

Training Monograph No. 1—84

Five Year Plans and District Planning

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Government of India
TRAINING DIVISION
Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms
Ministry of Home Affairs
New Delhi
July, 1984

No. Name of Service Unit.
Amount

78/1178-2763

FOREWORD

The various Five Year Plans starting from the First Five Year Plan have examined the issues involved in the administration and implementation of District Development Programmes. Over the years the approach has increasingly favoured the need for significant observations for strengthening the administration of development activities at decentralised level.

In order to facilitate an appreciation of the Plan observations on the important subject of District Planning and the evolution of the concept over the years, the Training Division is issuing a Monograph on "Five Year Plans and District Planning". The Division has arranged the relevant abstracts as appearing in the different Plan documents. It is hoped that the publication would be of use and interest to all concerned with the subject.

U. C. AGARWAL,

Secretary

July 30, 1984.

Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms

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FIRST FIVE YEAR PLAN (1951-56)

Administration of District Development Programmes

Effect of Recent Changes :

Para 7.1. The structure of administration developed during the past century was based upon the district as the principal unit with the district officer as the government's principal representative in touch with the people. Besides being in control of the administration of law and order and revenue in the district, the district officer held a coordinating responsibility for the activities of all departmental agencies within the district. In the hierarchy of administration, he enjoyed status and powers which gave him considerable influence over the local population. In the Indian States also, the administration was organised through the district, but in the majority of States there were no stable public services and personal rule prevailed, so that the position of the district officer was generally much less important than in the provinces. [Page 128]

2. **Para 7.2.** The district is still the most important single unit of administration. As before, the maintenance of law and order and the collection of land revenue remain the district officer's primary duties. Recent developments have, however, altered his position and emphasised the need for giving an altogether fresh orientation to district administration. The maintenance of law and order must always be an important obligation, but increasingly district administration derives its significance from its role in developing the resources and raising the standard of living of the people of the district. The district officer's position is intermediate between the State Government, whose policy is determined mainly by a political executive responsible to a legislature elected by the people, and local self-governing bodies which are also elected by the people. For many years district boards, municipalities and town committees have existed as institutions of local self government in most of the States, but their development programmes have now to be linked up with those of the district and the States. In the past, for the limited functions with which the district officer was especially concerned, a democratic village agency was scarcely necessary. In different ways the administration was supported in rural areas by influential persons such as zamindars, zaildars, village headmen and the like. These non-officials helped police and revenue administration in the district, but there was not much call on them for creating enthusiasm for development programmes, which were then extremely restricted in scope. Though they had some local influence of their own, they were

largely dependent on the authority which the administration conferred on them and invariably they had to reckon with local rivals for power and official favour. In the closing years of British rule this system no longer served the purpose for which it was created and was seen to be breaking down almost everywhere. [Page 128]

3. **Para 7.3.** Certain other tendencies were also in evidence in the field of district administration. Over many years, for fields of activity such as agriculture, cooperation, animal husbandry, forests, industries, etc., separate departments had grown up and established their own separate agencies for work in the districts. To the extent to which these departments had functions of a technical character, they were certainly necessary. In rural areas, however, a situation developed in which each department attempted to reach the cultivator through its own personnel. As a rule, the staff was thinly spread and, at the lowest levels, it was poorly paid and equipped. On account of the limited character of the development which was aimed at, there was not much in the work of these officials to inspire them with enthusiasm. The development departments did not maintain sufficient liaison between their various activities and their officials frequently confessed failure either by pleading for more punitive powers or for greater assistance from the revenue administration. Although some useful results were secured here and there, and those who were progressive or influential took advantage of the services provided by the government, development activities in the district lacked unity of approach and were always hampered for want of sufficient field staff for carrying out their extension work. [Pages 128-129]

4. **Para 7.4.** During the past decade the machinery of administration in the district has been severely tested in another direction also, namely, the procurement and distribution of foodgrains and the distribution of civil supplies. When the war ended, the district administration over the larger part of the country, was well *attuned* to the discharge of these responsibilities. With the decontrol of food in 1948, the grip of the administration over the problems of supply weakened and, although controls were reimposed subsequently, their administration has been distinctly less satisfactory than before. Frequent changes in the administration of food control have been a disorganising factor in district administration. Operations which should become matters of routine, in whose performance there should be a steady increase in efficiency, have suffered from the *ad hoc* character of changes which have sometimes been instituted without sufficient regard to administrative implications. In such circumstances, a difficult food situation may divert the attention of the entire district administration and affect both public relations and the execution of development programmes. [Page 129]

5. **Para 7.5.** Another set of problems which the district administration faces fall within the field of land reforms, a subject which is discussed at some length in a later chapter. Wherever zamindari has been abolished, it is necessary to create a new system of village administration and, frequently also, to prepare a new system of village records. This presents an immense administrative task. Elsewhere, when new restrictions and limitations are imposed upon the larger holders of land and new rights conferred upon tenants and workers, their implementation calls for sustained administrative action at various levels reaching down to the village and, what is not less important, they call for close control and supervision. When administrative arrangements are not adequate, measures of land reform do not fulfil their real purpose. [Page 129]

6. **Para 7.6.** To the factors which have been described, one more may be added. The quality of personnel charged with administrative duties in the districts varies greatly. While examples of initiative and independence of judgment are by no means wanting, it will be correct to say that, in common with other spheres of administration, the majority of districts are now administered less adequately than before. Many experienced persons—their number was always limited and was further reduced on account of the Partition of the country—have moved to secretariats and to the headquarters of departments. The burden of duties falling upon State Government has increased to such an extent and so many new functions have had to be assumed that the districts seldom secure at the higher levels the quality of personnel which their problems call for. Yet, it is on the record of service which the administration can render to the people in villages and towns that governments have to justify themselves. The institution of the Indian Administrative Service in succession to the Indian Civil Service is an important step in the direction of providing in the districts a sufficient number of well trained and well-equipped officers who can offer requisite leadership in district administration. [Pages 129-130]

7. **Para 7.7.** In brief, from now on, the primary emphasis in district administration has to be on the implementation of development programmes in close co-operation and with the active support of the people. Apart from the problem of finding personnel for the higher positions in the district and the problem of adapting the administrative system to the temper of democratic government, the reorganisation of district administration has to provide for

- (1) strengthening and improvement of the machinery of general administration;
- (2) establishment of an appropriate agency for development at the village level which derives its authority from the village community;
- (3) integration of activities of various development departments in the district and the provision of a common extension organisation;

- (4) linking up, in relation to all development work, of local self-governing institutions with the administrative agencies of the State Government; and
- (5) regional coordination and supervision of district development programmes.

If it were a matter only of machinery and structure, the reorganisation of the district administration would remain incomplete and the results would fall short of expectations. In the implementation of development programmes, as indeed in other spheres, public co-operation has a vital part to play. The subject is considered more fully in the following chapter. We may mention here one aspect of it, namely, the need to ensure that in the scheme of reorganisation administration in the district, there is a field for recognised social services agencies for participating in development programmes.

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Strengthening of General Administration :

8. **Para 7.8** The general administrative machinery of government constitutes, as before, the back-bone of the entire structure of administration. The quality of the general administration has a bearing on the lives of large numbers of persons. In the measure in which the elementary obligations of government are discharged efficiently and justly, the government becomes more capable of undertaking economic and social development and of securing the willing co-operation and support of the people. The need for an adequate administrative service to provide personnel for positions carrying higher responsibilities is now being met through the Indian Administrative Service and the State Administrative Services. In the course of a few years, it may be expected that the existing deficiencies of personnel for these positions will be removed. There are, however, three directions in which the general administrative organisation of the district needs to be strengthened urgently. A word may be added here about the position of the district officer in the scheme of administration. In the past few years the work of the district has expanded considerably and has also become more complex than before. The first effect of proposals to strengthen and reorganise the administration of the district, especially from the aspect of development, will be to increase the district officer's work and responsibility still further. It is, therefore, important to give him the assistance of a senior officer to enable him to devote attention to development. Secondly, care should be taken to see that too much of the district officer's time is not taken up in matters such as formal attendance on higher authorities and submission of reports. In the third place, if additional work has to be undertaken in a district over a period, for instance, in connection with a

famine, or a land reform measure, instead of relying too much on the normal machinery of the administration, adequate assistance should be afforded. [Pages 130—131]

9. **Para 7.9** In several States, there is an administrative cadre, commonly described as the State Civil Service or the Provincial Civil Service, which provides personnel for senior district posts involving revenues, executive or magisterial duties. It would assist the growth of efficient administration if there were liberal opportunities for the best among the personnel of the State services to enter the all-India service. Further the training of the personnel of the State Administrative Services should receive no less emphasis and attention than the training of those who enter the all-India services. A major share of the responsible but detailed administrative work in the district is done by members of the State Administrative services, and it falls mainly to them to coordinate the activities of different branches of the administration and to win the cooperation of the people in carrying out development programmes. [Page 131]

10. **Para 7.10** In ryotwari and temporarily settled areas, the district administration has been held generally to be stronger, better organised and more capable of undertaking new responsibilities than, for instance, in the permanently settled areas. The difference is due, mainly, to the existence of village revenue officials described variously as patwari, talati or karnam. In the permanently settled and jagirdari areas, the implementation of development programmes as well as of measures of land reform is frequently impeded for want of village revenue officials. It is, therefore, a task of the first importance to recruit and train personnel in these areas for village revenue establishments. Many States are already taking steps in this direction, but these need greater emphasis and the process has to be hastened. [Page 131]

11. **Para 7.11** The third direction in which the general administration of the district has to be strengthened relates to the territorial units through which district work is now organised. In ryotwari areas, between the village patwari and the district officer, it is common to have a revenue inspector in charge of a circle, a tehsildar or mamlatdar in charge of the tahsil or the taluk, and a sub-divisional officer or other revenue officer in charge of more than one tahsil or taluk. In some permanently settled areas, there is no revenue machinery below the sub-division and the line of communication from the government to the people beyond the sub-divisional officer passes through the local police station. In certain other permanently resettled areas, below the sub-division, there is a union representing a group of villages. With the abolition of zamindari the entire structure below the level of sub-divisional officer has to be completed. Some districts are so large that in the interest of efficient organisation they need to be further divided. As the Bengal Ad-

ministration Enquiry Committee pointed out, there is no fixed formula for the ideal size of a district and much depends on the density of the population, the topography of the area and the nature and state of its communications. It might be useful for State Governments now to review the size of their existing districts from the point of view of efficient implementation of development programmes. Where no change in the size of the district is considered necessary, they might examine the possibility of establishing more sub-divisions. As a unit in district administration the sub-division is valuable from several points of view. The district officer is relieved of much routine work. For a great many transactions, the people are spared the trouble of travelling to district headquarters. Junior officers holding charge of sub-divisions secure training in the exercise of responsibility and initiative. During their touring and field work they are also able to acquire intimate knowledge of the people. The creation of a more adequate number of sub-divisions is also justified by the need to link up machinery of the State Government, local self-governing institutions with the administrative and development on which subject some suggestions are offered in this chapter. [Pages 131—132]

