (28).
13.   Inns and Inn-keepers, including levy of fees on users (31).
14.   Theatres and dramatic performances, entertainments and amusements, and levy of fees (33).
15.   Maintenance of land records, survey for revenue purposes, and records of rights (45).
16.   Taxes on consumption of electricity (53).
17.   Taxes on advertisements other than advertisements published in newspapers and advertisements broadcast by radio and television (55).
18.   Taxes on goods and passengers carried by road or on inland waterways (56).
19.   Land revenue, and levy of cesses or surcharges thereon (45).
20.   Taxes on agricultural income (46).
21.   Duties in respect of succession to agricultural land (47).
22.   Estate duty in respect of agricultural land (48).
23.   Taxes on lands and buildings, and levy of surcharges or cesses thereon (49).
24.   Taxes on minor minerals (50).
25.   Duties of excise on alcoholic liquors for human consumption, and levy of surcharges or cesses thereon (51).
26.   Taxes on the entry of goods into a local area for consumption, use or sale (52).

27. Taxes on vehicles other than on those mechanically propelled (57).
28. Taxes on animals and boats (58).
29. Tolls (59).
30. Taxes on professions, trades, callings and employments (60).
31. Taxes on luxuries, including taxes on entertainments and amusements, and cesses or surcharges thereon (52).
32. Stamp duty in respect of transfer of immovable properties, including levy of cesses or surcharges thereon (63).

II. Matters from List-III of Seventh Schedule

1. Maintenance of supplies and services essential to the community, including levy of 'user charges' (3).
2. Registration of marriages and divorce, and prevention of child marriages (4).
3. Prevention of cruelty to animals (17).
4. Forests, including levy of fees, cesses or surcharges on tax on forest produce (17A).
5. Protection of wild animals and birds (17B).
6. Economic and Social planning for poverty alleviation, economic and social development, and social justice (20).
7. Population control and family planning (20A).
8. Social Insurance, employment and unemployment, including levy of tax or surcharges or cesses (23).
9. Prevention of child labour, distribution of old age pensions and maternity benefits (24).
10. Primary and secondary education, including levy of a tax or cess or surcharge (25).
11. Charitable Institutions, charitable and religious endowments and religious institutions, including levy of fees, cess or surcharge (28).
12. Vital statistics including registration of births and deaths (30).
13. Weights and measures except establishment of standards (33A).
14. Mechanically propelled vehicles including the principles on which taxes on such vehicles are to be levied (35).
15. Electricity, particularly operation and maintenance of lighting of streets and public places (38)".

(Figures in the parenthesis indicate the serial number in the Seventh Schedule)

Essence of Cultural Tourism Management in India
- Vishwas Mehta*

Change is perhaps the only phenomenon in the world, which does not change. However, change is inevitable and its challenge can be felt everywhere. Societies, culture, organizations, families and individuals - all encounter challenges of change and their response to change determines whether they continue to survive or meet the fate of 'Dinosaurs'. Those who choose to ignore the needs for change may ultimately become the victims of change. The challenges of cultural tourism are no exception to this phenomenon.

In the process of continuous change, Nations today are witnessing different kind of war - Trade wars, which do not kill humanity but kill economies, which are fragile and weak. Today, even in the field of tourism, no nation can boast that it is self-sufficient and economically independent and therefore, in order to survive, most countries have decided and developed strategies to complement each other rather than competing with their neighbours in order to share the large size of cake that tourism offers. Countries like Singapore have joined hands with Malaysia to offer a comprehensive package to attract tourists. The management strategies of highlighting whatever tourist attractions, that are available with them and projecting these beyond the frontiers, has prompted countries like Malaysia to coin phrases like "Malaysia is truly Asia".

Curiosity to know about others, understand the nuances of their culture and appreciate the differences, is one of the main reasons for the growth and development of cultural tourism.Technological and communication developments today have made it possible for people to read, see and hear about the life-styles of different places or countries more than ever before. In fact, now world is being united by travel and communication to such an extent that there almost is no other side of the world any more.

The dynamics of tourism hinges upon an incontrovertible human fact - Curiosity and Wanderlust. Man, as a social animal is wanderer by nature. Fondness for wandering is as old a passion of human kind as is its history. The man has an insatiable inclination for new places and people. He is contented, jubilant and cheerful when travelling to new, unfamiliar and strange

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places and feels in his bones while exploring new situations and different things. As a result of revolutionary changes in the field of transportation and communication in the modern world, it has become possible for man to satisfy his passion for new places and people. As a matter of fact, around this passion for seeing something new, has flourished the entire tourism industry worldwide.

According to UNESCO, without cultural heritage there would be no tourism, as it is intrinsically linked to the cultural heritage of the humanity and the future of each depends on the other. Culture has no boundaries. It exists in its very nascent form in the way we live, the way we attire ourselves, the way we eat, and the way we celebrate. Culture is one of the most important media that brings together people of different caste, creed and status as well as different countries of the world on one platform. It unites people with invisible strings. Culture is represented in the form of social life as an apparatus of collective activity evolved by man amongst human realities. According to Edward D. Hall, "it is a mould in which we are all cast, and it controls our daily life in many unsuspected ways". Cultural heritage has been regarded as one of the oldest and most important generators of tourism, which retains its central role in tourism industry to this day.

Just like a house becomes a home only when inhibited by people as a family, a tourist destination becomes exotic only with personalized service; close interaction and fostering relationships rather than physical comforts alone. The overall tour experience of a visitor should be extremely satisfying providing him good value for the time and money spent along with memories, which can be imbibed and carried along. It is not possible for a tourist to carry the cultural components physically after a visit, but the perceivable ones will survive and linger in the human mind for a long time to come.

Tourism has become the largest peacetime movement of people in the history of mankind today. The basic instinct of wanderlust of mankind, the need for physical relaxation, exploration of new areas, travel to far and distance places - known and unknown and understanding the nuances of culture has made 'Tourism', an integral part of the human civilization. Today with globalization, the physical and geographical borders have become less relevant with the opening up of new frontiers for man in all corners of the globe to reach out, explore and experience different facets of human existence and its surroundings.

In this ever-changing dynamic world, tourism has shown a remarkable and sustained growth both as an activity as well as an industry in almost all the geographical areas of the world. More than 698 million tourists travelling around the world spend 7.4 trillion US dollars that makes 'Tourism' - one of the largest and fastest expanding industries of the world. With the exception of U.S.A. and Japan, this amount exceeds GNP of any country of the world. Today tourism has grown faster than the growth rate of the world's GNP.

Tourism today, is the world's largest and fastest expanding industry. It is astonishing to note that in a short span of fifty years, tourism has fast grown up as a pursuit of profound human interest, developing itself as the world's most important industry in terms of export earnings. World recognizes tourism as an industry for generating immense business opportunities, a creator of wealth, income multiplier, a catalyst for employment and preserver of culture and environment. The earnings in tourism make it one of the biggest industries of the World with an astounding figure of US $ 476 billion of international receipts in the year 2000 - an increase of 4.5% over the previous year.

Global Scenario

It is well known that as a contributor to the global economy, tourism has no equal. The figures denoting the fast growth of tourism sector quoted in the report of World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC) are worth mentioning. Tourism employs 10.6% of the global workforce and contributes 10.2% to world's GDP. It generates tax revenue of $ 655 billion and is the largest industry with $ 3.4 trillion gross output.

Tourism accounts for 10.9% of all consumers spending and 10.7% of capital investment in the world. It accounts for 6.9% of all government spending. In 1999, tourism industry earned over $ 3.5 trillion worldwide generated by over 500 million international travellers. According to WTTC, by the year 2000, more than 616 million international travellers accounted for $ 4.7 trillion spending. Tourism accounts for 8% of total exports or more than 30% of International Trade in services. It is therefore, no wonder that developing and developed countries have identified Tourism as the topmost priority for the 21st Century for generating wealth and employment.

The relevance of tourism is increasingly being recognised as an employment generating industry. It is a highly labour intensive and service oriented industry and could have significant impact on the countries with surplus labour. In 1995, Travel and tourism employed nearly 212 million people worldwide constituting 10.6% of World's workforce (Ghosh; 1998, 4). Between 1995 and 2005, 144 million new jobs would have been created in this sector.

This is likely to grow to nearly 400 million jobs by 2007 generating a new job in every 2.4 seconds (The Hindu, 23rd May 2000). Tourism employs a large number of women - educated, uneducated, skilled and unskilled, creating employment opportunities even in remote and backward areas. Employment multiplier in tourism is 2.36, which means that a direct employment of 1 person in tourism creates jobs for 1.36 persons in other sectors of the economy.

It is estimated that by the year 2020, the projected annual growth of the tourism sector will be considerably exceeding the maximum probable

expansion of world's wealth. The future projections given by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) and WTTC are quite revealing. By 2020, there will be 1.6 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide, who will be spending about $ 2,000 billion. The sustained annual average growth rate in the tourism will be 4.3% in arrivals and 6.7% in receipts, which is far above the probable expansion of the world's wealth. Thus, it is certain that in the years to come, next to Information Technology (IT), tourism will emerge as one of the strongest and most stable productive industries of 21st century in the world.

In terms of earnings in 1999, US tops with US $ 74.9 billion with Spain, France and Italy earning around US $ 30 billion each. The United Kingdom earned US $ 20 billion with Germany, China, Austria and Canada earning US $ 10 billion each, closely followed by Hong Kong (China), Thailand and Singapore close behind.

It is interesting to note that all studies connected with tourism and aviation suggest that the focus of travel and tourism is gradually but deliberately shifting from Europe and North America to East/South Asia and the Pacific. The WTTC Tourism Satellite Account 2001 confirms this phenomenon and has projected data of far reaching implications for Indian tourism in the coming decade.

Along with this, it has been recorded that there has been a marked increase world wise in the paid leisure time. This time has recorded an upward increase from two weeks to five weeks. This feature is not only visible in the industrialized world but also in the developing societies. It is important to note that most developing economies are culturally rich and are preferred destinations of tourists from prosperous countries, who look forward to cultural experiences ordinarily not available in their own countries. The average length of stay of foreign tourists in India is one of the highest in the world because of her cultural richness.

The estimated average length of stay for tourists in India during 1998 was 31.2 days, one of the highest, when compared to 7.3 days in France; 5.2 days in Canada; 8.4 days in Thailand and 2.6 days in Singapore. This is extraordinary, when compared with international standards, proving once again that the longer stay of foreign tourists in India indicates the character of the average visitor as a serious and studious explorer of history and culture.

Tourism in India

Tourism in India was always considered "elitist" i.e. a luxury activity for the higher strata of society and was never considered as a national priority despite its critical importance for employment generation and economic growth.

In India, tourism grew on its own from 15,000 tourists in 1950 to 2.64 million arrivals in the year 2000, which is 0.38% of the total international

tourists arrivals in the World. It is interesting to find that this ratio of percentage share of India has remained static at 0.38% from 1995 onwards. In the year 1995, India received 2.12 million tourists (0.38%) out of 565.4 million tourists worldwide, which increased to 2.64 million in the year 2000 out of 698.3 million tourists worldwide, keeping the percentage of 0.38% same during the last six years.

It is remarkable that such a small percentage of foreign tourists has made tourism in India, the third largest foreign exchange earning industry after Gems, Jewellery and readymade garments, earning a precious amount of Rs. 14,408 Crores (US $ 3282 million) in foreign exchange during 2000 compared to Rs. 13,041 Crores (US $ 3035 million) in 1999 (RBI Figures). Despite ranked 43rd, among the 60 prime tourist destinations in the World, Govt. of India is struggling to achieve a target of 1% of the total International Tourist arrivals to India, which remains a far dream still waiting to be realized in near future.

In India, more than 20 million people were employed directly or indirectly in tourism industry in the year 1997. Direct employment in tourism in 1994-95 was about 7.8 million people, which is 2.4% of the total labour force. Indirect employment accounts for 19 million people, which can be doubled in 5 years, if the international arrivals are increased to at least 5 million. According to WTTC, India has the potential to triple its travel and tourism jobs to 40 million jobs. Every direct job created leads to 11 indirect jobs. It is estimated that every 1 million additional visitor could translate into Rs. 4,300 crores of revenue for the tourism industry (FICCI Study. 2001, 2).

Employment per million rupee invested in tourism is much higher than other sectors. Labour capital ratio, per million rupee of the investment in 1985-86 prices in the Hotel and Restaurant sector, is 89 jobs compared to 44.7 jobs in agriculture; 12.6 jobs in manufacturing industry; 0.9 jobs in Railways; 13.8 jobs in other transport industry and 2.6 jobs in mining/quarrying sector. As a whole tourism industry provides for 47.5 jobs (Ghosh; 1998, 103). The employment output ratio at 1983-84 prices in tourism was 71 as compared to 51 in Leather; 27 in Textiles; 14 in Electricity; 12 in Beverages and 6 in Cement industry.

Despite tremendous potential and cascading effect of Tourism on economic growth and community development, is it not surprising that first 10 years of India's Five Year Plans, did not even mention tourism among the sectors of economic priority! Is it because of the misplaced priorities and general apathy of the Indian policy makers and agencies that even today, tourism has had no patron even in the Constitution of India, where it is neither listed as a central nor as a state or concurring subject! According to WTTC reports, India ranks 153rd out of 160 countries in terms of Government expenditure on tourism. An analysis of Five Year Plans reveal that Tourism accounts for less than 0.2% of the total plan outlay of Government of India.