12. **Para 7.12.** Training programmes for executive officials are organised with reference to the duties which they are expected to perform. Such training is, of course, always essential. In the re-orientation of the administration which is now called, for, it is also necessary that, at an early stage in their careers, all revenue officials should receive special training in rural development work. In other words, just as members of the Indian Administrative Service or the State administrative services have to learn the work of the patwari, the circle revenue officer and the tahsildar in the course of their training, they should also learn the work of the village-level workers and of officers in charge of larger development units. Such training will enable the general administrative machinery of government in the district to assume the role in development work which we envisage for them under the Five Year Plan. In this connection, it may be suggested that since many district officers are new to their responsibilities in the field of development, it may be useful to give them a measure of guidance and orientation through occasional conferences, seminars and demonstrations. [Page 132]

Village Agency for Development :

13. **Para 7.13.** For many decades the village has been the primary unit for revenue and police administration but, as a social and economic organisation, it became weaker under British rule. As settled conditions developed, the village community became increasingly dependent on the administration

and less able to manage its own affairs. Even in work undertaken by development departments the approach was nearly always to the individual, not to the village community, so that thirty years of development activity have influenced only a fraction of the population. [Page 132]

14. **Para 7.14.** Legislation for setting up village panchayats exists in most of the States. Since independence, several States have revised their earlier enactments with the object of promoting the quicker development of panchayats and of giving to them a larger role than before. In some of the newly merged territories similar action needs to be taken. Taking a general view, it may be said that panchayat legislation in India is marked by considerable boldness of thought and an earnest desire to make the village panchayat a vital base in the national structure. The legislation seeks to translate into action the directive principle in the Constitution that the States should take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as might be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. In the practical implementation of this principle some States have made considerable progress, but in the country as a whole much remains to be done. We suggest that each State should have a programme for establishing over a period of years panchayats for villages or groups of villages. [Pages 132—133]

15. **Para 7.15.** The functions of panchayats are conceived widely enough to permit them to comprehend most of the civic and economic activities of a village community. In addition, panchayats also have judicial functions. In practice, few panchayats discharge all the functions entrusted to them, and the activities of many of them suffer from local faction, lack of resources and want of guidance. Panchayats have helped social awakening, but they have not had the same success in raising the level of village life or in fostering self-help in the improvement of village conditions. In other words, although there are exceptions, the panchayat as an institution has not yet become the instrument of village reconstruction and development which it was intended to be. We believe that the panchayat will be able to perform its civic functions satisfactorily only if these are associated with an active process of development in which the village panchayat is itself given an effective part. Unless a village agency can assume responsibility and initiative for developing the resources of the village, it will be difficult to make a marked impression on rural life, for, only a village organisation representing the community as a whole can provide the necessary leadership. As the agencies of the State Government cannot easily approach each individual villager separately, progress depends largely on the existence of an active organisation in the village which can bring the people into common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the administration. [Page 133]

16. **Para 7.16.** Where both panchayats and cooperative societies exist, it is necessary to distinguish their respective functions in village life. Many cooperative credit societies are now being converted into multi-purpose societies, but multi-purpose operations are not yet widely spread. The functions of a cooperative society are governed by the objects for which it is constituted and are limited to the interest of its members. As cooperation develops, the movement will become increasingly representative of the village community. On the other hand, the panchayat is already intended to represent the entire village community, including those who are landless or are not engaged in cultivation, and has to meet pressures from all sections of the population. Secondly, a panchayat has a larger authority, both in tradition and in law, over the affairs of a village than any other organisation could have. If, by linking up the village panchayat closely with development programmes, village leadership can be successfully developed, cooperative activity will also be strengthened. [Page 133]

17. **Para 7.17.** Under the existing legislation panchayats are already vested with many of the functions and powers which they need in order to play their part in organising village development programmes. State Governments may consider any amendments that may be required in panchayat legislation to enable panchayats to assume responsibility for such functions as :—

- (1) framing programmes of production for the village ;
- (2) framing budgets of requirements for supplies and finance needed for carrying out the programmes;
- (3) Acting as the channel through which, increasingly, government's assistance other than assistance which is given through agencies like cooperatives reaches the village;
- (4) securing minimum standards of cultivation to be observed in the village with a view to increasing production;
- (5) bringing waste land under cultivation;
- (6) arranging for the cultivation of land not cultivated or managed by the owners;
- (7) organising voluntary labour for community works;
- (8) making arrangements for cooperative management of land and other resources in the village according to the terms of the prevailing land management legislation; and
- (9) assisting in the implementation of land reform measures in the village.

These and other similar tasks can be carried out with enthusiasm in the measure in which a village community becomes aware of its problems and of the power of its members, through mutual aid and cooperation, to solve them. The first aim of village leaders and of extension workers is, therefore, to stimulate an understanding of what needs to be done and of the means that lie at hand as well as a growing sense of common interest and responsibility for the welfare of every section of the village community. [Page 134]

18. **Para 7.18.** The process of election by which panchayats are constituted may not always throw up a sufficient number of persons with qualities most needed in village reconstruction, such as good farmers engaged in improving agricultural practice, enthusiastic workers of the cooperative movement and persons whose main interest lies in constructive social work. We, therefore, suggest that for village development programmes there should be provision for a small number of additional members to be appointed by the State Government or on its behalf, so that the panchayats enlarged in this manner function as village development agencies largely on the basis of consent and constructive leadership within the village. We expect that this village agency will gradually be able to draw up production plans for the village as a whole on the basis of programmes accepted by individual farmers and Local cooperatives, and will thus become the effective base for planning on a national scale in the field of agriculture and rural development. These suggestions have been made in general terms because the organisation which will serve best at the village level is necessarily a matter of local adaptation. Conditions vary in different parts of the country and even the term 'village' has several different connotations. The points which may be emphasised are : (1) the need for an appropriate agency in the village or as near the village as may be possible, (2) the desirability of having as members of the village body concerned with various aspects of village development a few persons in addition to those who may be elected by vote, and (3) the need to use the village body as an effective agency for development in the village and in relation to programmes sponsored by the Government. [Pages 134—135]

19. **Para 7.19.** The resources of village panchayats have been recently reviewed by the Local Finance Inquiry Committee. Legislation in different States provides for various forms of taxation by village panchayats, such as taxation of land and house property, profession tax, vehicle tax, fee on transfer of land and other moveable property, reimbursement of recoveries on account of judicial fines, fees, etc., and licence fees of different kinds. There is provision also for grants and contributions by the District Board and the State Government. In some States, village panchayats are entitled to call for contribution in labour which, according to the legislation, could amount in the course of a year, in the Punjab, for instance, to about 48 man hours, in Orissa to 4 days'

work, in Madhya Pradesh to 15 days' work, and in Assam to 36 day's work. Frequently, there is a provision that those who are unable to contribute labour may make an equivalent contribution in money. These legislative provisions are not yet effective on any significant scale. Whether legislation formally provides for contributions in labour or not, it is of the utmost importance that village panchayats should find ways of utilising the available manpower for works in the village or even outside, for instance, by forming labour cooperatives. Legislative provisions may undoubtedly be helpful, but it is by arousing local enthusiasm for improving village conditions and promoting common effort that village panchayats can secure the largest measure of participation by the people in various programmes of development. The Five Year Plan includes proposals for financial and technical assistance to rural areas designed specially to draw out substantial contributions in labour and money and to stimulate local effort in the villages. [Page 135]

20. **Para 7.20.** In some States the practice of making over a share of the land revenue to the village panchayat has been recently adopted. The Local Finance Inquiry Committee recommends that 15 per cent of the land revenue should be given to the village panchayat. We recognise that advantage of giving to each village panchayat a nucleus fund around which it can organise further effort in the village and attempt to provide the minimum services needed to raise the level of village life. It is necessary, however, to point out that in the estimates of resources on which State Plans are based, State Governments have, as a rule, taken credit for the full proceeds of land revenue. If a portion of the existing income from this source is diverted to village panchayats, to that extent the State Plan will be affected. The more appropriate course might, therefore, be for the State Governments to impose a suitable surcharge with reference to the land revenue and to make over the proceeds of this surcharge to the village panchayat. In addition to the provision of resources, we suggest that State Governments should take special steps to train members and officials of village panchayats and to use village panchayats as focal points in schemes of social education. The results of experiments in the development of panchayats which have been undertaken in different States need to be studied carefully, so that States can benefit from one another's experience. [Page 135]

Rural Extension and the Integration of Development Activities :

21. **Para 7.21.** Within the district, development programmes of different departments have to be coordinated into area programmes at the following levels :

- (i) for a village or a group of villages which have a common panchayat;

- (ii) for a group of villages intermediate between the panchayat area and the development block, such as, the area entrusted to a village level worker or, as in West Bengal, the area served by a union board;
- (iii) for a development block which, according to the practice now adopted for community projects and intensive area development schemes, might represent an area of about 100 villages with a population of about 50,000 to 60,000 and should correspond, as far as possible, to a recognised administrative area in the district such as one or two revenue circles, a taluk or a sub-tahsil;
- (iv) a sub-division or an area within the district (which may comprise more than one tahsil) for which a revenue officer is placed in specific charge of development and other executive work;
- (v) towns and cities which have their own municipal bodies; and
- (vi) the district as a whole, the district programme being the sum of programmes drawn up, both on the urban and rural side, for the different units mentioned above.

In virtue of his position as the head of the district, the Collector is the natural leader in development programmes undertaken or aided on behalf of the government. This has led the recent Grow More Food Enquiry Committee to describe the Collector as the Extension Officer of the district under whom all development activities are unified, with specialist officers working as members of a single team. In the area comprised in a sub-division, the Sub-Divisional Officer (or elsewhere, the senior revenue officer assisting the Collector) plays a similar role. [Page 136]

22. **Para 7.22.** We have referred already to the growth of separate departments for different activities in the field of development. These departments have their own personnel for research and other technical work. They also endeavour to reach rural areas through their field staffs, but these are usually small in number and are not too well equipped in practical knowledge. The villager finds himself approached through a number of channels on behalf of the government and receives advice which may be contradictory or ill-coordinated or even lacking in value for his day-to-day problems. Some States have been quick to recognise that the development effort which the government makes is weak, and frequently fails at the very point at which it touches the life of the people. Although large sums are spent and much useful research done, the impact on the village home and on the farm is not commensurate. Intensive work in projects in Uttar Pradesh, Madras, Bombay and elsewhere has confirmed the view that village level workers and a common extension machinery on behalf of the principal development departments of government

are vital to the success of rural development programmes. These conclusions have been followed in the community projects and other intensive areas schemes which have been recently introduced. The Grow More Food Enquiry Committee has recommended that within a period of ten years a rural extension organisation should be built up throughout the country. The Committee has proposed that at the village level there should be one worker for five to ten villages who will be “the joint agent for all development activities and who will convey to the farmer the lessons of research and to the experts, the difficulties of the farmer, and arrange the supplies and services needed by the farmer, including rendering of first aid for animal and plant diseases”. We are in agreement with these proposals and recommend their early acceptance by the Central and State Governments, so that the necessary administrative programmes can be drawn up and executed with speed. [Pages 136—137]

23. **Para 7.23.** While the village is the basic unit of community organisation over the greater part of the country, for particular purposes it may be found that a larger unit is needed. For instance, in employing paid staff for panchayats and cooperative societies, in arranging for supplies and credit or for providing amenities a larger area and population will frequently make for greater economy and efficiency. How large the area should be and what arrangements should be made for effecting the necessary coordination and economy in the provision of services and amenities must depend upon local conditions and requirements. The need for such arrangements, however, exists everywhere and has to be taken into consideration in planning the execution of rural schemes under the Five Year Plan. [Page 137]

24. **Para 7.24.** For the area represented by a development block, a common agency for the agriculture, cooperative, panchayat and animal husbandry departments has to be created. In the organisation of community projects and in intensive area schemes as well as in the report of the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee, the view has been taken that for the development block what is required is an extension team rather than an extension officer. In this arrangement, officials representing the agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperative and panchayat departments as well as those concerned with cottage industries, health and education departments are expected to integrate their programmes as closely as possible in terms of the requirements of the local population and to work together as a team. The local representative of the revenue department has also to be closely associated with the work of this team. In some States, panchayat staffs have been placed recently under the Registrar of Cooperative Societies. There is considerable advantage in having common staff for cooperative and panchayat work, wherever this practice is considered feasible. This would be in line with the recommendations made earlier regarding the role of the panchayat in village development. [Page 137]

25. **Para 7.25.** Each State has to work out a pattern for its extension organisation which is suited to its own needs and conditions. The essential points which need to be kept in view in making the detailed administrative arrangements are :

- (1) a multi-purpose village worker who will be the agent of all the development departments and will represent them to the villager for all their activities;
- (2) at the level of the development block, development officers working as a team with the extension officer, who may be the Sub-collector or, where the sub-divisional system is not developed, other officer closely associated with the district administration; and
- (3) the position of the Collector as the head of the extension movement in the district with the district officers of the development departments working with him as a team.

So long as these essential principles are observed, there must be considerable flexibility and freedom in working out extension organisations adapted to local conditions and open to modification in the light of their practical working. The proposals which we have made will place heavy responsibilities on the Collector. It is, therefore, important, as has been already suggested, that he should have adequate assistance to enable him to devote the closest attention to his duties as the head of the development machinery in the district
[Pages 137—138]

26. **Para 7.26.** In the field of development and indeed of government as a whole at every level, officials have to work in close cooperation with representative non-officials. This is an aspect of such importance that we refer to it later at some length in connection with our proposals for integrating local self-governing institutions like district boards and municipal bodies with the development machinery and programmes of the State Government. We may add a word here about working relations between the various officials who are engaged in development work in the districts. Administrative changes in the field of development will succeed best if different grades of public servants engaged in formulating and executing programmes are guided by a sense of comradeship in a common enterprise undertaken in a spirit of cooperation and understanding towards the people. It is of the utmost importance in development work in the district that all workers from top to bottom should have the opportunity of speaking their minds of making their views and experiences heard when the targets are established, methods determined and priorities set. The feeling that they have shared, in the decision which they are called upon to implement is itself a source of energy and initiative and an assurance that the programmes will be implemented. In this connection we

may also refer to the need in development work for keeping the door open to men and women of different age-groups to come into the field of public service from other walks of life. This may be secured by throwing open appointments such as those of extension workers to persons who bring the requisite experience and enthusiasm to the task of development [Page 138]:

Role of Local Bodies in Development Programmes :

27. **Para 7.27.** With the exception of corporations and a few large municipal bodies local self-governing institutions have remained subordinate though distinct units of administration. Until recently there were few basic changes in their legal and financial structure. Their activities have not been integrated sufficiently with those of State Governments. At one stage Collectors and other officials who presided over local bodies provided a way of coordinating their schemes with the schemes of the State Government. With the appointment of non-official chairmen however the gulf has widened.

28. **Para 7.28.** During the past decade the problems of local bodies have received even less attention than before and indeed on the whole the period has been one of retarded development in the field of local self-government. Generally speaking during these years local bodies have not expanded their resources to any great extent and have found it difficult even to maintain the existing level of services. Although official chairmen and nominated members have largely disappeared and the municipal franchise has been widened in many local bodies the standards of efficiency have gone down and new tax obligations continue to be avoided. In recent years several State Governments have followed a policy of 'provincialisation' of schools hospitals or veterinary centres which were run by local bodies and had their own financial resources permitted many of the States would have carried this policy further than they have in fact done. Owing to unsatisfactory employment conditions in local bodies such action is often welcomed by their own employees. With the abolition of posts such as those of Commissioners, supervision over local bodies, which seldom went beyond the routine, has further diminished. In post-war development programmes no place was found for local bodies. In the Five Year Plan some of the more important programmes of local bodies are expected to receive assistance, but in the main the omission will have to be made good in practice by treating the programmes of local bodies as an essential part of district and State programmes. [Pages 138—139]

29. **Para 7.29.** The Constitution has provided for democratic institutions at the Centre and in the States, but so long as local self-governing institutions are not conceived as parts of the same organic constitutional and administrative framework, the structure of democratic government will remain in-

complete. The view is sometimes expressed that the creation of decentralised agencies for functions now performed by State Government may lead to the weakening of the administration and to lowering of the standards of performance. On the other hand, many in the administration realise that official machinery by itself cannot carry out those development programmes which call for a great deal of initiative and participation on the part of the people themselves. Representatives elected to panchayats, local boards and municipal committees are certainly in a position to express local needs and to suggest programmes of work for their respective areas. The problems and needs of economic and social development in any area are, however, wider than the functions and the outlook of civic bodies like the panchayat, the local board and the municipal committee. At the stage of development which local self-governing institutions have reached, programmes for local development may be best conceived of as joint enterprises to be carried out in close cooperation by the agencies of the State Government and the representatives of the people elected to local self-governing institutions. For the execution of these programmes, however, it is not enough to rely only upon those who are chosen by popular vote. It is necessary to supplement their experience and interests by bringing in a few persons representing, for instance, the cooperative movement, the field of constructive social work, technical knowledge and understanding of the relation between local programmes and the national plan of economic and social development. [Page 139]

30. **Para 7.30.** Local self-governing bodies have thus a vital part to play in the field of development. We consider that the general direction of policy should be to encourage them and assist them in assuming responsibility for as large a portion of the administrative and social services within their areas as may be possible. It may also be necessary to work out suitable arrangements for linking local self-governing bodies at different levels with one another, for instance, village panchayats with district or sub-divisional local boards. The experience gained in some States in the field of local self-government could be of value to other States as well and needs to be studied. While the process that we envisage develops, close cooperation in the field of development between State Governments and local self-governing institutions could be established in directions such as the following :

- (1) Programmes undertaken by local bodies, which are at present restricted by the resources available to them, should be carefully integrated with State programmes. Within the district and the State, they should be shown as part of the District and State plans respectively;
- (2) As far as may be practicable, State Governments should use the agency of local bodies for carrying out their social service programmes. That is to say, if the choice lies between a State Government establishing a primary school or a veterinary hospital with its own

resources and assisting a local body in initiating such a development, in principle, the latter course should be preferred, steps necessary for ensuring standards of efficiency being taken simultaneously. It is a good general rule for any authority to try and pass the responsibility for a project to the authority immediately below it if, with a measure of help and guidance, the latter can do the job equally or nearly as well;

- (3) Institutions run by local bodies and the services provided by them should be inspected, supervised and guided by the technical and administrative personnel of the State Government on exactly the same lines and with the same rigour as may be adopted for the State Governments' own institutions and services. Since the majority of institutions run by local bodies receive grants or other assistance from the State Government, it is the responsibility of the State Government to ensure their efficient working by enforcing the necessary standards;
- (4) For carrying out development programmes in any area, it is essential to associate a number of non-officials. The nucleus of non-official representation should be provided by persons elected to local bodies. Members nominated by the district or taluka board may provide the nucleus for development committees set up for framing and watching the execution of district and taluka development programmes. In addition, as explained earlier, there will be other non-officials. The arrangements have to be flexible because conditions vary and new needs and situations have constantly to be met. The precise manner in which the cooperation and association of local bodies in development work are to be secured must, therefore, be left to the judgement and discretion of the authorities concerned; and
- (5) Wherever sub-divisional officers exist or are created in the future, the establishment of sub-divisional local boards should be considered. [Pages 139—140]

31. **Para 7.31.** It is of some importance that members of State Legislatures and of Parliament should be closely associated in framing and working out local development programmes. They are in a position, on the one hand, to bring their knowledge of local needs and problems to bear on the formulation and examination of State and national policy and, on the other, to carry into local programmes the larger perspective and the conception of priorities against which policies have to be worked out both by the Central and State Governments. This object may be achieved by appointing members of the State legislatures and of Parliament, irrespective of their party affiliation, to

non-official development committees which are set up in their areas. [Pages 140-141]

32. Para 7.32. In view of the large and expanding role that has to be envisaged for local bodies in framing and implementing State development programmes, the question of resources becomes extremely important, for, invariably local bodies are poor. The proposals recently made by the Local Finance Enquiry Committee might be examined by each state in relation to its Five Year Plan and the suggestions which we have made above for coordinating district programmes of the State Government and the programmes of local bodies, both urban and rural. The use which each local body makes of the sources of revenue assigned to it is, in the case of municipalities, for instance, as important a consideration as the character of those sources. A better understanding of social needs and of their own obligations is no doubt called for on the part of those elected to local bodies. At the same time, there is need for caution on the part of State Governments in accepting proposals for taking over from local bodies control of institutions like hospitals, schools and veterinary centres. Such transfers do not relieve the local bodies of their financial burdens, for, frequently, they are required to continue their normal contributions to the cost of maintaining the institutions. They do, however, impose additional burdens on the State Government's budget and, to that extent, come in the way of expansion in other fields. At the same time, they deprive the local bodies of the opportunity of gaining experience and restrict the field of local community efforts. [Page 141]

Regional Coordination and Supervision of District Programme :

33. Para 7.33. During the past few years, while the volume of work and responsibility falling upon the district organisation and the district officer has greatly increased, there has been a fairly general decline in standards of training, supervision and performance. If development programmes are to succeed and are to evoke popular support and cooperation, it is essential that the administrative machinery of the district should be made much more efficient than it is at present. In this chapter, a number of proposals have been made with this object. There are, however, two other aspects which need to be considered. Except in the smaller States, it is often desirable to prepare development programmes in terms of regions determined by physical, economic and administrative considerations. The needs and priorities of different regions as well as their potential for short-term and long-term development should be taken into account in drawing up and continually reviewing their development programmes. There is always a possibility that at the State headquarters, regional aspects may receive less consideration than they deserve.