Why then today, so few people visit 1 billion people of India despite its rich cultural heritage, ancient civilization and regional diversities? Why is then India, visited by so few people? What are the impediments for the world to come to India and explore this mystic land? Why is it that millions of domestic tourists criss-crossing India from its one corner to another are not even taken note of? Why is it that culture and tourism are not viewed as two sides of the same coin? Is there something wrong the way culture and tourism are managed and propagated? What is ailing us from promoting and implementing the concepts of Cultural Tourism Management?

The figure of 2.6 million people comprising of 0.38% of the international travellers, visiting this country has become stagnant in the last one decade. In fact, what is not known to a large number of people is that 3.8 million Indians go abroad every year, which far exceeds visitor traffic to this country. Foreign tourist arrivals to India, if increased tenfold to even 3.8% of the international tourist arrivals, which is equivalent to 27 million people visiting China every year, can virtually help wiping out the entire budgetary deficit of the country besides financing the entire budget of the Government of India. Alas! The fact remains that this is a far cry, since even the target of achieving 1% of international tourist arrivals, is nowhere in sight.

Even at the conceptual level, there is no bigger dilemma in Government where both at the central and state governments level (with few exceptions like Rajasthan), tourism and culture are separate departments, chalking out their individual pathways on to old beaten tracks and policies eventually leading to a situation where left hand doesn't know what right hand is doing. The strategy so far of developing tourism, not to speak of Cultural Tourism, if any, has been like running around in a circle, which has no beginning and no end.

The real essence of Indian culture as reflected in our lifestyles, customs, traditions, performing arts, spiritualism, etc. is what actually fascinates and attracts visitors from all over the world. Unfortunately, this essence of linking Culture with Tourism presenting 'India - that really is' has always been confined to fringes with marginal importance.

A first time visitor to Delhi, Kolkata or Mumbai may be appalled by the overcrowded cities, filth and garbage on the roads and stray cattle on the streets. However, with longer stay, repeated visits, and a closer interaction with locals, a foreign visitor with discerning eyes is able to fathom the 'Real India', which exists beyond the filth and garbage, perceiving the spiritual values, human bondage, family ties, non-materialistic attitude of people and the underlying love for tolerance, peace, religious acrimony, which is the real ethos of India. The tourist can perceive better, why for centuries, the Indians have not grabbed other's land, mutilated their culture, history or tried to enforce Indian way of life on others. Indians have not conquered anyone, except

hearts through spiritualism, ethnic values, beliefs, customs, traditions and their way of life.

It has to be clearly understood, that foreign tourists do not come to India for entertainment, since we cannot show them Casinos of Las Vegas, Joyrides of Disneyland, Samba Dances of Rio De Janeiro, Skyline of London and Paris or even Nightlife of Bangkok. The researcher is of the opinion that most of the foreigners come to India to know about the culture of this ancient land, which means visiting monuments, palaces, forts, temples, fairs, festivals and experiencing cuisine, colours, customs, traditions, rituals, folk art, dance, music, handicrafts, artifacts and ancient art of Yoga and Ayurveda. But by and large they are exposed to the cheap imitations offered or performed in selected hotels, restaurants and various tourist destinations.

The relationship between Culture and Tourism is nowhere better defined than in India's context. One of the almost mystical attractions of India is its ancient civilization and culture, with a history of more than 5000 years. Like Egypt and China, India is one of the earliest cradles of civilization and certainly the fountainhead of religion and philosophy. Karl Marx called it "the source of our languages, our religion". In the modern world of material advancement and resultant tensions, India has much to offer by way of spiritual and mental rejuvenation. Thus, philosophy, meditation, yoga, ayurveda, physical and mental healing and contact with ancient traditions and systems, make India an outstandingly attractive destination. The main pull of India is mysticism and history, which will always fascinate serious minded tourists rather than luxury or leisure traveller.

The mutual dependence of Tourism and Culture has to be understood and absorbed very clearly by all those involved with development of tourism, conservation of culture and management of both in India. Cultural Tourism helps keep traditions alive; widens social opportunities; stirs up nation's ethnic life; awakens feelings of national entity, identity and integration; improves inter-regional understanding; helps in revival, strengthening, protection of cultural heritage and enlightenment of individuals increasing visitor's appreciation of that heritage. Without sustainable management, tourism's link with culture loses its potential for growth.

For years while talking about the synergised development of cultural tourism in India, the planners have taken only the myopic view of the factors, which need to be focused upon to ensure increase of India's share in global tourism. The strategy, if any has been confined to physical aspects like growth of infrastructure, improvement of accommodation and transportation facilities. However, this approach of improving the physical aspects can in no way substitute the significant requirement of sprucing up India's act in the cultural tourism i.e. improving the perceivable or intangible aspects of culture and tourism as a part of cultural tourism management.

Given the ethnic diversity of destinations in India and the inherent strengths of our culture, it is possible to substantially enhance the tour experience and satisfaction among our tourists. However, vision on the part of all the agencies involved in the tourism sector is required to transfer this valuable intangible asset to attract and increase our tourist traffic.

It is the perceivable character of Indian culture, which made Mark Twain remark, "it (India) is one country under the sun that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, bonded and free and on land that all men desired to have seen and having seen once by even a glimpse would not give that glimpse for the shows of all the world combined."

It is this mystique cultural Kaleidoscope of India reflecting the perceivable character of Indian culture that draws tourists from variety of backgrounds to this land. As such, it is relevant here to first understand the perceivable aspect of cultural tourism, which explains the finer elements of culture and tourism and their inherent bonds.

It is interesting to note that while for the improvement and development of physical components, the tourism industry has to either make substantial capital investment or depend on the government agency, the perceivable aspects of tourism can entirely be managed by their own efforts without any incremental investments. Some efforts with a visionary approach and training focusing on human resource development can bring about incremental results for the industry when dealing with management of perceivable aspects of cultural tourism.

Bharatvarsha - India, one of the oldest civilizations of the world, sprawls like a giant from the snowy heights of the Himalayas in the north to the mighty waves of the Indian ocean in the south, washing its coasts for thousands of kilometers from Bengal to Kutch, spreading as it does from an intricate maze of the Naga Hills in the east to the thirsty sands of the Thar desert in the west. All through the long history of its civilization, the vast geographical expanse of the sub-continent not only provided a fertile ground for the germination and flowering of regional, ethnic and cultural diversities as a direct outcome of man-nature interaction, but also governed the destiny of its teeming millions - a destiny that in all its diverse cultural milieu, maintains a remarkable continuity defying time and still changing like the patterns in a kaleidoscope.

India is known to the world as a mystic land - a land of snake charmers, the poor and the illiterate. The world at large is unaware of her vast and rich cultural heritage manifested in the form of diverse dialects and languages; myths and legends; customs and traditions; colours and costumes; food and habits; monuments and palaces; fairs and festivals and aesthetic and emotional

sensitivities that have created an amazingly complex social mosaic. And yet, the Indian people have, for millennia together, learnt to come to terms with such diversities and interacted together, presenting a mysterious composite character that pervades every aspect of their lives, transcending all regional, lingual, ethnic, religious and economic barriers thereby creating strong bonds of cultural fusion - unparalleled and unseen in the rest of the world.

Perhaps that is why, Max Muller remarked, "If we were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty, which nature can bestow - in some parts veritable paradise on earth - I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts - I should point to India."

India - much beyond the perception of being a mystic land of snake charmers offers a dazzling array of destinations and experiences in the realm of culture. It is a huge sub-continent of teeming millions comprising of 1/5th of the world population making India the seventh largest country in the world occupying 2.3% of the earth's land surface, stretching across 3000 kms. approximately from the East to the West and from the North to the South. Bounded in the North by the majestic Himalayan ranges to the spectacular coastline in the South washed by the three seas, India is a vivid kaleidoscope of lucid landscapes, splendorous historical and architectural monuments, archaeological wonders, golden beaches, colourful people, fairs and festivities.

Today, it is a land relatively untouched by the vagaries of the modern developed world and lies largely unexplored by travellers from around the globe. Yet it is ironical that not long ago, its glory, fame, cultural heritage and wealth attracted invaders from all over the world. From Alexander onwards, the Parthians, the Kushanas, the Turks, the Moghuls, the Portugese, the French, the Dutch and the British, all of them came to loot us, captured our lands but could not conquer the minds or alter the cultural fabric and social ethos of this country.

India as a country cannot afford to miss the opportunities for economic development, employment generation and foreign exchange earnings from Tourism - specifically Cultural Tourism. Management practices in Indian Tourism sector should strive to achieve a better growth of tourism through infrastructure development, new product development, product improvement, product mix and innovative strategies for promotion and marketing of the rich cultural heritage. Management of right practices by all the agencies concerned in tourism industry can help generate new strategies for achieving diversification of cultural tourism products, packages and circuits developed on the basis of core competence, strength of individual States and cultural products instead of going for common products and packages.

The process of globalization has resulted in lot of stresses and tensions due to competitive lifestyles, breakneck speed of change and the ever-growing

need to excel. There is a tremendous demand of tourists, world over to go to exotic places, unexplored just to relax and run away from their monotonous, mechanical and routine lifestyles. The rich cultural heritage of India has always evoked a sense of great awe among people all over the world. India is, and has always been a storehouse of intellectual and cultural wisdom. Our diversity, cultural richness, and multifarious living ways give us the single distinction of being in a position to offer many unique products to the global community. Indian cultural heritage with its deep roots in ancient human civilization is enormously vast and varied, which can boast of original and unique achievements in the field of spiritualism, yoga, ayurveda, art, architecture, religion, philosophy, music, dance, festivities, customs, traditions and values, much beyond the brand image of being a mysterious land of snake charmers.

Cultural Tourism Management

Tourism Management should be inbuilt with new cultural tourism products, packages and circuits based on our rich cultural heritage focusing on people and lifestyles; ethnic diversity and languages; values and beliefs; myths and legends; rites and rituals; customs and traditions; fairs and festivals; colours and costumes; monuments and palaces; sculpture and architecture; deserts and beaches; artifacts and handicrafts; folklore and music; poetry and drama; yoga and ayurveda. These products based on cultural heritage can be developed into cultural attractions for tourism to accentuate the relevance of national heritage to everyday life interpreted in such a way as to make them living, vibrant and entertaining for the tourists.

Modern management practices would be required to present these cultural tourism products in the form of multi-media presentations, audio-video presentations, seminars and lectures, regular guided tours, music and poetry recitals, reconstruction of the pasts, guided trails and heritage walks, books and publicity material like postcard and posters, CDs, exhibitions, live performances and displays. These would require creating world class infrastructure and manpower by providing a tourist with all the information and amenities at par with best in the world resulting in a complete holistic experience providing good value for money and time spent by him.

Managers involved with human resource development in the service sector like tourism have to remember that, "People are the primary source of competitive advantage. At the end of the day we bet on people, not strategies". People are the first line of contact for tourists, who get a glimpse of the culture of a region through them. The behaviour and attitude of the personnel providing services while working in the field of cultural tourism has an important influence on the visitors' overall perception of the culture and tourism of a destination. Training of HRD at all levels is thus a very important aspect of cultural tourism management.

Tourism is one of the biggest employers of the country. The manpower skills vary from completely untrained, raw manpower to highly trained skilled and sophisticated personnel catering to tourists from abroad depending on whether they are working in a roadside dhaba or a five star hotel.

The role of training for Human Resource Development in tourism has become important because of the requirement of excellence in dealing with people, which even though in great demand is in short supply. No one is born with the value of excellence, and it has to be evolved gradually. There is no magic power at work that makes managers excellent, but a good thing about excellence is that the right things and basics that bring success - are learnable.

It is said, "Give a man fish, he will eat it. Train a man to fish, he will feed his family". The techniques of the training are therefore, a key factor and major tool used to achieve the objectives of HRD in a service sector like cultural tourism. Training in HRD must therefore, equip themselves with the latest technology, adopting practices to recruit, motivate and evolve talent besides retaining them due to the fast turnover of experienced professionals to defect to greener pastures.

Training in HRD has today ensured that the future lies in the jobholder and not in the job, with the employment security not coming from being employed, but from employability. All development is self-development, and development is highly individual. According to Einstein, it is the "uniqueness of the individual", which helps him strive constantly to educate himself and improve learning how to "run hard to stand still" in this fast changing world.

The right Indian management practices with original Indian wisdom providing sufficient ground and wealth of knowledge as contained in our ancient Vedas, Upnishads, Puranas, Geeta, Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. with original Indian wisdom also need to be emulated. Even today, the lessons provided by the ancient Indian wisdom are quite relevant to develop managerial styles more suited to Indian management. Instead of blindly copying western management styles, we should try to dwell upon culture-specific management taught in traditional Indian business management practices in the context of cultural tourism management.

Cultural Tourism Products and Management Practices must ensure to assimilate and support local needs and aspirations by promoting local cuisine, local material, local handicrafts, local folklore performances, cultural and recreational activities, local fairs and festivals and heritage walks. The creation and development of such cultural tourism enterprises would be best managed, if operated and owned by local people. Modern day traveller is better educated, more culturally aware, more curious, analytical and sensitive. They look for alternatives to large mass tourism markets. They want to stay in small locally owned accommodation very much part of the local communities reflecting local values and ways of life instead of large modern hotels equipped with international facilities.

In Indian context, there appears to be a conceptual mindset of neglecting domestic tourists. Policy makers, industry representatives and opinion makers in India have always equated tourism with foreign visitors. The reasons are obvious. Firstly, it was traditionally the foreign visitors who occupy hotel accommodation, filled the airline seats, frequented the bars and restaurants and used the recreation adventure facilities like the beaches, mountains and the exotic holiday resorts. Secondly, during the early days of tourism, foreign exchange was in short supply and the foreign tourists were looked upon as the purveyor of unlimited money supply. Every aspect of Indian tourism, therefore, was arranged to suit the requirements of the foreign visitor, be it accommodation, transport, recreation or shopping.