District plans are always essential, but they may gain in value if they are also part of well-considered regional plans. In the first stages of planning, embodied in the present plan, the regional aspect with its emphasis on the development of local resources has not been worked out sufficiently. It is, therefore, hoped that in the process of implementation from year to year, the Plan and the programmes of which it is composed will be continually adapted and adjusted to local and regional needs and conditions. [Page 141]

34. **Para 7.34.** In the second place, with increase in district work and a falling off in the quality of the administration a great deal of inspection, supervision, guidance and attention to training has become an essential condition of efficiency. The need has, therefore, been felt for a senior regional officer who is not himself involved in detailed administrative work and can give personal attention to all aspects of administration and development in his area. Whether such an officer is located in the region, as Commissioners formerly were or, at the headquarters of the State Government, as members of a Board of Revenue are, for instance, is an aspect which has to be considered locally, and no set pattern can be proposed. The important point is that both for securing regional coordination and for supervision of district work, in many States an authority between the secretariat departments and the district officer is necessary. We are aware of objections raised in the past to the office of Commissioner. What we have in view is, however, not the revival of the former role of the Commissioner, but adequate arrangements for territorial coordination in the field of development and for inspection and supervision over the entire range of work that now falls to the district. The need for such arrangements is emphasised by the fact that many Collectors are relatively new to their responsibilities and if they have a measure of personal guidance at this stage, they will not only secure better results during the next few years, but will also ensure more adequate training for junior officers who will follow them. [Page 142]

35. **Para 7.35.** While problems relating to law and order have frequently to be dealt with directly between the district and the State Government, from time to time there are special problems which need investigation, and special situations in which timely action on the basis of assessment and study by experienced officials may be of enormous advantage to their governments. Pressed as he is with much day-to-day work the district officer is frequently unable to do justice to important questions of policy such as land reform or to complex administrative and economic questions such as arise in connection with food and supply problems. The presence of a senior regional officer can certainly make a difference in the handling of such problems. In this context, we conceive of the regional officer, not so much as one who formulates policy (although doubtless his advice will always be valuable) but as one who explains and interprets the letter and spirit of the government's policies to officials at various levels, watches closely over their implementation, and helps

district officials to take whatever steps are necessary for ensuring that the programmes and targets approved by the Government are fully achieved. [Page 142]

Social Service Agencies and District Administration :

36. **Para 7.36.** In the past social service agencies have played scarcely any part in administration. The subject is one of increasing importance and will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. There is no field of activity concerning district administration in which better results cannot be secured by taking the maximum advantage of the cooperation and civic spirit of individual non-officials and of non-official agencies. In particular, social service agencies can provide workers who will help village panchayats and cooperative societies in discharging their manifold functions. Although their numbers are never large, there are always some individuals who desire to serve the community with no more than a bare living for themselves. At present a good deal of potential idealism of this kind runs to waste and many social workers are frustrated for want of opportunity to work in a field in which their cooperation would help the people and be valued by the administration. When there are suitable social service organisations willing to train workers and take up programmes, their help could be availed of in specified areas. Suitable financial assistance could be afforded to such organisations to enable them to meet the expenses of training and to pay their workers. There exists already a long tradition of constructive social work of which advantage should be taken in the implementation of development programmes. Such cooperation with social service organisation may prove valuable in developing non-official leadership, especially in the rural areas. [Pages 142-143]

SOURCE : *First Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1952

SECOND FIVE YEAR PLAN (1956-61)

Recent Developments :

1. **Para 7.1.** In India the district has always been the pivot of the structure of administration. With the acceptance of a Welfare State as the objective the emphasis in district administration has come to be placed overwhelmingly on development activities. The progress of the national extension and community development, increase in the number of village panchayats and the response of the people to opportunities for cooperation in development programmes have served to stress the importance of planning and execution of development programmes within the district with the full support and participation of the best non-official leadership at all levels. [Page 148]

2. **Para 7.2.** In the First Five Year Plan problems relating to the administration of district programmes were reviewed and a number of recommendations made. The object of this chapter is to consider action that has been taken during the past three or four years and to suggest directions in which the administration of district programmes may be further strengthened in view of the tasks to be undertaken in the Second Five Year Plan. As was pointed out in the First Five Year Plan, apart from finding personnel and the need to adapt the administrative system to the temper of democratic government, the reorganisation of district administration has to provide for—

- (1) establishment for development at the village level of an appropriate agency which derives its authority from the village community;
- (2) integration of activities of various development departments in the district and the provision of a common extension organisation;
- (3) linking up, in relation to all development work, of local self-governing institutions with the administrative agencies of the State Government;
- (4) regional coordination and supervision of district development programmes; and
- (5) strengthening and improvement of the machinery of general administration.

These tasks are of even greater importance for the Second Five Year Plan. [Pages 148-149]

3. **Para 7.3.** The strengthening and improvement of the machinery of general administration has to be undertaken at State headquarters as well as at other levels. At State headquarters coordination is achieved through an inter-departmental committee of Secretaries in charge of various development departments. The chairman of the committee is the Chief Secretary or the Secretary in charge of planning. Generally the functions of coordination for planning and for the implementation of District programmes are combined in a single officer commonly described as the Development Commissioner. As a rule, a committee of the State Cabinet under the Chief Minister provides overall guidance and direction. State Planning Boards which include leading non-officials have also been constituted in most of the States. [Page 149]

4. **Para 7.4.** At the beginning of the First Five Year Plan several States especially those which had been recently integrated were without adequate administrative cadres. This deficiency has been largely made good, but several small States are experiencing difficulty in obtaining officers on deputation from other States. States which had abolished zamindari or jagirdari such as Bihar Rajasthan and Hyderabad are taking steps to provide the necessary administrative agencies at various levels. [Page 149]

5. **Para 7.5.** Steps which have been taken during the past few years such as the programme of national extension and community projects, integration of district development activities on the national extension pattern and the development of village panchayats, point to the need for speeding up the development of democratic institutions within the district. In this respect, a certain hiatus has continued to exist which it is necessary to remove. It is important that sound institutions should be built up as early as may be possible to enable the people of each area to assume the principal responsibility for the development of their resources and for solving their local problems as part of the wider scheme of state and national planning. [Page 149]

6. **Para 7.6.** The implementation of the plan and of national extension and community projects have enhanced the responsibilities of the district administration. The additional personnel located in the district by the development departments for carrying out national extension and community projects and other programmes have been a source of strength to the district administration. On the other hand, the task of supervision over different branches of activity has become larger and more complex and the claims upon the time and energy of the Collector have increased. Large scale programmes for agricultural development, expanding and improving the cooperative movement and promoting village and small industries and the development of urban areas are new responsibilities for which the Collector will have specially to equip himself. It is obvious that administrative agencies have a much

larger part to play in these directions than ever before. The people also look to a larger share in the working of various programmes. In many States to enable the Collector and the team of officers at the district level to meet the new demands additional Collectors and District Development or Planning Officers have been appointed and there has been greater delegation of authority. The Collector, the Sub-Divisional Officer and the Block Development Officer are functioning as leaders of teams of specialists whose work they guide and knit together. In several States more sub-divisions have been created and phased programmes for establishing new sub-divisions are being followed. Action along these lines should be pursued systematically in all States as it has been decided to extend the national extension service programme over the entire country in the next five years. [Pages 149-150]

Village Planning and Village Panchayats :

7. **Para 7.7.** The preparation of the First Five Year Plan in the States took place mainly at State headquarters. Subsequently attempts were made to break up State plans into district plans. In National extension and community project areas as programmes were carried to the village to be worked in cooperation with the people the significance of village planning was increasingly realised. In the programme of local development works local communities had to propose schemes which they could undertake through their own labour with support from the Government. It has been recognised that unless there is comprehensive village planning which takes into account the needs of the entire community, weaker section is like tenant-cultivators-landless workers and artisans may not benefit sufficiently from assistance provided by the Government. The national extension movement aims at reaching every family in the village. This aim cannot be fulfilled unless as was pointed out in the First Five Year Plan there is an agency in the village which represents the community as a whole and can assume responsibility and initiative for developing the resources of the village and providing the necessary leadership. Indeed rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organisation in the village which can bring all the people— including the weaker sections mentioned above— into common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the administration. [Page 150]

8. **Para 7.8.** These considerations have been taken into account in the preparation of the Second Five Year Plan. Early in 1954 State Governments were requested to arrange for the preparation of plans for the second five year-period for individual villages and groups of villages such as tehsils, talukas, development blocks etc. It was essential that local initiative in formulating plans and local effort and resources in carrying them out should be stimulated to the maximum extent possible. This would help to relate the plans to local

needs and conditions and also to secure public participation and voluntary effort and contribution. Village planning was to be concerned primarily with agricultural production and other associated activities including co-operation, village industries, communications and other local works programmes. These suggestions were generally followed and in all States village plans and district plans were prepared and formed a basis of the draft plans presented by State Governments. [Pages 150-151].

9 **Para 7.9.** The methods adopted for preparing the Second Five Year Plan have provided valuable training both to the rural people and to rural officials associated with development. It is realised that the pattern of district administration envisaged in the national extension and community development programme will remain incomplete unless village institutions are placed on a sound footing and are entrusted with a great deal of responsibility for carrying out local programmes. The experience of setting up ad hoc bodies in village to implement development programmes has also reinforced this conclusion. The development of village panchayats on the right lines has significance for several reasons. Under the impact of new developments including the growth of population, land reform, urbanisation, spread of education, increase in production and improvements in communications, village society is in a state of rapid transition. In emphasising the interest of the community as a whole and in particular the needs of those sections which are at present handicapped in various ways (village panchayats along with cooperatives, can play a considerable part in bringing about a more just and integrated social structure in rural areas and developing a new pattern of rural leadership. [Page 151]

10. **Para 7.10.** It is the general aim to establish a statutory panchayat in every village, especially in areas selected for national extension and community development projects. During the First Five Year Plan the number of village panchayats has increased from 83,087 to 117,593. According to the tentative programmes drawn up for the Second Five Year Plan, by 1960-61 the number of village panchayats will increase to 244,564. All over India there is need to review village boundaries so that there might be evolved good, efficient working village units with live panchayats. Thus, there are over 380,020 villages in India with populations of 500 and below. More than 78 million people or 27 per cent of the rural population live in such villages. There are 104,268 villages with a population between 500 and 1000. About 73 million people live in these villages, constituting over 25 per cent of the rural population. More than half the rural population thus lives in villages with populations below 1000. A proportion of such villages is in hilly areas which are sparsely populated, and in these grouping may be difficult. In other areas question of combining existing villages into units with a population of about 1,000 deserves to be examined. It is necessary to have villages which are small enough to have a sense of solidarity and yet not so small that pers-

onnel cannot be provided or the essential services organised for their benefit. The second conference of Local Self-Government Ministers held in 1954 recommended that where individual villages are not large enough to serve as units for panchayats, a single Panchayat may serve a population of 1,000 to 1500. This is useful upto a point, but the real problem concerns the organisation of convenient village units. [Pages 151-152]

11. **Para 7.11.** In the First Five Year Plan it was recommended that to enable panchayats to play their part in organising village development programmes, legislation should confer on them certain functions relating to village production programmes and the development of village lands and resources. Recently this proposal has been further examined. The functions of village panchayats may be distinguished broadly between two groups, administrative and judicial. Administrative functions may be divided conveniently between (1) civic, (2) development, (3) land management and (4) land reforms. The civic functions of panchayats are embodied in legislation in different States in more or less similar terms. They include such tasks as village sanitation, registration of births, deaths, etc. organisation of village watch and ward, construction, maintenance and lighting of village streets, etc. [Page 152]

12. **Para 7.12.** The functions of village panchayats in relation to development may be set out as follows:

- (1) framing programmes of production in the village;
- (2) in association with cooperatives, framing budgets of requirements for supplies and finance for carrying out programmes;
- (3) acting as a channel through which an increasing proportion of government assistance reaches the village;
- (4) developing common lands such as waste lands, forests, abadi sites, tanks, etc., including measures for soil conservation;
- (5) construction, repair and maintenance of common village buildings; public wells, tanks, roads, etc.
- (6) organisation of mutual aid and joint effort in all activities;
- (7) promotion of cooperative societies;
- (8) organising voluntary labour for community works;
- (9) promoting small savings; and
- (10) improvement of livestock. [Pages 152-153]

13. **Para 7.13.** The functions of panchayats in respect of management of village lands and the implementation of land reforms are specially related

to the lines along which it is proposed that the agrarian structure should be reorganised and are explained in chapter IX. The main land management functions are:

- (1) regulation of the use of common lands such as waste lands, forests, abadi sites, tanks, etc. ;
- (2) cultivation of lands set apart for the benefit of the village community, as in consolidation of holdings;
- (3) adaptation of standards of good management and cultivation to local conditions and their enforcement; and
- (4) association with the work of maintenance of land records.

The functions of panchayats in relation to land reforms arise from legislation which may be enacted by each state. In the main, they entail the association of the village panchayat with such activities as—

- (1) determination of land to be allotted to owners and tenants on the exercise of rights of resumption of personal cultivation,
- (2) determination of surplus lands on the application of ceilings on agricultural holdings, and
- (3) redistribution of surplus lands arising from the imposition of ceilings. Village panchayats are already associated in several States in the work of consolidation of holdings. [Page 153]

14. **Para 7.14.** The judicial functions of panchayats concern—

- (1) the administration of civil and criminal justice,
- (2) enforcement of minimum wages for agricultural workers, and
- (3) Simple disputes pertaining to land.

The common pattern in States for facilitating the exercise of these functions is to establish separate judicial panchayats whose territorial jurisdiction extends as a rule to a number of villages. [Page 153]

15. **Para 7.15.** It was recognised in the First Five Year Plan that the process of election by which panchayats are constituted might not always throw up a sufficient number of persons with qualities most needed in village reconstruction such as good farmers, cooperative workers and social workers. Similarly, instances might occur in which weaker sections of the population, especially the landless, might not be adequately represented in the panchayat. Nomination of additional members, which was suggested as a possible course in the First Five Year Plan, is not free from defects. To meet deficiencies, it may be desirable to empower village panchayats to co-opt a limited

number of persons, say, two or three, in the case of smaller panchayats and up to, say, one-fifth in the case of the larger panchayats. A representative of the principal cooperative society of the village could also be an ex-officio member of the village panchayat. In the panchayat legislation of a number of States provision exists for a measure of reservation in favour of Harijans and backward classes. In the actual administrations of panchayat legislation it is necessary to pay special attention to the representation through election of weaker sections of the village community. [Page 154]

16. **Para 7.16.** Once it begins to function actively, an institution like the village panchayat will soon face the difficult problem of finance. Panchayat legislation in most States provides for series of sources of revenue such as tax on trade or profession, property tax, licence fees, fines and watch and ward tax. In most cases, however, these do not yield any significant resources. In the main, panchayats have to rely on three sources given to them by State Governments. The first of these is the grant of a proportion of the land revenue. The second, of which there are not many instances yet, is the right given to the panchayat to collect land revenue and to realise the collection fees allowed to village headmen. The third source is the right to utilise income from common lands, tanks, etc. In the Punjab and in one or two other States, in the course of consolidation of holdings, by agreement a certain amount of land is given to the village community, so that the income can be used for common benefit. Grants to panchayats of a proportion of the land revenue are made in several States. They vary from 10 to 15 per cent at one end to about 30 per cent at the other. It is desirable that a proportion of the land revenue in each village should be assigned to the panchayat for local development. This will serve as a nucleus fund to be augmented by the panchayat from contributions in labour and money from members of the community. We suggest that State Governments may consider making grants to village panchayats in two parts, a basic proportion say 15 to 20 per cent of the land revenue with an additional grant extending up to say 15 per cent of the land revenue on condition that the panchayat raises an equal additional amount by taxation or voluntary contributions. Panchayats should also be assisted in developing sources of recurring income [Pages 154-155]

17. **Para 7.17.** In programmes sponsored by State Governments and district authorities the panchayat has to find a proportion of the cost through labour and through contributions in other forms. Its own direct expenditure concerns the provision of elementary services in the village and the maintenance of minimum staff. The responsibilities entrusted to panchayats will continue to grow. In some cases full-time panchayat secretaries have been appointed; in others part-time arrangements have been made. It is not

necessary to prescribe any set pattern but different ways of providing staff assistance to village panchayats which are being adopted in the States should be studied and according to circumstances those which are found suitable can be adopted. The staff for the Panchayats should be suitably trained. [Page 155]

18. **Para 7.18.** As the coverage of the national extension movement expands, the work of village panchayats should be closely integrated with the programmes adopted in development blocks. Panchayats will have two sets of programmes, namely, those which are sponsored by the Government through extension workers and by District Boards through their agencies, and those which are undertaken by the village community of its own volition and from its own resources in manpower, materials and money. Towards the former the village has to find a share of the cost mainly in the form of labour. While both sets of programmes are vital and the village panchayat should be used wherever possible in carrying out development programme an important test of the success of the Panchayat as an institution is the proportion which the second set of programmes bears to the first. The true significance of the panchayati lies in its role in mobilising the contribution of the community. It is also desirable that where village panchayats undertake activities such as minor irrigation works, land development, soil conservation, etc., they should be given the assistance which is commonly made available to individuals under various schemes. In fact local communities should be encouraged to undertake joint activities to the maximum extent possible. [Page 155].

District Plans :

19. **Para 7.19.** When planning is undertaken on a national scale a careful view has to be taken as to which programmes should form part respectively of the national, state and district plans. Among the factors which have to be taken into account are—

- (1) the level at which an activity can be undertaken with the necessary technical and administrative resources,
- (2) whether an activity is limited to a particular area or has significance for a wider area, so that it should form part of a larger inter connected plan, and
- (3) the extent to which public participation and cooperation are called for in implementing the programme or augmenting its scope and influence.

On these considerations the Central Government has to undertake the main responsibility for the development of major industries, the railway network, national highways and over-all coordination in various fields of development such as irrigation and power, large and small industries, etc. There are other projects which are best planned on a State basis, as for example irrigation and power schemes of medium size, road transport services and surveys for drawing up minor irrigation programme. Plans for districts and villages merge into the State plan which, in turn, has to take cognizance, of plans prepared from the point of view of a country as a whole. Page 155-156].]

20. **Para 7.20.** In drawing up the Second Five Year Plan it was agreed that a State plan should include to the maximum extent possible all programmes to be implemented by the State Government or by public authorities such as local bodies or by special boards set up within the State. The fact that for any particular programme either the whole or a part of the resources came from the Central Government or from various agencies set up by it did not, in principle, affect the inclusion of a programme within the State Plan. This course was adopted because in the Second Five Year Plan one of the most important aspects was the preparation of plans at various levels below that of the State, that is, for individual villages, towns, talukas, tehsils or extension blocks and districts. It was recognised that both at the district and at the State level three kinds of programmes sponsored on behalf of public authorities would be included in the plan, namely.

- (a) programmes initiated at the level in question, e.g. taluka, district and State,
- (b) programmes initiated at lower levels and integrated with those in (a), and
- (c) programmes initiated at levels above and integrated with (a), for instance, schemes sponsored by the Central Government but executed through States or schemes sponsored by the State Government and implemented through machinery available in the district. [Page 156].

21. **Para 7.21.** A State plan has to be presented in two different ways, namely, according to different sectors of development represented in it and according to regions and districts. Programmes for different sectors include those which are to be executed directly by departments at State level and others which are to be executed through districts but are coordinated at the State level. Thus, a district plan would include programmes prepared on a territorial basis for villages, groups of villages, talukas, extension blocks, municipal areas. etc. and also programmes to be executed within the

district which are derived from departmental plans formulated at the State level. That part of the district plan which is prepared within the district is important both for the range of activities which it embodies and for the fact of association with the people at every level and the opportunity afforded to them to determine their needs and to contribute towards their fulfilment. [Page 157].