The hidden dimension of Indian tourism showing a phenomenal rise of domestic tourism, which has increased from 63.8 million visitors in 1990 to 176 million visitors in 1999, has somehow escaped the attention of policy makers. (Table)

Table - Domestic Tourists

Year	Domestic Arrivals
1990	63, 817, 285
1991	85, 864, 892
1992	102,465,705
1993	109, 237, 566
1994	127, 116, 655
1995	136, 643, 600
1996	140, 119, 672
1997	159, 877, 008
1998	168, 196, 000
1999	176, 082, 442

Source: Department of Tourism, Govt. of India (Figures taken from WTTC Report, Aug. 2001)

The phenomenal explosion of domestic tourism is an inevitable by-product of economic development of the country. As people acquire more disposable income, the demand for travel and tourism grows exponentially. This is already explained in the well-recognized axiom of Maslow, wherein travel becomes the first priority of an income earner after the basic requirements of home, food and essentials are met. It is imperative, therefore, that same good facilities are provided to the domestic tourists at reasonable costs and at par with foreign tourists so as to have a good balance of growth for both

domestic and international tourism in India. The foreign tourists visit India mostly during our winter months of October to February, whereas domestic tourists move around during the summer vacations coinciding with school vacations. These characteristics can be effectively harnessed to reap the maximum advantages of economic returns offered by tourism.

The outstanding wealth of natural resources and rich cultural heritage, Indian travel and tourism can generate 25 million additional jobs by 2010 with the help of thriving business community and high levels of entrepreneurship, provided Govt. of India takes tourism as one of the priorities with increased allocation of resources for tourism in both central and state plans.

The future scenario emerging from the facts available so far indicate that the rate of growth in South Asia has been 9 and 10.7% during 1999-2000 and 1998-1999 respectively compared to 6.2% in Europe and 6.5% in Americas, which is even higher than overall global growth of 7.4% during 1999-2000. The growth rate of tourist arrivals during the period from 1990 to 1999 in India has been 5.04% compared to China, Hong Kong, Thailand with 17.5%, 8% and 7.02% respectively.

It is thus concluded that Culture, Tourism and Management are part of the same coin, which seeks to satisfy the basal needs of wanderlust, travel and exploration of the mankind. Culture fuels the intellectual mind, feeding the fodder of basal instincts through tourism while management ignites the fuel and fodder together, generating the heat and dust of self-actualisation and human fulfillment.

Tourism development in India varies from State to State, since States differ widely in their attitude towards tourism. States like Kerala, Rajasthan and Goa have emerged as front-runners in Tourism, while states endowed with historical and natural beauty such as Uttar Pradesh, the Buddhist Circuit of Bihar, Forest and Wild Life of Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Uttranchal and Himachal Pradesh have not fully explored and exploited their rich tourism potential.

More than 60% of the foreign tourists coming to India essentially visit the Golden triangle comprising of the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur sector. Rajasthan alone is visited by 0.63 million foreign tourists out of 2.6 million visiting India every year. In the year 2000, more than 8 million tourists, of which 7.37 million were domestic, visited Rajasthan compared to 2 million tourists in 1973. India also has a very well established domestic tourism industry supported by about 240 million domestic tourists spending about Rs. 95,000 Crores (Panwar; Rajasthan Sujas, June-Sept. 2000, 12).

Rajasthan - a land drenched in hues and history, enfolds in its lap a diverse kaleidoscope of nature and creation of man ranging from shimmering sands to the magnificent forts, opulent palaces and marvelous havelis. Each of these monuments is having a legend of its own - cast in architectural splendour, with a magical sojourn reverberating with age-old culture, tradition and legacy of the royal dynasty of bygone era. It is therefore, no wonder that a majority of tourists both domestic and international have been mesmerised by this land of vibrant colours and costumes, monuments and palaces, fairs and festivals, folk dances and music.

However, the enormous potential of this uniquely gifted land has not been fully utilized. A majority of the Forts and Palaces, Havelis and Monuments are in sad state of dilapidation due to lack of repairs and maintenance by the present owners or the government agencies. It is left to the imagination of visitors to decipher history in the empty chambers, labyrinth corridors, meandering steps and vacant halls of all important historical Forts like Chittorgarh, Kumbhalgarh, Amer, Bundi, Kota, Bikaner, etc. due to the absence of any authentic display of articles of the bygone era or dissemination of correct information by the agencies concerned looking after these monuments. The historical importance of most of these places is distorted with spicy stories concocted by semi-literate locals disguised as guides escorting the tourists with basic intentions to extract money by charming the visitors.

Kerala - God's Own Country has seen 100% increase in foreign tourist arrivals and 250% increases in domestic tourists with earnings doubling to Rs. 500 crores in the last 5 years. Kerala, not fitting into the traditional image of India's tourism package comprising of Palaces, Maharajas, Deserts and Taj Mahal of the Golden Triangle, had to develop into a stand alone destination with its own cultural tourism products. It had to create a separate identity, that of a lush green destination, tranquil and serene, with its palm-fringed backwaters, scenic beaches and relaxing massages, the stuff that dream vacations are made for. According to Dr. A. Jayathilak, former Managing Director of Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), "ABCD of Kerala tourism denotes, 'A' for Ayurveda, 'B' for Backwaters, 'C' for Culture and 'D' for Distance" - which actually meant the lack of it, as almost all the tourism products - beaches, backwaters, sanctuaries or hill stations are just a few hours away from each other, in a state that can be covered in about 18 hours.

The success story of Kerala as a complete tourist destination is liberally sprinkled with aggressive marketing strategies and several innovative tourism products like 'Kettuvalloms' - houseboats, Therapeutic Ayurvedic massages more effective in the lean monsoon season, Coir villages, Lighthouse tourism etc. International kudos came, in the form of the National Geographic Traveller including Kerala in its list of 50 "must see" paradises in the world. Financial Times (FT), London in its story, "Catching the drift - Why travellers are captured by Kerala" talks of the "green venice" of dreamy lagoons, curving waterways, damp paddy fields, swaying greenery and singularly beautiful people. Kerala, says the FT, 'is where the smart travellers go'. Focus of Kerala Tourism is now shifted from mass tourism to class tourism for foreigners and packages to attract domestic tourists as well. (HT Sunday Magazine, Hindustan Times, Internet).

A lesser-known state in tourism, Andhra Pradesh, while preparing its development plan has found that the tourism in state is grossly under publicized. Very few people are aware of the fact that Andhra Pradesh with 52.5 million domestic arrivals in 2001 occupies second place in the country in terms of tourist arrivals with 10% growth every year. Focusing on the growth of tourism, Andhra Pradesh Government has embarked on more than 30 projects in tourism under public-private partnerships with an investment of Rs. 550 crores and

projects worth Rs. 650 crores are in pipeline. (SWAGAT, July 2002, 53-54). Other states like Tamil Nadu is trying to jump in the bandwagon of tourism by focusing its strategy on the Heritage and Hospitality with phrases like, "Tamil nadu - Anytime Paradise" and "History is a rich part of our geography".

Whether it is a phrase like, "Padharo Mhare Desh", of Rajasthan or it is "God's Own Country" of Kerala, it is ironical that despite having one of the richest cultural heritage wealth of the world, there is no uniform strategy or catching phrase for India as a whole to be presented and projected before the rest of the world. A unified plan of action is needed to project this Unity in Diversity lying dispersed in various states to highlight the best of each to harness the economic windfall the Indian cultural tourism is waiting to offer.

It is time for Central and State Governments to change their perception of seeing tourism as an elitist activity set in the background of five star hotels, recreation and pleasure. The implications of management of cultural tourism leading to employment generation, community growth, foreign exchange earnings, promotion, preservation and conservation of Indian cultural heritage, etc. cannot be ignored.

Amidst all the anarchy in the world due to the socio-politico-economic chaos, where nations are fragmenting physically, culturally and economically, India provides the peace and tranquility to the mankind by highlighting her unity among diversities - unity in diversity of man, unity in diversity of nature and unity in the diversity of religion, manifested in her unique cultural values and heritage.

Time has now become ripe for India to identify, prioritize and implement an uniform management strategy to awaken this sleeping giant of tourism and culture, turning it into one of the most powerful engines of economic growth, employment generation as well as conservation and preservation of cultural heritage in the decades to come.

In words of Charaka - Indian Medical genius, "Na Kinchit Anushadham", which means that there is nothing in this world, which cannot be used as medicine. The concept of Cultural Tourism Management modifies this and says that there is nothing in India, which cannot be developed into a cultural tourism product.

The overall strategy for Cultural Tourism Management must ensure that a tourist to India should get physically invigorated, mentally rejuvenated, culturally enriched and spiritually elevated so much so that on return to his country he should feel India within him.

Whatever be the strategy to develop cultural tourism management, the concept of sustainable development in cultural tourism as summarized in the age-old Vedic hymn cannot be lost sight of -

"Whatever I dig of you, O Earth -
May you of that have quick replenishment! - O Purifying One,
May my thirst never Reach right unto your vital points - Your Heart!"

(Meaning - O Mother Earth, let me not injure you beyond recovery. Let me take out from you only that much as you can recoup).

Re-orientation of Textiles Committee from "regulator" to "facilitator" for quality improvement in Indian Textile and Clothing industry

- R.C.M. Reddy*

1.0   The Organisation and the Context

1.1   The Textiles Committee (herein after referred as Committee) was set up in the year 1963, under Textiles Committee Act, 1963 (Act of Parliament of India), with the basic objective of ensuring that the textiles and clothing manufactured in India and marketed in domestic as well as export markets, meet certain quality levels. The organization, which functions under the administrative control of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, is run by a 29 member Committee representing the Government, textile trade & industry and the R&D institutions. The committee functions through a network of 30 regional offices located in all major textile clusters in India with Head Office at Mumbai. The number of employees is around 800 and half of them are inspectors and laboratory technicians, with academic qualifications in textile technology and chemistry, in addition to Market Research specialists. The organization, with annual budget of around US $ 3.75 million, is funded by the Government of India.

1.2   The pre-export quality inspection of textiles and clothing, before shipment, was the principal instrument used to meet the objective of quality control. The inspections were made compulsory under the Regulations prescribed by the Government of India. The objective of these Regulations was to ensure that substandard goods were not exported from India. The responsibility of such inspections was entrusted to the Textiles Committee. The inspection systems were primarily aimed at assessing the quality of textiles and clothing, through a visual based classification and quantification of defects. Certain benchmarks were prescribed with reference to quality standards under this scheme. The Inspectors of the Committee, responsible for these inspections, had absolute powers to clear a consignment as fit for exports or reject the consignment if it fell short of prescribed quality standards.

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1.3   Thus the decision whether a particular product meets the quality standard, which is purely a market function, arising out of requirements of a buyer and the capability of a supplier, sought to be "enforced" through a regulatory mechanism. Also such discretionary and sweeping powers to inspectors resulted in misuse in some cases, thus casting aspersions on the credibility of not only the inspection systems, but also the organization of Textiles Committee itself.

1.4   Based on the experience of implementation of these inspection systems, the Government realized that mandatory inspection system was not the appropriate solution to ensure quality of products and such functions should be left to the market forces. Deregulation of trade and industry was also the need of the hour, in view of policies of economic liberalization, initiated by the Government. Considering these two aspects, compulsory inspection of textiles and clothing, before shipment by the Committee, was done away by the government in the year 1995. Therefore the Committee was left with hardly any work and it would have become irrelevant, unless it   reoriented its activities.

2.0   The changes and challenges posed by the external environment

2.1   The economic environment within and outside India has been rapidly changing in the 1990s. The Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) on export of textiles from the developing countries including India, as prescribed under MFA, are being phased out gradually since 1.1.1995 and the markets would get completely integrated by 1.1.2005 under Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) within the framework of GATT/WTO. In the absence of QRs and formal trade barriers, the Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) related to quality, environment, social responsibility and others would increasingly influence the global market access. Only those companies, whose fundamentals are strong and can meet market compliances would survive in such highly competitive trade environment.

2.2   The textile and clothing industry has been the backbone of Indian economy. It is the largest employment provider, next to agriculture, and contributes to one-third of the country's export earnings. Majority of the manufacturing units, accounting to more than 90% of total production of fabric and clothing, are located in highly decentralized small sector. The capacity of these units to understand, conceptualize and implement measures to meet the above mentioned challenges is very limited. Therefore capacity building of these units to meet the quality and other market compliances has emerged as a major issue.

2.3   The policies of the Government of India have increasingly been directed at deregulation of trade and industry and consequent down sizing of

regulatory bodies. The basic existence and relevance of such regulatory organizations was being questioned.

2.4   Thus the Committee, a regulatory organization, charged with the basic responsibility of assisting the textile industry in quality improvement, was faced with twin challenges of facilitating the industry in quality improvement and reorienting its role from regulatory activities, in order to survive in the changed policy paradigm.

3.0   The Innovations and the Change

In order to meet the above challenges, the Committee has initiated several innovative measures since the later part of the year 1997. The salient features of these innovations are discussed below:

3.1   Quality is a multi-dimensional concept and needs to be ensured in the entire supply chain. The ISO 9000 Quality Management System (QMS), a holistic tool to address quality related issues, was relatively new to the Indian textile and clothing industry in India, barring the big companies. The capacity of small-scale units to conceptualize and implement this standard was relatively weak. Therefore, the Textiles Committee has initiated a campaign to educate the industry about the importance of implementation of this QMS by organising countrywide workshops. Around 100 textile technologists and chemists of the Committee, who hitherto used to do inspection/regulatory work, have been retrained in implementation of ISO 9000 QMS. With this training, the hitherto "Inspectors" emerged as "Consultants" to assist the industry in quality improvement in a holistic manner by way of facilitating the certification of manufacturing companies under ISO 9002 standard. 150 such small-scale textile and clothing units have been/are being assisted by the Textiles Committee (corresponds to 25% of market share) since 1997.