22. **Para 7.22.** Just as in drawing up State Plans the preparation of district plans is an important stage, so also in the implementation of the State plan its break up into district plans is an essential step. In particular, in different sectors in the State plan programmes or schemes in which local participation and community action have a special contribution to make are to be separated out and shown as constituents in the plans of districts. Those items of work become part of the district plan in which, in the main, the resources provided by Government are in the nature of a nucleus to be augmented through popular support and participation. The value of district plans as a method of approach in planning is changed by the ambitious scale on which national extension and community projects are proposed to be undertaken. By the end of the Second Five Year Plan this programme will serve almost the entire rural population. Each State will have its phased programme for bringing different development blocks, talukas, etc. under the national extension and community development programme. A district plan will include programmes for all parts of a district, whether or not, at a given date, they are provided with extension services. The district plan, has, therefore, to take into account the requirements and activities of areas under the extension programmes as well as of those outside it. This makes the district plan an important influence in educating public opinion, in bringing together various programmes in the district within a common frame and in developing community participation, cooperative self help and local initiative and leadership. The people of each district are thus enabled to assess their needs and resources, judge for themselves the tasks to be undertaken with the active support of the administration, and put forth the requisite effort. Moreover, as a partnership in effort between the administration and the people a district plan will specify obligations to be met by both. [Page 157].

23. **Para 7.23.** The main constituents of a district plan are :

- (a) the community development and national extension programme,
- (2) social welfare extension projects,
- (3) agricultural production programme and allied activities in the field of rural development such as animal husbandry, soil conservation etc.

- (4) development of cooperatives,
- (5) village panchayats,
- (6) village and small industries,
- (7) schemes for utilising effectively resources developed through State projects for irrigation, electricity, communications, industrial development and expansion of training facilities,
- (8) housing and urban development,
- (9) the programme of small savings,
- (10) aiding construction projects through labour cooperatives and sharmdan,
- (11) programmes for the welfare of backward classes,
- (12) programmes in rural and urban areas relating to social services, especially expansion of education at primary and secondary levels, health units, health education, sanitation, malarial control, family planning etc,
- (13) utilising and assisting voluntary organisations engaged in constructive social work,
- (14) land reform,
- (15) prohibition work, and
- (16) dissemination of information about programmes of national, state, regional and local development [Page 158]

24 **Para 7.24.** These programmes are undertaken through several official and non-official agencies and in a number of them there has to be co-ordination between more than one agency. Thus in addition to administrative officials and the officials of the various development departments each district will generally have a rural local board, a large number of village panchayats, and a number of municipal bodies in rural areas. The importance of towns as focal points in economic growth is likely to increase, and urban and rural areas have to be viewed together in terms of planned regional development. In areas selected for intensive work under the national extension and community development programme, there are project or block advisory committees which include, besides Members of Parliament and the State Legislature, a number of non-officials appointed by the State Government. The existence of a larger number of agencies whose work has to be coordinated through a district plan suggests certain possibilities of reorganisation of development machinery in the districts. [Pages 158-159]

District Development Machinery :

25 **Para 7.25.** During the First Five Year Plan, as has been stated earlier, the national extension machinery has become part of the normal district administration. In almost all States district development or planning committees have been set up which associate representatives of the district in the State legislature and in Parliament, representatives of the district board and the principal municipal bodies and leading non-official workers with the formulation and implementation of development programmes in the district. The functions of these committees are essentially advisory or consultative. On the whole, they have not secured the degree of participation and cooperation from the public which is implicit in the concept of district planning. The association through these committees of the district board and of other local bodies with the work of development does not go far enough. In the First Five Year Plan the role of local bodies in development programmes was reviewed and it was suggested that the general direction of policy should be to encourage them and to assist them in assuming responsibility for as large a portion of administration and social services within their areas as may be possible. It was pointed out that it might be necessary to work out suitable arrangements for linking local self-governing bodies in different fields with one another, for instance, village panchayats with district or sub-divisional local boards. While the process developed, it was suggested that State Government should secure the close cooperation of local self-governing bodies in the field of development in such directions as the following:—

- (1) Programmes undertaken by local bodies should be integrated with State programmes and should be shown as part of district plan;
- (2) Local bodies should be used as agencies for carrying out the social service programme of State Governments. "It is a good general rule for any authority to try and pass the responsibility for a project to the authority immediately below it if, with a measure of help and guidance, the latter can do the job equally or nearly as well";
- (3) Institutions run by local bodies and services provided by them should be inspected, supervised and guided by the technical and administrative personnel of the State Government on exactly the same lines and with the same vigour as may be adopted for the State Governments own institutions and services;
- (4) Members representing the district board should provide the nucleus for development committees set up for framing and watching the execution of the district and talukas development programmes. These committees would also include other institutions; and

- (5) Wherever sub-divisions exist or are created in the future, the establishment of sub-divisional local boards should be considered. [Pages 159-160].

26. **Para 7.26.** In practice these recommendations have not been carried out to any great extent. In a number of States, as in Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere, thought has been given recently to the future structure and functions of district boards with reference to the functions of village panchayats and to those of various administrative agencies functioning in the district. The Taxation Enquiry Commission expressed the view that district local boards could no longer continue in their existing form and that their position in the structure of local self-government had become increasingly unstable. The need for creating a well-organised democratic structure of administration within the district is now being widely felt. In this structure village panchayats will have to be organically linked with popular organisations at a higher level. In some States it may be convenient to have a democratic body at the district level, in others at the level of sub-divisions. In either case there are two essential conditions to be aimed at. In the first place, the functions of the popular body should come to include, if necessary by stages determined in advance, the entire general administration and development as of the area other than such functions as law and order, administration of justice and certain functions pertaining to revenue administration. The second condition is that for smaller areas within the district or the sub-division such as development blocks or talukas, sub-committees of the popular body should be assigned clear functions in the implementation of local programmes. The subject requires careful and objective study in the light of conditions prevailing in different parts of the country and experience during the First Five Year Plan. We therefore recommend a special investigation under the auspices of the National Development Council. While this investigation proceeds and the results of experiments made in various States are studied more closely from the point of view indicated above, there is need for strengthening and reorganising the non-official agencies which have been created in almost all States for assisting in the implementation of development programmes, specially at the district level and in national extension and community project areas. [Pages 160-161].

27. **Para 7.27.** At the district level, the primary object is to coordinate the work of various agencies concerned with development and to associate with them representatives non-official and others who may be in a special position to assist. At the development block or taluka level the main aim is to secure the largest measure of participation, especially from cooperative organisations, village panchayats and voluntary agencies. A review of the manner in which district development committees and project advisory com-

mittees have functioned suggests that as an immediate step in reorganisation it will be useful for State Government to set up district development councils and development committees for areas such as development blocks or talukas.

A district development council might include—

- (1) representatives of the district in the State legislature and in Parliament,
- (2) representatives of municipal committees and rural local bodies,
- (3) representatives of the cooperative movement,
- (4) representatives of village panchayats,
- (5) co-opted members from leading social service agencies, from educational institutions and from amongst constructive social workers, and
- (6) the collector along with sub-divisional officers and district officers in charge of various development departments. [Page 161].

28. **Para 7.28.** The functions of a district development council may be described as—

- (1) advising on the formulation of each year's plan of development within the general framework of the State Five Year Plan;
- (2) reviewing progress in the implementation of approved programmes of development;
- (3) recommending measures for the effective and speedy fulfilment of schemes of economic and social development and more especially of national extension and community projects, agricultural production programmes, local development works, social services and village small industries;
- (4) promoting public participation and cooperation in development programmes and expanding local community effort both in urban and rural areas;
- (5) assisting the development of cooperatives and village panchayats;
- (6) promoting the small savings movements;
- (7) general supervision over the work of village panchayats in respect of land reform, land management and rural development generally;
- (8) enlisting the active association and cooperation of teachers, students and others in the study and development of local resources;

- (9) providing opportunities for general education through fairs, exhibitions, seminars, etc;
- (10) training of members of panchayats and cooperatives.

The functions of development committees constituted for development blocks or talukas will be similar to those of district development councils. Their membership might comprise:

- (1) representatives of village panchayats;
- (2) representatives of urban local bodies and of the rural local board,
- (3) representatives of the cooperative movement,
- (4) representatives of the area in the State legislature and in Parliament (to the extent their other commitments permit them to participate),
- (5) co-opted members from leading social service agencies, from educational institutions and from amongst constructive social workers,
- (6) officials in charge of development departments. [Pages 161–162].

29. **Para 7.29.** Although the functions of district development councils and block or taluka development Committees will be advisory, they should be given a considerable amount of initiative in suggesting the details of various programmes and the distribution of resources within the general scheme approved for the district by the State Government. Their work should be suitably planned, they should be consulted before programmes are finalised and their reviews of work done in the field should take place at regular intervals. Their special responsibility will be to ensure that the maximum amount of public cooperation and participation are secured, that the various programmes operate so as to be complementary to one another, and that disadvantaged sections of the community benefit adequately.

Development councils for districts and development committees for blocks or talukas constituted broadly on the lines mentioned above will take the place of existing development committees and project advisory committees. It is envisaged that in the beginning these bodies may be non-statutory. Their effective functioning will mark an important stage in the reorganisation of district administration and the experience gained will indicate the lines along which the structure of district administration may be modified and strengthened to meet the basic needs of democratic development. Moreover, progress along these lines will emphasise two specially valuable features of district and area planning. Local programmes represent an area of common action significant for the welfare of the mass of the people in which differences in view and affiliation are of relatively small consequence. Secondly, working with one another and with the people and their representatives will go a

long way to bring the outlook and attitudes of local officials in line with the requirements of the socialist pattern of society and to break down barriers between different grades which are themselves an impediment to success in the common effort. Institutions and practices such as seminars sharing of experience and for consultation in formulating and reviewing programmes of work have already proved useful in this direction. [Page 162-163].

Coordination and Supervision :

30. Para 7.30. Coordination and supervision of development programmes have to be organised at various levels—in the taluka or the development block, in the district or the sub-division, for a group of districts constituting a region and at the State level. At each stage two problems arise. The first is that the work of different technical departments has to be knit together so as to make a single, coordinated programme. The second problem concerns guidance and inspection, and evaluation and reporting. The need for coordination arises, on the one hand, in relation to policy and allocation of resources and, on the other, in terms of the requirements of a common extension agency. The strength of a coordinated programme of development lies in the quality of the specialised services which are brought together. Coordination should therefore be so organised as to bring out the best in the specialist. This involves a clear appreciation of the responsibilities of technical departments at each level in the scheme of operations and a proper recognition of their contribution to the common programme. As pointed out earlier at the State level coordination of programmes is undertaken by the Development Commissioner under the direction of a Cabinet Committee on development. In the district or the sub-division these responsibilities devolve on the Collector and the sub-divisional officers. Development programmes in the Second Five Year Plan are much larger in scope than those in the First Five Year Plan. It is not now possible for the Development Commissioner, with the other responsibilities he bears at the State level, to tour sufficiently and keep in close touch with the working of the State plan in the District. This difficulty will be specially felt in the larger States. In the circumstances of the Second Five Year Plan the need for setting up machinery for effective regional coordination and for supervision of district work cannot therefore be too greatly stressed. [Page 163-164]

31. Para 7.31. District administration is an agency of change towards a new social order. It has to respond to the needs and aspirations of the people. It will be judged both by the practical results it produces and by the methods and institutions of popular association and cooperation which it integrates into its basic structure. [Page 164]

SOURCE : *Second Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1956.

THIRD FIVE YEAR PLAN (1961--66)

Panchayati Raj :

1. **Para 20.11.** The establishment of democratic institutions at the district and block levels and the role assigned to the Gram Sabha and the Village Panchayat constitute fundamental and far-reaching changes in the structure of district administration and in the pattern of rural development. Their significance lies in the fact that, subject to guidance and supervision by the State Government, the responsibility for the implementation of rural development programmes will now belong to the Block Panchayat Samiti working with Panchayats in the villages and the Zila Parishad at the district level. These institutions have not been at work long enough to permit more than a preliminary statement of the problems which are likely to require careful attention. In considering these, certain aspects deserve to be stressed. The primary object of Panchayati Raj is to enable the people of each area to achieve intensive and continuous development in the interest of the entire population. The elected representatives should be encouraged to value the development of Panchayati Raj as offering new avenues of service to the people rather than opportunities for the exercise of authority. The concept of Panchayati Raj is not limited to the non-official and democratic organisations associated with it. Representing, as it does, a distinct level of responsibility and functions within the general scheme of administration, Panchayati Raj comprehends both the democratic institutions and the extension services through which development programmes are executed. Extension personnel at the block and village levels, although functioning within the jurisdiction of the Panchayat Samiti, form part of a larger administrative and technical network, which extends to the district and even beyond it. It is vital to the permanent success of Panchayati Raj that the integrity of the structure of technical and administrative services provided by Government and their ability to fulfil the duties and responsibilities cast upon them should be fully ensured, while their knowledge and experience are made available to the elected bodies at the district and block levels. It is also of the highest importance that their should be clear recognition of the distinct role of federal cooperative organisations functioning at the State and district levels, as in the field of banking, marketing, processing, distribution and education and training. Large obligations are undertaken by various cooperative organisations and they should be enabled to fulfil them in accordance with the approach and principles

of the cooperative movement. The economic development of rural areas is still in its beginnings and large possibilities lie ahead. It is the object of the new institutions and relationships now being established to help each area to realise these possibilities to the utmost limits of its resources. From this aspect the following are among the main tests by which the success of Panchayati Raj will need to be measured from time to time.

- (1) agricultural production as the highest national priority during the Third Plan;
- (2) development of rural industry;
- (3) development of cooperative institutions;
- (4) full utilisation of the local manpower and other resources;
- (5) development of facilities for education and adult literacy;
- (6) optimum utilisation of resources available to Panchayati Raj institutions such as finance, personnel, technical assistance and other facilities from higher levels, and efforts by them to raise their own resources;
- (7) assistance to the economically weaker sections of the village community;
- (8) progressive dispersal of authority and initiative with special emphasis on the role of voluntary organisations;
- (9) understanding and harmony between elected representatives and public servants to be achieved through comprehensive training in education and a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities, and progressive increase in competence both among officials and non-officials; and
- (10) cohesion and mutual self-help within the community. [Pages 337–339]

2. Para 20.12. From the limited experience gained so far, the following suggestions are offered for ensuring the effective and successful working of Panchayati Raj institutions :

- (1) while developing institutions at the higher levels, the greatest stress should continue to be laid on the work of the Gram Sabha and the Panchayat at the village level. It is at the village level that the efforts of the people have to be mobilised and there is the largest scope for securing community action. Both on the part of the Gram Sabha and the village Panchayat the approach of unanimity or near unanimity should be encouraged, so that various activities are undertaken with the general consent and good-will of the community.

- (2) technical officers at the district level should endeavour to make their advice and assistance available to extension officers at the block level and to the Panchayat Samitis for the initial preparation of programmes and schemes before decisions are taken. In turn, Panchayat Samitis should seek and welcome such assistance since a considerable proportion of extension personnel at the block level are necessarily without adequate experience, but can render better service if they receive the necessary guidance and help from officials at the district level.
- (3) the manner in which the block extension team, comprising the Block Development Officer and Extension Officers in different fields of development, functions is of the highest importance for the success of Panchayati Raj. To assist the Panchayat Samiti effectively, these officials must continue to function as a team. The Block Development Officer providing the necessary coordination and leadership, and Extension Officers in different fields participating actively in formulating programmes and schemes for the consideration of the Panchayat Samiti and its Standing Committees, executing them impartially in accordance with the rules, and ensuring that the supplies and services needed are organised efficiently. Adequate supervision over the work of the village level workers is essential. Care should be taken to see that the Block Development Officer and the Extension Officers undertake extensive touring within the block and are not tied up excessively with discussions at headquarters.
- (4) in the work of Panchayat Samitis, the main stress should be on the preparation and implementation of carefully considered block plans. These, along with village plans, provide the essential means for securing intensive and continuous development. Block and village plans, which are technically well-conceived, will go a long way to counteract *ad hoc* decisions and local pressures.
- (5) the introduction of Panchayati Raj enhances greatly the responsibility of the technical departments at the State level. They should transmit the best guidance and experience available in each field of development, provide for adequate training programmes for the elected representatives, and assist them generally in fulfilling the onerous responsibilities which Panchayati Raj places on them.
- (6) the collector of the district will continue to have a large share of responsibility in facilitating the success of Panchayati Raj institutions. He has the duty of ensuring coordination at the district level between the Zila Parishad and the technical officers in different fields, close contacts between the latter and the Panchayat Samitis and Extension Officers at the block level, and a continuing flow of technical advice

and guidance from departments at the State level. An important aspect of the Collector's work will be to assist democratic institutions and the public services in developing the right conventions in day-to-day work and in administrative relationship based on recognition of their distinctive contribution in fulfilling common objectives. [Pages 339—340].

3. **Para 20. 13.** For the effective implementation of the programme of community development, several technical Departments have to work together in a coordinated manner. If the vast majority of cultivators are to be assisted to utilise the results of research and to practise, scientific agriculture, adequate assistance in the form of technical advice and supplies of improved implements, seeds, fertilisers and credit must reach them at the right time. It is essential for the success of these complex but vital programmes that the responsibility of all official agencies and organisations concerned should be properly defined and there should be no ambiguity in the responsibility of the higher technical officers to provide the necessary guidance and supervision. In other words, in these matters, an uninterrupted line of responsibility reaching down to the village units should be assured.

While the responsibility of the official agency is defined and enforced as above, the functions of non-official leaders should be :

- (i) to mobilise public participation and promote the acceptance of programmes by the people;
- (ii) to assist village panchayats and cooperatives in their work;
- (iii) to assist in training programmes for village leaders and others;
- (iv) to organise programmes for the benefit of the community, using local manpower resources; and
- (v) to promote the welfare of the weaker sections.

[Pages 340—341]

Rationalisation of District Administration :

4. **Para 20. 14.** The introduction of Panchayati Raj raises the wider question of the reorganisation of district administration. It is not generally realised that over the past decade changes in district administration have been somewhat haphazard. When the community development programme was taken up, the extension organisation had to be super-imposed on the traditional district administration without adequate connecting links. The conse-

quence is that in many districts the following organisations are working on parallel lines with their activities largely uncoordinated :

- (i) the revenue administration which looks after certain specified development functions, such as taccavi advances, recoveries, etc.;
- (ii) the established Development Departments at the district, taluka and other levels;
- (iii) the community development organisation with block officers and village level workers, linked at the village level with panchayats and cooperatives; and
- (iv) Local Boards (where these have not yet been abolished).

With the introduction of Panchayati Raj, the functions of Panchayat Samitis include both community development activities and several activities hitherto entrusted to Local Boards. In the nature of things, there is still considerable overlapping which calls for some measure of rationalisation in district administration and fresh definition of functions and relationships. [Pages 341-342]

SOURCE : *Third Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1961

FOURTH FIVE YEAR PLAN (1969—74)

District Planning

1. **Para 6.11.** If the State Plans are to succeed, their formulation in relation to physical features and resources and the institutional organisations in each area is the first requirement. Development needs not only financial resources and material inputs but personnel and the right kind of institutions. This requirement has to be worked out for each operational area. The natural corollary of beginning to plan realistically and from the bottom is to recognise that planning is not something that comes from outside or the above but what each State, district, locality and community does to develop its own resources and potentialities. This emphasises wide diffusion of initiative, decision-making and participation. It also implies a parallel shouldering of responsibilities. [Page 111]

Community Development and Panchayati Raj :

2. **Para 9.38.** The Community Development programme was started in 1952. It now covers the whole country. Its unit remains the block and its aim that of achieving rural development through people's participation and initiative. The assistance from Government, so far as resources would allow, took the shape of a budget grant for the block and a team of extension workers under a Block Development Officer. The latter was to coordinate all schemes of a developmental character within the block. In the integrated programme, divided into stages of five years each, agricultural development occupied the foremost position. [Pages 227-228]

3. **Para 9.39.** The next step was that of attempting to weld together Panchayati Raj and Community Development. This objective followed from the acceptance of the recommendations of the Study Team of the Committee on Plan Projects Balwantraj Mehta Committee). The three-tier Panchayati Raj system, together with its modifications in different States, thus set the pattern of local development administration. At each level—village or group of villages, block or group of blocks, and district—there was to be a link between the administrative apparatus and elected representatives. [Page 228]

4. **Para 9.40.** All the villages are now covered by blocks. There are some 5265 blocks, including 489 tribal development blocks. Of these 999 are in Stage I and 2585 in Stage II. The rest have completed ten years and passed both the stages. Village Panchayats exist in all States and most Union Territories. The other tier-Samities at the Block level and Zila Parishads at the district level has been constituted in all States except madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir, parts of Bihar and Nagaland. There is not much diversity in the functions and powers of the village panchayats and panchayat samitis. But there is considerable variation in the functions and powers of the Zila Parishads from State to State. [Page 228]