3.2   Non-availability of good laboratories, for testing of textile products and raw materials, has been one of the obstacles faced by the small-scale units in quality control. Added to this was the ban by Germany on the use of dyes capable of releasing carcinogenic amines, due to which the buyers from Germany and other western countries have been insisting that the textiles and clothing supplied to them should not contain any of these harmful substances. The awareness about these issues and the infrastructure for testing was nearly absent in India. The Textiles Committee has initiated a nationwide campaign to sensitize the industry to the concept of eco-friendly textiles. The Committee has also set up/ upgraded a chain of laboratories at 55 different locations in the country, capable of testing chemicals, dyes, textiles, effluents, etc. for various quality and environmental parameters, with the exclusive funding from Government of India. While 17 of these labs, serving more than 25000

client units, are directly managed by the Committee, remaining are managed by the R&D and Industry associations. In order to ensure that these testing services meet the international quality norms, the Committee has got its laboratories accredited as per ISO norms, under an international laboratory accreditation programme.

3.3   The environmental issues and the social accountability standards in manufacturing have become important in business operations in order to gain access to international markets. These concepts are relatively new to the Indian textile and clothing industry. The Committee therefore has initiated a consultancy on implementation of ISO 14000 Environmental Management System and Social Accountability (SA 8000) standards which are independent, voluntary and verifiable. The Committee was the first organization, in public and private sectors in India, to educate the textile industry about social responsibility issues and launch consultancy to facilitate the textile companies in obtaining the SA 8000 certification. Apart from enhancing the level of awareness in the industry about these issues, over one dozen companies are being assisted by the Committee in obtaining ISO 14000 and SA 8000 certifications.

3.4   There has been anxiety and apprehensions in the textile industry about the implications of WTO agreement in terms of survival in the globalised trade. In order to sensitize the industry to the implications of WTO agreement on quality and market compliances, a Nationwide Campaign titled "Quality and Compliances: Route for Global Competitiveness of Indian Textile and Clothing Industry" was launched by the Committee under which 25 workshops have been organized covering all major textile clusters in the country. The Campaign has received an excellent response from the industry and approximately 7500 executives in charge of quality and marketing in textile and clothing industry have benefited with this Campaign.

3.5   In order to help the executives in small scale industries, in upgrading their skill and knowledge base in quality control related issues, the Committee has initiated several comprehensive training programmes in quality inspection, testing, processing techniques, Internal Quality Audit, Statistical Process Control etc. Around 5000 executives of textile and clothing companies have been trained under this during the past 4 years.

3.6   The Indian textile and clothing industry is highly fragmented and a large number of units are located in decentralized sector in the entire supply chain. The need of the hour is to devise a suitable strategy by the Government and the industry to strengthen these segments of the textile industry. One of the major bottlenecks in devising the strategies is the absence of reliable database. The Textiles Committee with its wide

network of offices all over the country, has initiated several surveys under which the units are being covered on 100% census basis to map the technology, product, investment and employment profiles of the industry. Some of the important census that have been conducted are related to independent textile processing units (2324 units) and the cotton ginning and pressing factories (4500 units). Such studies would provide a reliable database to the Government and to the industry to formulate suitable strategy to strengthen/modernize the concerned sectors.

3.7   Thus the role and activities of the Committee have changed entirely, from being a mere inspection agency, to becoming a facilitator and one stop service centre for quality improvement, with the following thrust areas:

➢   Assisting the Indian textile and clothing industry, particularly the decentralized sector, in quality improvement.

➢   Facilitating the Indian textile and clothing exports in meeting the Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) in the areas of Quality, Environment and Social Accountability issues.

➢   Creation of database on vital segments of Indian textile and clothing industry.

4.0   Impact and Significance of the Innovations

The impact and significance of the above Innovations have been as under:

4.1   Facilitating the small-scale Indian textile companies in improving quality and market compliances and thereby reducing the costs and enhancing competitive edge in global market.

4.2   Redefining and refocusing of the Textile Committee, from being a mere inspection agency to a catalyst in quality improvement in textile industry and thereby establishing its relevance in the changed policy and economic environment.

4.3   Augmenting the internal revenue/income for the Textiles Committee which would help it grow as financially self-sufficient organization with less dependence on Government's funding. The Committee's income, primarily in the form of user/service charges, rose from a mere US $ 0.3 million to US $ 1.9 million over a period of 4 years, which constitutes about 50% of annual budget.

4.4   The working culture and mindset of the personnel within the organisation has undergone a dramatic transformation and there is healthy respect for the organisation and its employees in the industry and trade.

5.0 The relevance and replicability

5.1 The innovations proved that the Government organizations related to regulation of trade and industry in developing countries like India can become facilitators for capacity building of target sector. This is the need of the hour in the context of economic liberalization and globalization of trade and thus the experience is replicable.

5.2 The innovations also demonstrated how service providers in the Government can move towards financial self-sufficiency and thereby reduce dependence on the scarce resources of the Government.

5.3 The innovations and the consequent additional works were implemented by rational utilization of existing manpower and other resources within the organisation, without any additionality to the manpower or budget. This is again relevant for the organisations looking for cost-effective re-engineering options.

6.0 Strategy for innovation and management of change

Changing the mindset of the employees from regulatory mode to development, imparting new skills to them and establishing credentials among the potential clientele have been the major challenges before the Committee. The following are the salient features of the strategy adopted to meet these challenges:

6.1 Fresh recruitment to the posts of Inspectors was stopped and the vacant jobs have not been filled up. A talent search was conducted to identify suitable personnel among the employees of the Committee for the new tasks.

6.2 150 such identified personnel have been trained and retrained in various subjects like ISO 9000/ISO 14000/SA 8000 standards; testing of textiles, chemicals, dyes, effluents, etc. for quality and environmental parameters; market research; and management and leadership concepts.

6.3 The designation of "Inspectors" were changed in to "Quality Assurance Officers" to give a new identity.

6.4 Adequate operational freedom was provided to the field offices by way of delegation of powers and responsibilities.

6.5 Measures for boosting the moral and motivation of the employees have been implemented by way of performance linked career progression scheme and rewards for good work.

6.6 Annual Action Plans have been brought out, based on felt need assessment of the industry, by indicating clear targets - both qualitative and quantitative- to the individual offices and the employees.

6.7   Computerization has been assigned top priority in enhancing responsiveness of the organization. 400 employees have been trained in basic computer related skills and all the offices have been provided with computers and e-connectivity.

6.8   A conscious image and relationship building exercise has been implemented by way of networking with the media, trade and industry associations, Government, foreign buying houses, certification bodies, international organizations like UNIDO, Eco-tex Consortium and other stake holders of the industry. A website, audio-visual exhibits and other public relational tools have been brought out. Live linkages with the users have been ensured by way of formal and informal interactions. Extensive campaign was undertaken to reach out and establish rapport with the target group industry by way of mails, personal visits and meetings.

6.9   Transparency and accountability has been ensured by way of bringing out a comprehensive Citizens' Charter.

7.0   The Future

These innovations need to be carried forward further. With the successful re-positioning of its relevance in the domestic textile industry & trade, the next logical step is to establish its presence in the international markets whereby it would serve as comprehensive window for quality assurance. The HRD of the personnel of the Committee and networking will be two major pillars on which the strategy would be chalked out.

Issues Pertaining to Governance
- N.N. Vohra*

South Asian countries are home to near a quarter of the global population. All the countries in the sub-continent are "developing" and some of them are in the so-called category of "least developed". While the size of the population varies from country to country - India has over a billion and Maldives only a little over a quarter million - a serious and commonly shared concern relates to the low levels of human development and sharp socio-economic disparities among the various segments of the society. Illiteracy, unemployment and, consequently, distressingly large scale poverty, disease and suffering are common features in our region. Mahbub-ul-Haq, an outstanding missionary who set up the Human Development Centre in Pakistan, had concluded that our region is the world's poorest, the most illiterate, the most malnourished and the least gender sensitive. This led him to bring out a full fledged analysis of the root cause of these failures - a report on the Crises of Governance.

As in other regions of the world, each country in South Asia has its own political philosophy and constitutional framework. This writing does not seek to examine such variations but to comment briefly on issues pertaining to governance.

Governance has been variously defined. Expressed in the simplest terms the governance of a country relates to the effective management of its affairs at all levels of functioning; guaranteeing its unity and territorial integrity; and securing the safety and well being of all its people. The attainment of these objectives requires political, economic, executive and judicial authority to be axcercised in a manner which ensures that people are enabled to enjoy their rights; discharge their obligations to the societies in which they live and obligations to the state; and resolve their differences and disputes peacefully within the parameters of the constitution and the rule of law.

The roles and responsibilities of governments have been under increasing focus in the past years. With the onset of globalization and increasing pressures to undertake economic reforms and establish free market economies there has been growing demand to reduce the jurisdiction of the state and transfer many areas of its traditional responsibilities to the non-governmental arena. It is also expected

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that besides undertaking structural adjustments and visibly reducing their economic management role the governments will take concrete steps to positively encourage the evolution of strong and productive private sectors. The underlying assumption is that the pursuit of such approaches and the consequential attainment of competitive efficiencies shall subsume the inefficient public sector enterprises which are perennially loss making and, thus, enhance the productivity of governments while, side by side, reducing the overall cost of their functioning. A corollary of this assumption is that the operation of efficient market economies will not only result in a sharp reduction in ever increasing non-productive revenue expenditures of governments but also lead to speedier economic growth which will engender significantly larger surpluses becoming available for enlarging the content and stepping up the scale and pace of social and human development programmes.

The aforesaid briefly describes the theoretical framework for achieving a visible reduction in the burgeoning cost of governments and, side by side, improving their efficiency and capability to promote equitable human development, reduce poverty and effectively satisfy crying needs and aspirations of the people. Irrespective of the pros and cons of this approach it is unquestionable that among the most crucial challenges facing governments today is how to take the most urgent measures to become more efficient, productive, accountable and responsive in eradicating illiteracy, unemployment and poverty and enhancing the welfare of all people. In this context the need to deliver honest, efficient and productive governance can no longer be viewed as a luxury. Furthermore, continuing neglect or delay in taking the required steps to achieve such an objective could generate grave challenges to the established order with altogether serious consequences.

II

Consequent to the attainment of freedom, India has achieved outstanding successes on many fronts but its failures have been no less significant. There are many factors which have impeded sustained growth and equitable socio-economic development. The one which is all pervasive, and has caused the maximum damage to the cause of nation building, is the progressive decline in effective governance.

Among the numerous reasons for the failures of governance, virtually on every front, a notable factor has been the continuing instability of the political leadership in the States and, from around the early 1990s, at the Centre. The emerging multi-party coalition governments in the States and at the Centre and an environment of perpetual uncertainty has engendered a species of alliances and a polity which, largely bereft of national perspectives or ideology, has a single objective: to seize and hold power at any cost. The pursuit of such a self-seeking goal has resulted in political parties which assume authority to run the States, remaining continuously engaged in unashamedly exploiting the governmental machinery, which they are mandated to manage and direct towards the welfare and security of the people, to promote their own short-term interests. Insensitivity, and answerability

to the electorates are the legislatures to which they belong, has encouraged the constituents of the political executives in the States to indulge in nepotism and corruption and run the administrative apparatus in a manner which openly flouts constitutional norms and violates the rule of law. There is, as yet, no effective mechanism for holding the defaulting members of the political executive to account or bringing them to book. While the Lok Pal Bill has been pending enactment for over three decades, the scheme of Lok Ayuktas has been a dismal failure in most States and even those charged with serious allegations of corruption and maladministration have gone scot-free. The brazen disregard for laid down policies, rules and procedures has progressively eroded the functioning of the administrative system and, today, even vital public organizations and institutions have been rendered woefully dysfunctional.

To ensure that there is no questioning of their unlawful behests or any kind of resistance to achieving their self-seeking objectives political executives have progressively politicized the functioning of public service at all levels in the States. This has led to functionaries of questionable antecedents but who have political, caste and communal sympathies and alignments being placed in key positions in districts and the state secretariates.

Consequently, considerations of seniority, merit, competence, proven integrity and experience carry limited weight, if any at all, and upright elements in the public service cadres have been progressively marginalized. Equally alarming, even serious defaults of the favored functionaries cannot be questioned by their hierarchical superiors as the former have close and direct links with their political patrons who ensure them complete protection. This has, over the years, led to the break-down of the systems and procedures which ensured the discipline and accountability of the administrative structures. Besides the serious damage to the effectiveness and reliability of government machinery, the aforesaid scenario has contributed to increasing dishonesty and maladministration which cannot be easily checked because the established systems of functioning have been virtually liquidated through endless political interference.

In the past years there were allegations of corruption against individual politicians and government functionaries. The situation has since changed. Civil servants, a growing number of whom are acquiring questionable integrity, have joined hands with their political masters to indulge in corrupt practices. This committed campaign to make unlawful "collections" for the political parties in power is executed with clinical efficiency and no one who is required to deal with any public office is spared. A tragic outfall of this corruption is that even the Central funds which are specially made available to the States for implementing poverty alleviation schemes are misused and plundered, invariably by over-costing or false certification that the planned developmental works have been carried out, when nothing exists on the ground!