5. **Para 9.41.** The working of the programme has thrown up a variety of experiences. The operation of the Blocks in five year-stages, with tapering financial provision from stage to stage, was based on the assumption that, by the end of the initial ten-year period, there would be adequate mobilisation of resources by the local institutions and sufficient channelling of other Plan funds to make any separate provision thereafter for the Blocks unnecessary. Community Development, in other words, would then no longer be assisted and schematic but self-reliant and locally rooted. These assumptions have not proved correct. By and large the programme continues to be dependent on Government initiative and even more so on Government funds. Where funds were lacking, activities languished and the staff remained almost super-numerary. Where, however, administrative and financial support has been forthcoming, the combined contribution of Panchayati Raj and Community Development has been significant in the formulation and implementation of local development plans. There has also been a large measure of coordination and integration of the field staff. In certain instances, the panchayati raj institutions have, for their part, made attempts to raise increasingly large resources through tax measures. In the majority of cases, however, local finance has continued to play very little part in local development. [Pages 228-229]

New Dimensions :

6. **Para 9.42.** With all their drawbacks, the Community Development Programme and Panchayati Raj Institutions have provided a new dimension to rural development and introduced a structural change of considerable importance in the district administration. Within the limitations of resources the programme has attempted to do something which in many cases, had never before been attempted. Improvement of agriculture has remained in the forefront throughout. Investment from the available block funds on agricultural development has over the years almost equalled the provisions for all other sectors of development taken together. In many States, the block organisa-

tion has been virtually the only field agency for carrying out development programmes. There has been sizeable contribution from the local communities to the developmental effort. [Page 229]

7. **Para 9.43.** Some States have recently introduced changes in the pattern of organisation. While there has to be considerable flexibility in regard to the type of organisation, contents of programme and extent of resources, the need for an integrated approach to rural development, including coordination between official and non-official agencies, remains basic. Also important is a continued emphasis on priority programmes such as agriculture and family planning. The State Plans accordingly provide Rs. 84.69 crores for programme of community development. It is necessary to ensure that these funds are supplemented to the largest extent possible by resources mobilised by the Panchayati Raj institutions. Simultaneously, there should be progressively large devolution of programmes and resources by the States. [Page 229]

Pilot Study on Growth Centres :

8. **Para 9.44.** As a part of studies on area planning, a Centrally sponsored scheme of Pilot Research Project in Growth Centres is being launched. The aim of the pilot project will be to evolve a broad research methodology and pattern for identifying emerging growth centres, and to indicate how the growth potential of these centres could be promoted through comprehensive and scientific study of the overall development needs, and how these centres could be meaningfully woven into the frame of the district plan and thus help in the process of planning from below. The scheme will thus bring under close study action strategies relevant to the acceleration of integrated area development around potential growth centres. A number of projects will be set up in different areas in the States and Union Territories. A few projects would be located in institutions working on planning methodology. To facilitate integration with district planning, the growth centres will, to the extent possible, be located in districts for which detailed plans in terms of guidelines and norms provided by the Planning Commission are already being drawn up. [Pages 229-230]

Integration :

Para 9.45. Panchayati Raj having been accepted as the pattern for local development administration, fuller and more active involvement of the institution is necessary in the process of economic development and social

advance. The viability of these institutions would depend on the extent to which they can undertake obligations for mobilising local resources. Encouragement should be given to such efforts. They should likewise be assisted to build up their own revenue-yielding assets. The administrative apparatus at the district, block and village level has to be integrated and, where necessary, strengthened. The integration has to comprise not only the staff of the Community Development and Panchayat Raj institutions but also normal departmental staff dealing with all development schemes of a local character. At the same time, the administrative financial and other procedures relevant to these institutions call for a careful periodical review to ensure that they remain attuned to the responsibilities devolving on them. (Page 230]

SOURCE : *Fourth Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1969.

FIFTH FIVE YEAR PLAN (1974—79)

Machinery for Planning :

Para 15.13. So far as local-area planning is concerned, many States have already initiated work on the disaggregation of their divisible outlays between districts on the basis of the certain objective criteria pertaining to levels of development, population and area, productivity and the coverage of various social services and economic infrastructure. It is envisaged that every State would bring out a supplement to their plan documents giving details of the rationale for resource allocation the sectoral distribution of outlays and the physical targets for each district. This, it is expected would introduce realism and also lay a firm foundation for the rationalisation of the planning process at the district level through subsequent reorientation of plans according to local needs and the revision of physical content of district plans in the light of annual performance. [Page 289]

SOURCE : *Draft Fifth Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1974.

SIXTH FIVE YEAR PLAN (1980—85)

District Administration :

1. **Para 8.15.** As already stated, it will be necessary to make arrangements for horizontal linkages at the block level. The task of planning and implementation for development programmes at the district level is acquiring greater complexity.

It will be necessary therefore to strengthen the district level administration by the appointment of District Development Officers who should have complete authority and responsibility with respect to development work and should enjoy the same rank and status as the District Magistrate/Collector. Some State Governments have already acted in this direction and there is need to adopt this practice all over the country. The DDO's must have professional expertise and his continuity should not be disturbed at least during a plan period if found to be effective and dedicated. [Page 92].

Monitoring of Implementation :

2. **Para 8.16.** Adequate organisation and systems at present do not exist for monitoring and evaluation of plan projects and programmes at different levels. At the Central level, monitoring systems have been established and are in operation in respect of major projects in certain key sectors only like chemicals and fertilisers, steel, petroleum, coal, power and irrigation. For other sectors there is need to develop organised monitoring arrangements. Major public sector undertakings of the Central Government have their own monitoring systems. For projects and programmes within the jurisdiction of the State Governments, monitoring systems for use at the Central level have been designed for certain sectors like tribal development, development of backward classes, primary and adult education and water supply. [Pages 92-93].

3. **Para 8.17.** The implementation of the plan both by the State Governments, as well as the Central Ministries would need to be effectively monitored with a view to ensuring that for each scheme various targets relating to time and cost, production of goods and services, social and economic benefits relating to the individual projects in the industrial, agricultural, education,

irrigation, family planning, health or any other sector of the economy are achieved. [Page 93]

4. **Para 8.18.** Implementation of the Annual Plans has to be very effective and for this task various Departments concerned in the State Governments, State Planning agencies Ministries concerned at the Centre as well as the Planning Commission will have to be strongly geared. It would be desirable to have a report every six months with regard to the implementation of the State Plans as also the Plans of various Ministries of the Centre. This report should be drawn up by the above groups with regard to the schemes/projects etc., concerning them and these could be examined by the Planning Commission. [Page 93]

Machinery for Planning :

5. **Para 8.19.** The present position is that there has been a general lack of effective machinery for appraisal of investment proposals with the exception of certain categories of major products in selected sectors, the lack is more pronounced in the agriculture and social services sectors. A project included in the Plan needs to be appraised in terms of its techno-economic feasibility and social costs and benefits. At present such appraisals are generally confined to Central Government projects costing Rs. 1 crore and above. In the case of State projects and schemes the appraisal machinery is inadequate in most States except for medium and major irrigation and power projects appraised by the Central Water Commission and Central Electricity Authority respectively. The financial institutions and concerned State Government agencies also appraise some of the smaller size State projects in certain sectors. [Page 93].

6. **Para 8.20.** The State Planning machinery would need to be strengthened in the areas where deficiencies exist with regard to their role in supervising project formulations, drawing up of the Plans, and also the monitoring and implementation of the Plan projects. It would be desirable that the State Planning agencies coordinate effectively with the Planning Commission in respect of formulation of the Five Year Plans, as well as the implementation of the Plans. [Page 93].

7. **Para 8.21.** Planning at the local level has an important role to play in investment decisions in agriculture, minor irrigation, animal husbandry, fisheries, marketing and processing, cottage and small scale industries, local infra-structure and social services including water supply, housing, health, education, sanitation and local transport. During the Sixth Plan, planning at the block level will be further strengthened. The programmes will be made

area specific at the grass root level based on local endowments and potential for growth and fuller employment. It is proposed to formulate comprehensive block level plans and identify programmes for development of the area which aim at making full use of local endowments. The object of these plans will be to integrate various programmes for optimal utilisation of local endowments with plan objectives and local needs. [Page 93]

8. **Para 8.22.** The block level plans would need to be in harmony with the District and State Plans. The investment decisions at the local level would need to take into account the effects of Central/State Plans in that area and of neighbouring localities. The block is intended to be the primary area for local planning. As further experience is gained on the nature of local resources and socio-economic factors, programmes will be refined through local planning. Area specific development programmes will help deal with the problems of regional imbalances and intra-regional variations. The area level planning project would, however, require specific skill and manpower resources and considerable delegation of powers to area planning bodies within a framework of guidelines formulated at the State level. The Central Scheme for assisting the States for strengthening their planning machinery would be continued during the Plan period. Other State level agencies for promoting location—specific research and action plans should include State Councils of Science and Technology and of Environmental Protection. The State Land Use Boards should become effective. [Page 93]

Peoples Involvement in Planning and Implementation :

9. **Para 8.23.** Apart from decentralisation of the administrative machinery and provision of adequate coordinating mechanisms at the local level, it will be necessary to ensure that at every stage of planning and implementation there is full participation and involvement of the people. Allocations of public funds for schemes in these sectors, whether by the Central or the State Governments are on the basis of certain patterns of funding designed to achieve the targets of the Plan. The selection of the specific tasks, however, is governed by local conditions and in assigning priorities it might be necessary to involve both the administration at the local level as well as the representatives of people particularly of the beneficiary groups. [Page 93]

10. **Para 8.24.** The institutional mechanism for this purpose will need to be adapted to changing requirements. The Panchayati Raj institutions should be strengthened in order to become institutions of democratic management of rural development both at the district and block levels. Some State Governments have already established systems where at the district level the

development work is entrusted to an officer of the rank of the district magistrate and who acts as the chief executive of the Zila Parishad. The district and block level representative institutions will, however, have to give adequate voice in their affairs to the weaker sections of the society who are the major beneficiaries of the programmes of development. The welfare of women and their economic emancipation should receive special attention. [Pages 93-94]


11. **Para 8.25.** Special emphasis would need to be placed on involving the youth. More imaginative ways will need to be devised to tap the potential and idealism of the youth for constructive action. For instance, while pursuing household approach to poverty elimination, it would be possible to induce active participation of the youth. Similarly it would be desirable to encourage villagers to obtain energy (from decentralised sources) as well as plant nutrients from organic and biological sources in a sustained manner and partially to solve the problems of rural unemployment and underemployment. Involvement of people for this purpose will be achieved by persuasion, mass education, consultation, demonstration and by assisting peoples' own organisations for development. Student organisations like NSS and NCC and non-student youth organisations like Yuvak Mandals and Nehru Yuvak Kendras should be assigned specific tasks in each block. [Page 94]

SOURCE : *Sixth Five Year Plan*, Planning Commission, Government of India, 1981.

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