While there is public criticism against the prevailing corruption in government functioning, those with large industrial, business and commercial interests do not have any qualms about offering large bribes to the concerned authorities to seek favors which are granted in brazen violation of the extant policies, prescribed procedures and even the law. Business houses also make large contributions to all major political parties to create longer-term vested interests and pre-empt any future situation of the establishment not operating in their favor. The governmental functionaries through whom the Ministers bestow unlawful favors also get inducted into the unseemly loop, over time, there has been the emergence of a nexus comprising dishonest politicians, unprincipled public servants and those who seek undue favors and patronage.

In several parts of the country this unwholesome connectivity has also taken criminal elements in its embrace. Being immunized from the reach of law enforcement agencies by involved public servants and members of the political executive the criminal elements have built up enormous influence, financial strength and muscle power which their networks utilize to indulge to smuggling of currency, weapons, narcotics, etc. and to carry out extortions and commissioned kidnappings, killings and various kinds of major crimes. An enquiry into the serial bomb blasts which rocked metropolitan Bombay in early 1993, and led to large scale communal riots and enormous human and economic loss in Maharashtra and neighboring Gujarat, had reported the existence of a criminal-nexus between politicians, bureaucrats and the mafia elements in various parts of the country. The aforesaid finding (generally refereed to as the Vohra Committee Report) has not been acted upon with the required political will and determination to mobilize the necessary resources and mechanisms to liquidate the criminal nexus networks, wherever these exist in the country. As a result, such networks have increased in number and considerably enhanced their reach, influence and subversive activities in the past years.

The progressive decline, malfunctioning and corruption in the functioning of the Executive; the entry of persons of doubtful integrity and even of criminal background into the political arena; the established role of money and muscle power in the electoral process; the failure of the State Legislatures and Parliament to, interalia, effectively perform their mandated watch-dog role over the functioning of the Executive; the politicization, casteisation, communalisation and corruption of the public services; the operation of criminal-nexus networks and increasing incidence of subversion and sabotage in various parts of the country; continuing serious failure of the public service-delivery organizations to perform satisfactorily; erosion of the integrity of public institutions including universities and centres of higher learning, et al, have led to a growing loss of faith and trust of the common man in the credibility of governments. Continuing indifference to ameliorating the lot of the poor, disadvantaged and neglected segments of society has led to the

growing conviction that nothing can be got done from any public dealing office unless a person can secure political influence or pay the demanded bribe. This has generated a feeling of helplessness, despair, frustration and cynicism among the public at large.

Successive governments at the Centre have been both aware and concerned about the varied serious problems which arise from political interference in the functioning of the administrative system; corruption and maladministration. Instead of mustering the required political will to launch effective remedial measures, it has been conveniently argued, from time to time, that most of the blame for the failures on various fronts is attributable to the bureaucracy which has become corrupt and inefficient. While this line of reasoning does not reflect the full picture, from around 1997 onwards certain well considered moves have been initiated which seek to deploticise the management and functioning of the public services. Among the measures recommended by the Centre is the need to entrust the promotions, appointments and transfers of functionaries upto a given level to State Civil Services Boards; enforce a Code of Conduct for the public services; evolve and publicize Citizen's Charters to inform the citizenry of what is due to them, from whom, at what cost and when; rationalize the administrative structures and introduce greater transparency in the functioning of all public dealing officers and agencies etc. While these varied, recommendations have still to yield tangible results it could perhaps be optimistically said that at least the public at large is now on the way to getting better informed about the functioning of the various agencies which they need to deal with. With an increasing number of social activist groups and the expanding media keeping a growing and useful watch over the functioning of the administrative system there is a glimmer of hope that the requisite pressure may get built up in the coming time to compel concrete and meaningful steps being taken to achieve a more satisfactory state of affairs. However, such an expectation may not materialize if the obtaining malaise in governance is not remedied without any further delay.

There has been no dearth of debate and criticism about the serious failings in the electoral system; entry of unseemly and criminal elements in the representative structures at various levels, including Parliament, and the growingly ineffective functioning of the State Legislatures and the central Parliament. There is also no lack of analysis and reports of successive high powered Commissions which have repetitively gone into the issues involved and made numerous recommendations on what needs to be done to secure administrative reforms, improvements in the electoral process and the functioning of the Executive. Unfortunately, because of the overall political environment in the country, and the added complexities in the Centre-State relations which have arisen with the onset of multi-party coalition governments at the Centre, it has so far not been possible for Parliament and the Central Government to enact and enforce the much needed remedial measures.

As regards the containment of corruption in the functioning of the political executives in the States and at the Centre and the need to secure greater efficiency and accountability of the governmental apparatus, there have been continuing discussions within and outside Parliament for nearly two decades past. At one time it was being seriously mooted that a changeover to the presidential form of government would be the answer to all our national woes. While such demands have since abated, there has been renewed focus on the need to enact the Lok Pal Bill which, pending approval since the late 1960s, has undergone examination by numberless Parliamentary Committees but has still to be brought on the statute book.

The argument that only Constitutional changes can bring about the much required improvement in the governance of the country also appears to have abated, at least for the present. In any case, no amendments in the basic structure of the Constitution can be brought about as no coalition government can hope to mobilize the required two-thirds majority to bring about such changes; the present Parliament is comprised of a heady mix of nearly 40 political parties. The Government had recently set up a high level National Commission to review the functioning of the Constitution in the past five decades. It is learnt that this commission has since tendered its Report which, hopefully, may become public in the coming days.

Whatever be the recommendations of the aforesaid National Commission and whatever be the Government's subsequent decisions in regard thereto, it may not do to ignore the fact that most of our nation-wide problems and serious failures of governance in the States, and at the Centre in recent years, have arisen essentially from the progressive deviation from a strict and severe adherence to the perspectives, norms, objectives and prescriptions ingrained in our exhaustive Constitution. Successive governments in the States and, regrettably, even those at the Centre, can be held guilty of abusing the Constitutional provisions for achieving political objectives. A ready example is the misuse of Article 356 by various political parties, which have held sway at the Centre. This has, over time, led to a self-invited situation in which it has become most difficult, virtually impossible, to use this provision even when there is a clear and undisputed failure of constitutional functioning in any State, as demonstrated on several occasions in the recent past.

The deviations from the perspectives and principles imbedded in our Constitution have not been the only failure of governance. A graver and continuing offence relates to the governments of the day consciously flouting the provisions of the laws of the land and mis-managing the administrative apparatus in the States in a manner which virtually ensures that the day-to-day pursuit of political objectives is not constrained even if it involves disregaring the law. By way of example, it is the responsibility of the police to effectively enforce the law to maintain public order and provide a safe and secure environment. As past experience has shown

the vast majority of the continuing serious law and order problems in many parts of the country have arisen from a no more complex reason than that, over the years, the functioning of the police has been so grossly interfered with an exploited for securing political objectives that it is no longer a trustworthy instrument of governance. Worse still, such elements in the Police who dare to enforce the law face the threat of being punished for performing their lawful duty, as has repeatedly happened in almost every State and most recently in Gujarat.

India is a vast country with a burgeoning population; several hundred million of our people still subsist below the poverty line; we continue to face extremely complex problems which arise from our ancient socio-cultural traditions and which we have failed to manage in a timely and peaceful manner because of the perversities and confrontationist attitudes which have crept into national politics; as the continuing conflicts over. The Ayodhya issue and, more recently, the events in Gujarat have shown, the political executives appear to have given up their constitutional responsibility to take timely effective steps to avert rising conflagrations; incidents of subversion and sabotage have been increasing and we face continuing serious threats to our internal security; the national-level political parties do not display the required urgency and concern for evolving a bipartisan approach to resolving even major national and security issues and working towards the effective governance of the country.

Numerous suggestions and recommendations have been made in the past and more can be made in regard to what requires to be done to move in the direction of securing "good" governance. In my view, the very first step - would be to take every necessary measure to secure the restoration of the Rule of Law and the Constitution. Such an objective cannot be achieved unless the most urgent steps are enforced with ruthless efficiency to depoliticise the entire administrative apparatus in the country on a time bound basis. Only thereafter can further steps be taken to clean up the public services, weeding out all the inefficient, dishonest and untrustworthy elements therein. Unless this is done all other efforts towards reform are not likely to yield any mentionable outcome. If there is nay further dithering or delay we may have to face many more Godharas. And such an eventuality shall have extremely grave consequences for the very unity and integrity of the country. Let the leaders of all political parties remember: who lives if India dies.

Governance in 21st Century: Does Clinical Governance Provide A Way Forward Towards Better Governance in Health Service Organisations?

- Chandra Vanu Som*

Introduction

For a long-time, the concept of governance has been around in both political and academic discourse, which refers in a generic sense to the task of running a government, or any other form of organisation[1] . In the last ten years, it has been extensively used in scientific literature and in public discourse resulting in a proliferation of definitions (Forest, et al.1999).

However Cutting et al. (2001:p527) believes that, "There are really only halfhearted attempts at capturing what is really involved in the concept of governance". Therefore, this paper first looks at various definitions of governance then makes an attempt to define the concept of governance. Thereafter discusses the principles, characteristics and applications of governance in the present day world. From the discussion it emerges that clinical governance is an important application of governance in health organisations.

In UK National Health Service (NHS), clinical governance has been promoted as the main vehicle of quality improvement in health service. It appears to be an excellent policy initiative when evaluated against the benchmarks of excellence in governance. So, does clinical governance provide an opportunity for better governance of a country's health service organisations? Using UK NHS as an example, this paper presents a closer look at this critical issue.

Definition of Governance

Governance is about the processes by which human organisations, whether private, public or civic, steer themselves[2] . The International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) working group on "Governance and Civil Society" defines governance as "the process by which diverse elements in a society wield power and authority and thereby influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life, and economic and social development"[3]

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[1] http://www.gdrc.org/u-gov/governance-understand.html
[2] http://www.governance.uottawa.ca/english/overview/o_defi.htm
[3] http://www.iiasiisa.be/iias/aigrou/governance/Governance.pdf

The Department for International Development (DFID)[4] , UK interprets governance to mean 'how the institutions, rules and systems of the state - the executive, legislature, judiciary and military - operate at central and local level, and how the state relates to individual citizens, civil society and the private sector'.

World Bank[5] document defines Governance as, "The exercise of the power of the state in managing a country's social and economic resources, as well as the related mechanisms for public accountability, rule of law, transparency, and citizen participation".

Gray (2001) presents a working definition of governance "as the relationships of authority and function through which policies and practices are effected and rights and obligations established and regulated".

According to Rhodes (1997), governance refers to self-organising, inter-organisational networks characterised by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the state.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1997;p 6) looks at governance "as the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a nation's affairs. Further it states that governance is the complex mechanisms, processes, relationships and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their rights and obligations and mediate their differences"(UNDP,1997: p6).

From the literature we may conclude that the concept of governance can be seen to include the following generic notions (Cutting et al. 2001: p527-528) :

- Applicable at each of the three levels of the individual, the group, organization or company, society or nation.
- The rule, management, regulation, direction, control or leadership of the affairs or participants of such units.
- A system, pattern or structure of participants in such a way that they are a distinctive unit with some notion of a shared purpose.
- An acknowledgement of the autonomy and roles played by the individual participants or elements.

Therefore the concept of governance is very broad which includes different relationships command, communion and contract (Gray, 1998) between different stakeholders of an organisation, the way, the resources are managed and transcends beyond the collective meaning of related concepts like the state, government, and regime[6] .

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[4] http://www.livelihoods.org/info/guidance_sheets_pdfs/section6.pdf

[5] World Bank (2001) Governance - the critical factor, (IDA10-12), The World Bank, USA

[6] http://www.gdrc.org/u-gov/governance-understand.html

In the context of health service Walshe (2000), defines governance "as the set of activities of boards and board members, or more theoretically in ways that describe the things that boards should do or ought to achieve".

Lugon et *al.* (2000:pp46) in their book *Clinical Governance: Making it happen, states that: "Governance involves establishing and continuously renewing the understanding of the purpose for which the organisation was established and developing the means by which that purpose might be achieved".*

For the purpose of this paper, I propose the following definition: *Governance is the integrated approach to effective management of resources (financial, physical and human resource) of an organisation within a framework of rules & regulation to continuously improve performance and encourage excellence, to deliver excellent quality service.*

The study of governance involves[7] :

a)   examining the distribution of rights, obligations and power that underpin organisations;
b)   understanding the patterns of co-ordination that support an organisation's diverse activities and that sustain its coherence;
c)   exploring the sources of an organisation's dysfunction or lack of fit with its environment that may result in lacklustre performance; and
d)   establishing benchmarks, building tools, and sharing knowledge to help organisations renew themselves when their governance system demonstrates a need for repair.

In the traditional framework of government, vertical relationships are important: central government sits at the apex of power and controls various sub-national polities, but under the new governance mode, horizontal relationships would replace the traditional vertical configuration of different levels of government (Nakamura, 2001).

Common Principles of Governance

Although in organisational sciences various different views has been expressed on typology of good governance principles, a careful review of the literature reveals that academic and practiioners alike, agree on nine general principles (Taylor, 2000: p108):

1)   Knowing what governance is
2)   Achievement of strategic ends
3)   Board-CEO relationship

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[7] http://www.governance.uottawa.ca/english/overview/o_defi.htm

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4)   Unity of direction
5)   Unity of command
6)   Unity of accountability
7)   Ownership needs
8)   Self-improvement
9)   Understanding the cost of governance

Evidence from past may suggest that governance in all organizations are not always associated with the above principles. In the 21st century, to develop good governance systems, it may be useful to revisit some of the key features of sound governance suggested by UNDP (UNDP, 1995:p22):

- political legitimacy and accountability,
- freedom of association and participation,
- a fair and reliable judicial system,
- bureaucratic accountability,
- freedom of information and expression,
- effective and efficient public sector management, and
- co-operation with civil society organisations.

Forest et al. (1999) suggests that governance is built around the principle that the decision point should be put where the work is performed, and in the context of health service to make the system accountable, three principles must be respected:

a)   *Relevance*-i.e., the nature and scope of the health service operation should be in the hands of the people it serves.
b)   *Public control*-i.e., some degree of political control by elected authorities must be maintained.
c)   *Self-administration*-i.e., managers of the health service should have a free hand in determining how they will run it, especially in matters of budgetary and personnel policies.

Taking into account all these issues could be helpful in framing of policies related with governance of public service organisations, especially the health care organisations.

Characteristics of Governance

Looking at governance as self-organising networks Rhodes (1997) suggest some of the characteristics of governance as:

(1)   Governance is a broader term covering non-state actors with interdependence of organisations and changing boundaries between private, public, voluntary sector.

(2) The need to exchange resources and negotiate shared purpose may lead to continuing interactions between network members.

(3) The interactions between network participants are rooted in trust, regulated by rules negotiated and agreed by participants.

(4) Networks are self-governing, autonomous and not accountable to state. However, the state can indirectly influence the networks due to its sovereign position.

However, to my mind 'governance' is a much broader term and its characteristics should include the following:

1. Based on Rules and Regulations
2. Accountable to the stakeholders
3. Transparent in its operation
4. Participation of stakeholders
5. Enforcement of law
6. Legitimate decision-making authority
7. Framework for Conflict/dispute Resolution
8. Ownership of the organisation
9. Leadership (collective or autocratic)

Box 1: Characteristics of Good Governance

- Participatory
- Sustainable
- Legitimate and acceptable to the people
- Transparent
- Promotes equity and equality
- Able to develop the resources and methods of governance
- Promotes gender balance
- Tolerates and accepts diverse perspectives
- Able to mobilise resources for social purposes
- Strengthens indigenous mechanisms
- Operates by rule of law
- Efficient and effective in the use of resources
- Engenders and commands respect and trust
- Accountable
- Able to define and take ownership of national solutions
- Enabling and facilitative
- Regulatory rather than controlling
- Able to deal with temporal issues
- Service-oriented

Source: UNDP (1997; p19)

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However, governance means different things to different people, depending on the level of governance we are talking about, the goals to be achieved and the approach being followed[8] . Governance as a broader term involves the nature of interaction between such formally defined institutions (include the constitution, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary), and those of civil society with cultural values, social norms, traditions or structures that have important influences on this interaction process[9] .

Forms of Governance

Rhodes (1997: p108) suggests there are basically three types of governing structures hierarchies, markets and networks. Cutting et al. (2001; p538) trace the origins of this kind of classification from classical literature: *"In his Politics,* Aristotle differentiates three categories of state activity deliberations concerning common affairs (*or network orientation*), decisions of executive magistrates (or market orientations) and judicial rulings (*or hierarchical orientation*) and indicated that the most significant differences among constitutions concerned the arrangements made for these activities. Montesquieu was the first to make the modern division among the legislative (*or network orientation*), executive (*or market orientation*) and judiciary (*or hierarchy orientation*)".

a)   Hierarchies:

Hierarchies are legal-rational systems with formal structures, rules and interaction mechanisms that define the role of the participants (Cutting et al. 2001). Bureaucracy is a classical example of hierarchy. Based on the pillars of fairness and efficiency in an ideal situation the main features of a bureaucracy are (Watson, 1995):

- A hierarchy of offices with clearly defined functions
- Unified control and disciplinary system for members of staff
- Selection because of specific expertise with contractual appointments
- Sole employment for the staff with a salary based on the position in the hierarchy
- Promotion at the discretion of superiors in the hierarchy

In modern days some writers have criticised the organizations with hierarchical structures based on bureaucratic principles for not being flexible enough to deal with increased consumers expectations/demands, and efficient service delivery (Hegewisch et al. 1996).

b)   Markets:

Since the 1980s, the public service organizations world-wide have seen introduction of market mechanisms through public sector reforms, sometimes referred to as new public management.

It was believed that market mechanisms would increase competition, improve quality, increase accountability and provide more choice to consumers (Ferlie et. al. 1996). The use of market or quasi-market principles by

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[8]   http://www.gdrc.org/u-gov/governance-understand.html
[9]   http://www.iiasiisa.be/iias/aigrou/governance/Governance.pdf

government for delivering public services included privatisation, market testing and purchaser-provider split (Rhodes, 1997).

However, in some organisations where market mechanisms were introduced may seem to be operating within a loose concept of customer (Ferlie et al. 1996). Moreover organisations like National Health Service in UK may be working in an environment of controlled competition unlike a free market. For reasons of safety, national security, confidentiality and satisfactory service delivery market mechanisms may not work in Police, Defence and Social Welfare organisations (Flynn, 1997).

c)   Networks:

Commitment to a common set of values, trust in each other and subtle rules of interaction held together the networks (Cutting et al. 2001). The need to exchange resource with common shared purpose and multiple centres of power with no sovereign authority (autonomous organisations) characterise governance in networks (Rhodes, 1997). In this context Rhodes (1997: p110) believes "Governance means governing without Government and is the ultimate in hands-off government". Theoretically it sounds a great idea, but in practice it is difficult to imagine how core functions of a Country's Government (like conducting elections, enforcement of law, defence of the country, disaster mitigation and foreign affairs) could be performed within a network system. Nonetheless network concept could be successfully in areas of commercial and related areas of government activity as has been demonstrated by breaking up of many erstwhile public sector organisations in UK in small autonomous agencies.

Networks in public sector & voluntary organizations offer benefits for professionals and clients to share information, learn from each other and explore possibilities for further developments (Hill, 2001).

There are hierarchies within sophisticated markets, networks within hierarchies, and market type characteristics within networks (Cutting et al. 2001). So, it could be really difficult to identify organizations of one pure form or another.

Applications of Governance

Governance signifies a change in the meaning of the government referring new process of governing and there are at least six separate uses of governance (Rhodes, 1997):

  a)   as the minimal state
  b)   as corporate governance
  c)   as the new public management
  d)   as good governance
  e)   as socio-cybernetic system
  f)   as self-organizing networks

While reviewing the literature on governance, one comes across the following applications of governance:

a)   Corporate governance (e.g. Private Limited Companies)
b)   The State (e.g. Government in different countries)
c)   Clinical Governance (National Health Service, UK)
d)   Global governance (e.g. European Union)
e)   Local self government (e.g. Municipal Councils)
f)   Public-Private Partnership (e.g. Governing projects)
g)   Co-operative governance system (e.g. Milk co-operatives unions: AMUL)

Box 2: Improving governance and increasing community engagement in health services: a World Bank funded project (2001- 2003) in India:

Karnataka State in India is currently engaged in government-wide institutional reform, with support from the World Bank. Karnataka has a history of supporting civil engagement in governance and decentralization of many administrative powers to rural local governments (panchayats).

This project is centered on governance of health sector and rural development programs. The reform effort includes the health sector, for which the government has assembled a Health Task Force drawn from civil society to assess required changes. The proposed project will examine ways to improve governance in preventive health through a process of close collaboration with civil society in general and with members of the Health Task Force in particular.

This project seeks to empower citizens and rural local governments to monitor and participate in the implementation of public health arrangements.
1. Support local initiative to develop tools to assess the quality of preventive health service delivery.
2. Build on and add to the governance/public sector reform tools developed by the World Bank, and health service assessment tools based on "model standards" developed by the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta GA.
3. Develop a case study based on the situation in Karnataka, and its efforts to reform preventive health service delivery, as well as to engage local communities actively in this process and stimulate their demand for better public service delivery.
4. Extract some "best practices" in specific areas such as community-level organisation of preventive health services, and monitoring by civil society of the enforcement of public health laws and regulations.
5. Disseminate the new tools and case-study lessons widely. Engage in dialogue with users on the ground to facilitate increased local participation in implementing and monitoring preventive health services.

This project aims to help end-users in rural and urban areas to monitor the services provided by their own governments, ask for gaps to be filled, and identify areas where they can complement the work of public agencies.

(Source: World Bank's web page: http://www1.worldbank.org/ publicsector/civilservice/Preventivehealth.pdf)

In the context of health service introduction of clinical governance in many countries (like New Zealand, Australia and UK) provides an opportunity to look at governance of healthcare organisations from a new perspective.

From the realm of total quality management and business process reengineering literature about bench marking organisational performance, there are five generic benchmarks for excellence of governance in healthcare organisations (Taylor, 2000):

1)   Clearly articulated mission and vision
2)   Achievement oriented culture
3)   Leadership partnership
4)   Focus on improvement
5)   Boards are a workable size

From the public policy perspective, clinical governance is an excellent policy initiative, because it encompasses most of the benchmark mentioned above. Therefore, clinical governance provides an excellent policy framework for achieving excellence in governance in healthcare organisations.

Nakamura (2001) suggests that for the evolving concept of governance to work successfully through the civil society of the 21st century's modern world, the outcome will hinge upon the notion of "TAPE" management, i.e. Transparency, Accountability, Participation, and Equity, in an organisation.

The concept of governance has been widely used in recent years to signify the changing ways of managing public service organisations. Following similar trends in public service management, clinical governance is being used in the context of health service to describe the modernisation process (organisational change) that aims at continuous quality improvement in health care. So, 'what is clinical governance', is being examined in the next section of this paper.

What is Clinical Governance?

Clinical governance is a term first used by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 1983 to describe a multi-dimensional concept based on the provision of high quality health care, which include four important dimensions: professional performance, resource allocation, risk management and patient satisfaction (Penny, 2000a).

In 1997, under the UK Government's new plans to reform the health service, clinical governance re-emerged as a national strategy to improve the quality of health service (Penny, 2000a). In recent years, within the developed world, UK National Health Service (NHS) is probably trying to implement the most ambitious strategy in improvement of healthcare quality through clinical governance (Roland, 2001). As a result this quality initiative in healthcare in NHS, clinical governance, is being watched with great interest by experts in healthcare quality, from all over the world (Wallace, et al. 2001).

Clinical Governance is defined as *"a framework through which NHS organisations are accountable for continuously improving the quality of their services and safeguarding high standards of care by creating an environment in which excellence in clinical care will flourish"* (DoH, 1999).

Clinical governance is a relatively new concept in UK National Health Service (NHS), which seeks to encourage compliance with nationally approved evidence, based clinical practices through clinical guidelines and national service frameworks (Onion, 2000). Clinical governance being a new concept, each organisation within NHS will adapt to fit its own circumstances and a national consensus will have to be arrived by trial & error method over a period of time but there is no "right" way to manage it (Lugon et al. 1999).

Commission for Health Improvement[10] (CHI) in UK, defines clinical governance as the system of steps and procedures adopted by the NHS to ensure that patients receive the highest possible quality of care, which includes:

- a patient centred approach
- an accountability for quality
- ensuring high standards and safety
- improvement in patient services and care

The UK Central Council[11] (for Nurses, Midwifery and Health visitors) defines clinical governance as a "framework that helps practitioners maintain and improve standards of care by bringing together existing quality assurance and audit processes". The council suggests that the application of the clinical governance principles (such as professional self-regulation, strong leadership, communication, patient focus, commitment to quality, and continuing professional development) will provide an environment in which clinical excellence can flourish and high standards of patient care can be promoted.

Gray (2000; p.9) defines clinical governance as "a term which describes the creation in a health care environment of a framework to ensure that the optimum quality of care is delivered to the population and to provide assurance of this to both the government and the population".

Universally accepted definitions of clinical governance have been difficult to achieve but it is widely accepted that clinical governance is designed to integrate, consolidate and codify, the fragmented approaches to quality improvement in NHS organisations (Scally et al. 1998).

In the last few years, clinical governance has been promoted by the UK government as an overarching mechanism to improve quality of health service (Onion, 2000). Scally et al. (1998) perceives clinical governance to be 'the main vehicle for continuously improving the quality of patient care and developing the capacity of the NHS to maintain high standards'.

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[10] http://www.chi.nhs.uk/eng/cgr/overview.shtml#02
[11] http://www.ukcc.org.uk/cms/content/Advice/Clinical.governance.asp

Clinical governance has been introduced in the NHS to bring together managerial, organisational and clinical approaches to improve the quality of health care (Buetow et al. 1999). It requires health service organizations to create a culture together with systems/methods of working which will ensure that improvement in quality is built into the service delivery system (Penny 2000b).

Clinical governance has echoes of corporate governance, which was an initiative originally aimed at private sector to redress the failing standards (Scally et al. 1998). Onion (2000; p406) states that "clinical governance is increased corporate conformity with advice based on a systematic review of empirical evidence, including an appraisal of cost-effectiveness and as such, it is a form of good practice".

Walshe (2000) believes that the term clinical governance is designed to resonate with the established existing ideas of good corporate governance, to build up on the established notion of accountability, probity and transparency, which should expand it to the clinical domain in healthcare organisations.

Conclusion

In recent years, the structure, management and governance of health organisations has become a significant issue in many countries (Jacobs, 1998). The delivery of health care is complicated, so complicated that there are no easy solutions and there will always be problems and strains within the service (Goodman, 1998). Clinical governance acknowledges these complexities and attempts to overcome these problems by promoting unified & organisation-wide approach towards continuous quality improvement.

Most of the elements of clinical governance are not new, but have been unified under a single umbrella, with greater importance on quality in health service awarded by the UK government (Fletcher, 2000). But there are certain distinctive features of clinical governance (Walshe, 2000), which provides an opportunity for the health work force to move from the status quo towards a more challenging culture of active learning (Nicholls et al. 2000).

The implementation of clinical governance reflects UK Government's recognition that quality improvement strategy in healthcare needs to emphasise the importance of cultural transformation and a wholesale systemic change is required (Davies et. al. 2000). For successful implementation of clinical governance, it is the fundamental requirement to bring about necessary change in the existing culture of health care organisations (Nicholls et al. 2000). The required cultural change could be achieved through more pro-active human resource policies in health organisations.

Therefore, clinical governance could create an environment for better governance to deliver improved quality of services, provided health service organisations are ready to pay greater attention on organisational issues, management of their resources, human resource management and co-ordination between different medical units.

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Mid Day Meal Programme and Its Impact in Improving Enrolment in Rayagada District

- Bishnupada Sethi [1]

Rayagada is a part of Koraput-Bolangir-Kalahandi (KBK) region of Orissa, known as one of the poorest regions in the country. Out of the total population of 8.23 lakhs, 56.04 % belong to S.T. and 14.28% belong to S.C. community. The literacy rate, a vital indicator of prosperity is only 29.12% and 17.83% for the females in the rural area as per the 2001 census. BPL survey was conducted in 1997. Out of 1,88,317 no. rural families, 1,35,785 have been categorized as BPL. The poverty is quite endemic. The district has a sex ratio of 1029 females per 1000 males. The district witnessed a decadal population growth of 15.27%. The higher sex ratio and low population growth is despite adverse economic condition and not due to any economic progress. The basic minimum facilities are not available to a large section of people. In some pockets, like Parsali, Kurli, Chandrapur, Gudari, Puttasing and Kashipur of the district, it would not be wrong to say that the poorest population of the world resides there.

Poverty is a major issue. It has its impact on the primary education as well. Because of mass illiteracy and endemic poverty, community participation in primary education is low. High drop out, low retention, problems of girls' education and education of ST children are the major issues for the administration. Several steps have been taken in the district to improve the scenario. The most important intervention to take note of, is the introduction of mid day meal programme.

Mid Day Meal programme is in operation in the district since July 1995. Cooked meal at lunch hour is provided to the students enrolled in class I to V except in Urban schools, where dry ration is provided in accordance with the revised guidelines issued vide letter No.4761 dated 22.6.2002 of the Chief Secretary to Govt. of Orissa.

Organizational Structure of the Programme

The Govt. of India provides free rice, while the State Govt. is providing funds to meet other expenditure like cost of dal, salt, oil, fuel and stationary, vegetable and condiments. The honorarium paid to cooks and helpers is borne by the Gram Panchayats out of the funds of JGSY. At the district level, the Collector

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[1] IAS, (1995 batch), Orissa Cadre

monitors the programme with the assistance of District Social Welfare Officer and Civil Supplies Officer. The Block Development Officers with the assistance of Extension Officers, Sub Inspectors of Schools and Supply Inspectors implement the programme for their blocks. The Child Development Project Officers and Lady Supervisors have also been made responsible for the success of the program. At the school point, School Education Committees have been formed to supervise implementation at the village level. This has been done in order to strengthen the functioning of the School Education Committees, so that they can take over the program subsequently.

Finance and Management of the Programme

Rice is being lifted from the nearest FCI point allotted by Government of India. The required quantity of dal, oil and salt is procured locally through Purchase Committees constituted at district level. The cost of these items is met out of funds allocated by the Women & Child Development Department, Orissa.

Arrangements have been made to lift and deliver the stock through the Civil Supplies Corporation functioning in the district, pending appointment of Storage & Transportation Agents.

The Norms & Coverage of the Programme

The scale of foodstuff prescribed per student per meal is as under.

1.	Rice	125 grams per student per day.
2.	Dal	15 grams per student per day.
3.	Oil	1 gram per student per day.
4.	Salt	2 grams per student per day.
5.	Vegetable/condiment	Rs.0.09 per student per day.
6.	Fuel & Stationary	Rs.1.30 per student per month.
7.	Honorarium to cook	Rs.200/- per month
8.	Honorarium to Helper	Rs.100/- per month.

Cooked meal at lunch hour is provided to all the students enrolled from class I to class V excepting schools located in urban areas, where dry ration is given @ 3 kgs of rice per month for every student having 80% attendance in the previous month. Distribution is done twice a month i.e. once in every fortnight.

During the year 2001-2002, the Govt. of India allotted Qtl. 25,601.76 of rice for the coverage of 1,06,674 students in 240 school days. The percentage of monthly coverage of students is 70% to 75%.

An Analysis

The data on enrolment available for last ten years is given below, on the basis of which some observations have been made.

Table 1 - Enrolments in Classes I to V in Rayagada

Year	Class I	Class II	Class III	Class IV	Class V	Total	SC	ST	Girls
1991-1992	15,449	14,649	15,763	9,512	6,579	61,952	12,483	31,573	24,388
1992-1993	16,263	15,420	16,593	10,013	6,926	65,215	13,165	33,051	25,669
1993-1994	17,199	16,232	17,467	10,540	7,291	68,729	13,833	34,987	27,018
1994-1995	18,217	17,043	18,340	11,367	7,655	72,622	14,621	37,024	28,584
1995-1996	21,820	16,835	17,088	12,251	8,646	76,640	15,559	39,358	29,926
1996-1997	17,640	19,973	16,363	11,990	8,056	74,022	14,561	38,041	31,165
1997-1998	20,376	18,417	22,167	13,744	9,187	83,891	16,206	45,361	34,516
1998-1999	24,888	19,916	20,491	17,120	11,191	93,606	18,242	51,199	39,265
1999-2000	26,025	22,850	21,133	17,281	13,877	101,166	20,154	56,817	43,574
2000-2001	26,070	25,231	22,534	17,121	14,100	105,056	20,896	59,894	46,379
	69	72	43	80	114	70	67	90	90

The mid-day-meal program was started in the year 1995-96. An analysis of the above data shows the following:

(i)   The no. of students enrolled in class-I during 1994-95 is 18,217. During 1995-96, there was an increase by 20% in the enrolment in class-I, whereas for the total students the rise was only 6% for the same year. It shows that a large no. of students had remained un-enrolled in the previous years and because of the mid-day-meal program, a sharp rise of 20% in class-I is seen. This can also be seen from the graph on trend of enrolment for class-I children.

Graph 1(a) - Enrolment of children in class I
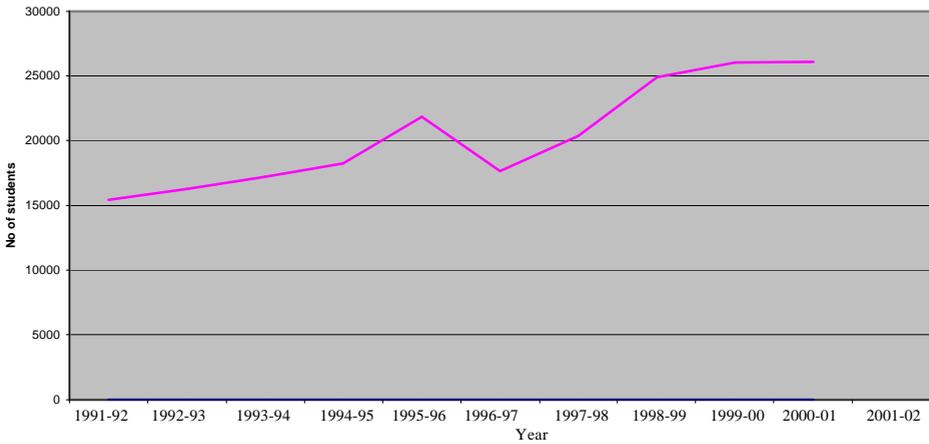
(ii)   Because of high enrolment in class-I during 1995-96 and
        continuation of the mid-day-meal program, a tremendous
        improvement in the enrolment position in different classes during
        subsequent years is seen. During 1996-97, there was 19%
        improvement in the enrolment in class-II, when compared to its
        previous year. The improvement in class-III during 1997-98 was
        35%. The improvement in class-IV during 1998-99 was 25%.
        The improvement in class-V during 1999-2000 is 24%. This has
        been possible because of less dropout and more retention in
        subsequent years, as the rise in growth rate for these classes is
        more than the intake in class I during 1995-96.

**Graph 1(b) - Enrolment of students in Class V**
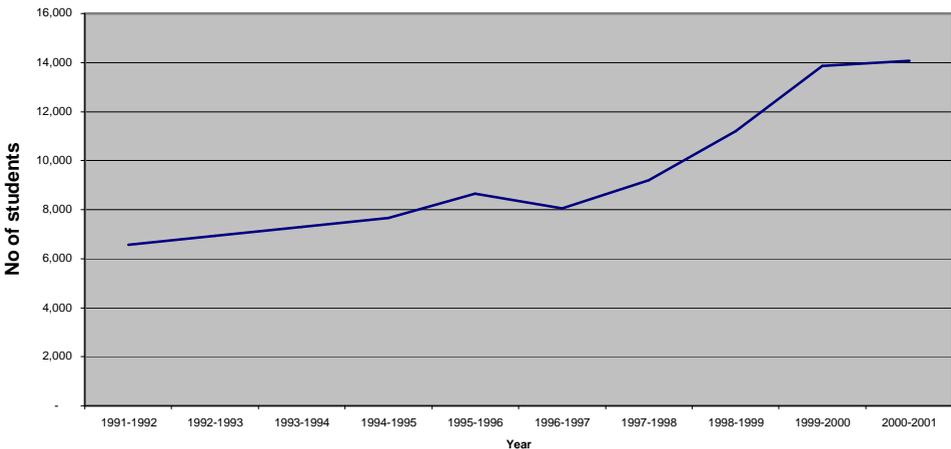
(iii)   An analysis of the position of total student enrolled before the
        mid-day-meal program and after its introduction is given below:

**Table 2 - Enrolment Rates and Mid Day Meal Programme**

Category	Average children enrolled during the period 1991-92 to 1994-95	Average children enrolled during the period 1995-96 to 2000-01	Rise in enrolment
Class I	16782	22803	36%
Class II	15836	20537	30%
Class III	17041	19963	17%
Class IV	10358	14918	44%
Class V	7113	10843	52%
Total children in all classes	67146	89090	33%
S.C.	13526	17603	30%
S.T.	34159	48445	42%
Girls	26415	37471	42%

The rise in enrolment can be considered significant in a period of
5 years, when the decadal population growth rate was only15.27%.
The average number of students enrolled in class-I after the starting
of mid-day-meal program has increased by 36% when compared
to the period before the mid-day-meal program. The greatest impact
has been on the S.T. and girls' enrolment position. The growth
rate in enrolment for the girls and S.T. children is much higher
than the rise for the total students. Similarly, the increase of 52%
for the class V students shows better retention, less dropout and
more success in terms of completing class V education. The
difference in the improvement for class III (17%) and class IV
(44%) can be explained by the fact that there were more drop outs
after class III earlier, which showed significant improvement for
the children in class IV and class V after the introduction of MDM.

Graph 2(a) - Total Enrolment of children in all classes
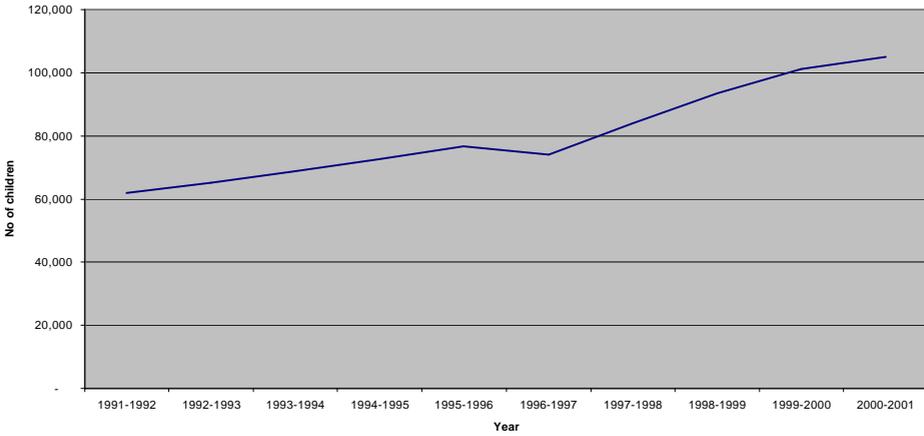
Graph 2(b) - Total Enrolment of girl children
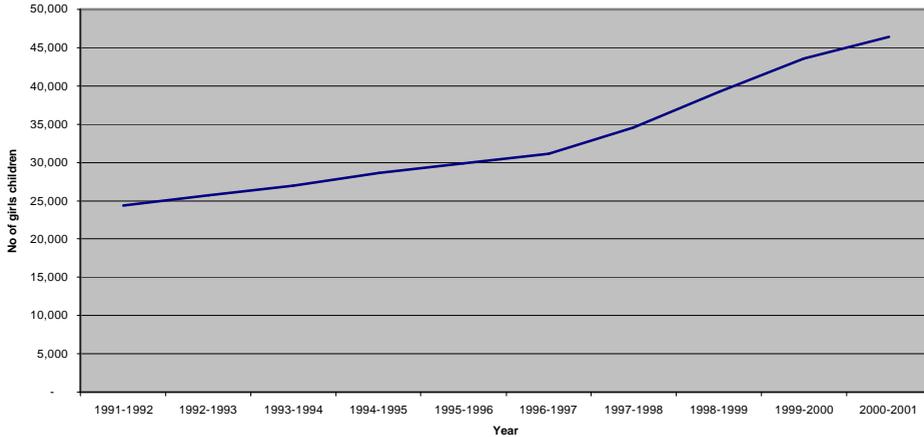
(iv) If we analyze the average annual growth rate, it is more in the period since the starting of mid-day-meal program.

Table 3 - Growth rate and MDM

Category	Before mid-day-meal program	After mid-day-meal program
Class I	6	4
Class II	5	10
Class III	5	6
Class IV	7	8
Class V	5	13
S C	6	7
S T	6	10
Girls	10	11

Obviously, after the mid-day-meal program, the annual growth rate has been more than in the previous period. This decrease in the growth rate as far as class I is concerned, can be explained by the fact that more number of children got admitted soon after the introduction of the MDM program. There would be a normal tendency for such growth rate in enrolment to decline to match the population growth rate.

(v) It can be seen from the various graphs on the number of children studying in class I & V, total students, S.T. students, girls students and SC students that there is distinct division between two periods; one prior to the starting of MDM programme and another afterwards. The growth in enrolment is far more rapid than the population growth. As such, the enrolment improvement is higher than the population growth rate before the starting of the MDM program. Had there been no intervention, the curve should taper down and remain parallel to the population growth subsequently. But significantly, the curve shows an upward trend.

(vi) The following data is on child tracking. For the different years of admission in class I, the numbers of students in subsequent years in higher classes have been shown.

### Table 4 - Tracking student attendance over five classes

Year of admission in class I	No. of students in Class I	No. of students in Class II	No. of students in Class III	No. of students in Class IV	No. of students in Class V	% of students passing out of class V, against admission in class I, 5 years back
1991-1992	15,449	15,420	17,467	11,367	8,646	55.9
1992-1993	16,263	16,232	18,340	12,251	8,056	49.5
1993-1994	17,199	17,043	17,088	11,990	9,187	53.4
1994-1995	18,217	16,835	16,363	13,744	11,191	61.4
1995-1996	21,820	19,973	22,167	17,120	13,877	63.5
1996-1997	17,640	18,417	20,491	17,281	14,100	79.9

The percentage of children passing out of class V has increased from 56% for the students admitted during 91-92 in class I to 80% for the students admitted in class I during 96-97. Obviously, retention has increased. The graph on child tracking shows, as that for the years of admission after the introduction of mid day meal, the curves show an upward trend, meaning more retention and success in terms of completing class V examination.

Graph 3(a) - Enrolment of ST children
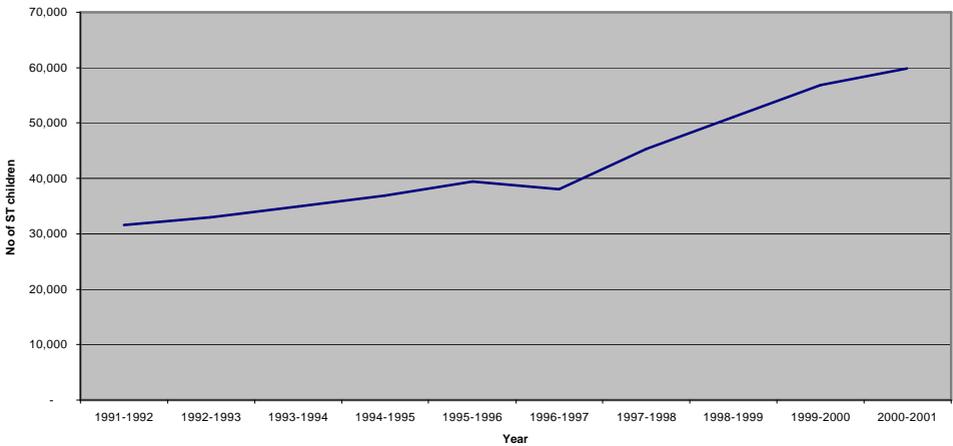
Graph 3(b) - Enrolment of SC children
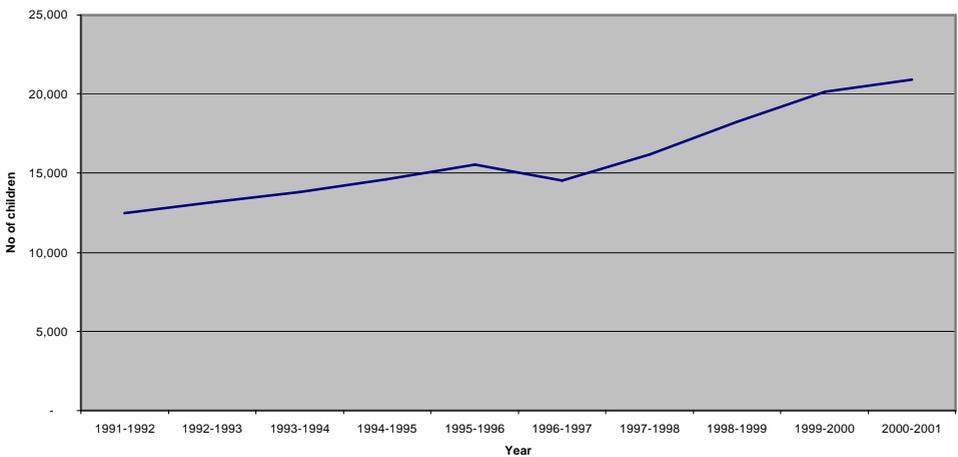
Child tracking and success rate
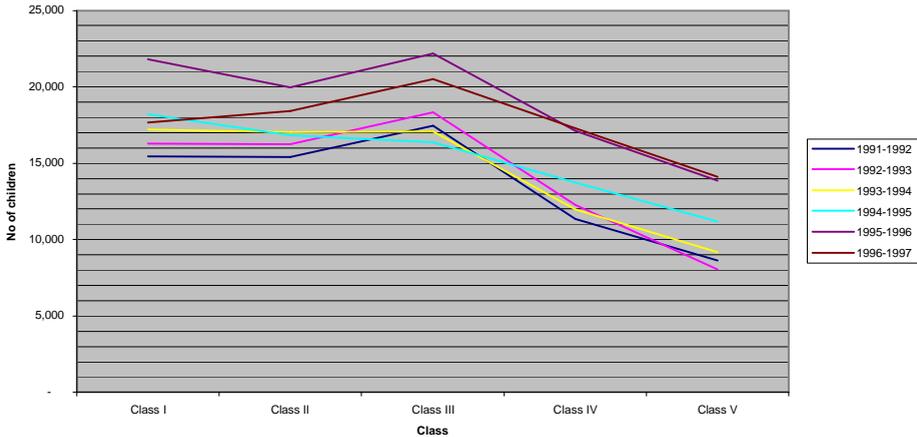
Summary

During the period of analysis, other measures were taken to improve the retention, dropout, enrolment of girl children and S.T. students. It has not been possible to analyze the impacts of all other interventions on the enrolment position. However, if we analyze the situation before the mid-day-meal program and afterwards, we can find sharp departure from the trends of the pre-mid-day-meal situation. Hence, it can be said that mid-day-meal program has made significant contribution for the improvement in enrolment, retention in various classes, reduction in drop out and having more number of S.T. and girl children complete class V in the primary schools.

Book Review

Title of the Book	:	**India 2020 - A Vision for the New Millennium**
Author	:	Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam with Y.S. Rajan
Publisher	:	Viking Books India, New Delhi - 110 019
Year of Publication	:	1998

Dr. Avul Pakir Jainalubdeen Abdul Kalam, now President of India has been Scientific Advisor to the Ministry of Defence Research and Development - being the recipient of three highest civilian honours of India - The Padma Bhushan in 1981, the Padma Vibhushan in 1990 and the Bharat Ratna in 1997. Y.S. Rajan, has been Senior Advisor (Technology) to the confederation of Indian Industry and Executive Director, Technology, Information Forecasting and Assessment Council (TIFAC). The book is a thought provoking seminal work on India's vision 2020 and provides us with a positive reply to the question - can India become a first world nation within the next twenty years. Dr. Kalam and Y.S. Rajan, show us how to accomplish the goal of building a developed India within a twenty years framework. This inspiring and well-written book has been dedicated to a ten-year old girl whose ambition is to live in a developed India and the millions of Indians who share her aspiration. According to the authors, "a developed India by 2020, or even earlier, is not a dream. It need not even be a mere vision in the minds of many Indian's. It is a mission we can all take-up and succeed". Authors are proud and happy that the dreams of many Indians in the agricultural, scientific, artistic, cultural and social fields have come true. However, the vision of a prosperous India without poverty, an India strong in trade and commerce, an India strong in many fields of science and technology, an India with innovative industry and with health and education for all, has remained just partially realized. The authors assert that the Indian people can rise well above the present poverty and contribute more productively to their country because of their own improved health, education and self-esteem. Igniting young minds can be a powerful resource to accomplish any mission.

The book under review contains twelve chapters. Each chapter contains a rich treasure of information and inspirational thoughts. The first chapter titled "Can India Become a Developed Country?" analyses the strategic and core strengths of the nation in terms of growth of technology and various social indicators of development. The central issue is to expand the social opportunities open to people by expansion of educational facilities and health care for all. India has to develop indigenous technologies to enhance our competitive edge and to generate national wealth in all segments of economy. Nations are built by the imagination and untiring

enthusiastic efforts of generations and each generation adding its own aspirations to the national vision. As a nation and as a people we need to shed our cynicism and initiate concrete actions to realize our vision - national security reasonably assured, the countrymen living well above the poverty line with high standards of education and health, enhancement of core competencies in various areas, bringing all-round prosperity, happiness and technological progress. The authors believe that India can emerge as a major developed country and all its people can contribute to and share in the prosperity.

Chapter - 2 gives us the glimpse of what other countries like the USA, Europe, Malaysia, China, Japan, South Korea and Israel envision for themselves. These visions emerge from the perceptions of their security environment, the social and economic needs; as well as an assessment of their core strengths. Chapter-3 covers India's core competencies and evolution of technological vision 2020. Chapter-4 deals with food, agriculture and agro-food processing. Chapter-5 highlights India's material resources such as steel, titanium, rare earths, aluminium, composite materials, ceramic materials, photonic materials, super conducting materials, polymeric materials, nuclear materials, bio-materials and future scenario taking into account their great potential for the country's wealth. Chapter-6 discusses chemical industries and out biological wealth. Chapter-7 discovers manufacturing for the future. Chapter-8 titled "Services as people's wealth" highlights the future HRD challenges and priorities. It conceptualizes various security services like border security, prevention of economic and white collar crime, prevention of sabotage and industrial espionage. Role of Information Technology in future scenario for India has been explained by indicating future technologies in the services sector. Chapter-9 covers various "Strategic Industries". According to the authors, it is our duty to build the necessary technologies so that the future generation of Indian's will have new worlds to conquer and not have to struggle with the problems of "bridging the past gaps" as we are doing today. "Health care for all" is the title of Chapter - 10 and it can be ensured through disease prevention, good sanitation, safe drinking water, prevention of non-infectious diseases, sight for all and good maternal and child health. A change in thinking would lead to a miraculous transformation. High productivity requires a healthy work force. Chapter-11 titled "The enabling infrastructure", discusses need for heavy investments in infrastructure. One aspect, which is interesting is how, whenever India achieves something that is commendable, the developed nations tend to trace it to some know-how, equipment or manpower that was provided by the west. Launching of Rohini Satellite into orbit, the guided missile programme and launching of Agni in 1989 and testing of nuclear devices in Pokhran are examples of excellent Indian technological performance and prove that India has great potential and capable manpower dedicated to their assigned missions. Realizing the mission, is the twelfth chapter and it gives a restatement of vision for 2020.

India should become a developed nation by 2020 and should be one of the five biggest economic powers, having capability in national security with agricultural core strength and should emerge as a global leader in the services sector. The health of all our people is vital for all-round rapid growth of the economy and technological power, energy, quality electric power, roads, waterways, airways, communications, ports are important parts of growth of infrastructure. Given the

devolution of power to the panchayats, our political economic and technological support for achieving the national mission is important. Our job is to make a golden triangle of punyatmas, punyadhikaris and punyanetas work country-wise. State level PSUs, big and medium size industries, academic and R&D labs, MNC and foreign entities - all have their respective responsibilities for realizing the vision. Central Government, State Government and Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) have all their respective roles to play in realizing the national vision. A positive media and particularly the electronic media can help to create a new climate by reporting good events from different parts of the country and discovering our heroes and heroines who silently work all over the country with dedication, commitment and missionary zeal. Our teachers at all levels have a very special role to play in shaping the young minds and ignite their potential. Our Parliament must proclaim India's vision of a developed nation before 2020.

India is a nation of a billion people. A nation's progress depends upon how its people think and act and try to transform dreams to reality. Let the young Indian minds blossom, full of thoughts of prosperity, full of missionary zeal to achieve and realize the India's vision.

The book under review is a great book giving Indians a new vision for 2020 and provides very authentic and pragmatic approaches to realize the vision. The goals and the vision as dreamt by the authors are not unrealistic. Extrapolating from current growth rate and trends and realizing the great potential of the Indian nation, India can achieve the status of a self-reliant developed nation ensuring our citizens a decent standard of living, all round development of the country and good health for all the countrymen. The authors have suggested various ways and means to accomplish the vision. The book contains a full list of technology vision 2020 reports and other reports.

The book is educative, informative and valuable contribution by the authors, written in lucid style with scholarly inputs from various authentic reports and other various sources. It can be very useful for policy-makers, national planners and Member of Parliament/State Legislative Members and enlightened citizens. The book is a unique contribution by the authors on a very important subject concerning the nation's long and short term strategic planning. A critical task before Indians is to overcome their defeatist mentality that has crept into our intelligentsia and the fatalist belief that Indians can't do anything worthwhile.

The book contains 312 pages and is reasonably priced for Rs. 395/-. This book, India-2020 should be the source of igniting many Indian minds and motivate them to build a strong, secure, self-sufficient, economically well off nation. What Indian young minds must imbibe from great nations of the world is the commitment to a vision and tenacious hard work to achieve it.

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