1.1 Concept of Rural Growth Centre

Growth centre may be defined as service centre (rural or urban) which has a potential for further development and hence need to be supported by further public and private sector investment\(^1\). It has been conceived as points of attraction for the people who otherwise would go to large congested urban areas. Rural Growth Centre is a centre which provides goods and services to its own population as well as its surroundings population creating balanced socio-economic development of an area. It is a powerful strategy for microlevel planning for rural as well as for urban areas. Mostly it is seen that urban areas have large number of facilities and amenities for the betterment of the people while rural population have to travel large distance to avail these socio-economic facilities. Therefore, there is a need to identify existing rural growth centres in rural areas and accordingly propose new growth centres so that the rural areas become self-sufficient in its basic socio-economic facilities and amenities. For the developing country like India where nearly 70 per cent of the population lives in the rural areas, therefore it is necessary to revitalize the tempo of economic activities. Thus the growth centre strategies have been adopted in the present analysis to reduce the regional inequalities and usher balanced development of the region. Some of the models pertaining to rural growth centres has been discussed in sequent manner.

1.2 Growth Pole Model

The main theoretical base of the growth centre concept is the ‘growth pole’ model. The model originates from the work of Francois Perroux who started from the view that economic growth does not occur everywhere all at once, but starts at a few

specific growth poles and spreads through various channels at varying intensities and with varying effects. Perroux’s original conception had little to do with geographical space. Rather, he conceived of an abstract economic space in which a growth pole is a large, leading or innovative, industrial firm which, through backward and forward linkages, is capable of spreading development impulses to other organizations.  

During 1960s, practical strategies based on the growth pole concepts, named "growth pole strategies", had been intensely considered and implemented in developed and developing countries. By the late 1970’s, the growth pole strategies had been "implemented, provided for, or seriously discussed" in at least 28 developed and developing countries. They were Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, France, Ghana, Great Britain, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Libya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, the United States, Venezuela, and Yugoslavia. The growth pole theory was largely abandoned in the 1980’s due to growing dissatisfaction with the perceived lack of coherence between traditional notions of growth poles and empirical reality. Many growth pole policies were shown to fail in their intended objectives of inducing new economic growth in lagging regions.

It has been observed that inspite creating balanced regional development growth poles had created regional inequalities. Stohr and Todtling (1977) synthesised the case studies and found that growth pole strategies could not bring development to the hinter land. They concluded that the growth pole strategies may have been successful in reducing inter-regional disparities, but as local spread effects were weak,

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moreover, they had at the same time caused intra-regional, in particular rural-urban, disparities\textsuperscript{5}. For the development of rural areas in the developing country like India, bottom-up approach should be adopted. But growth pole model emphasized on top-down approach by establishing industries in urban areas. Therefore, through this model rural development could not be achieved. For balanced socio-economic development of any region (rural or urban) Christaller’s Central Place Theory has been proved much satisfactory than the growth pole model which has been discussed below.

1.3 Central Place Theory

For analyzing facts and views which is one of the most important objectives of research, one has to at the beginning provide for a definite framework on which the total study is dependent. In this study theoretical frame of reference is based on central place theory which was introduced by Walter Christaller in 1930’s and modified by others\textsuperscript{6}. Christaller viewed his theory as a “general deductive theory” to explain the “size, number and distribution of towns” in the belief that “there is some ordering principle governing the distribution”\textsuperscript{7}. Apart from its importance in theoretical geography, Christaller’s theory is also being used as a practical planning tool. This theory is considered as most relevant for the identification of rural growth centre and for socio-economic planning and development. This theory was based on the two principles that work simultaneously to sustain the central place, i.e. threshold population and range of goods. Christaller’s concept is based on certain assumptions-

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{6}Christaller, W., (1933), The Central Places in Southern Germany, Translated by Baskin, C.W., Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966.
  \item \textsuperscript{7}Berry, B.J.L., and Pred, A., ‘Central Place Studies: a bibliography of theory and applications’, Regional Science Research Institute, Bibliography Series 1, 1961, p.15.
\end{itemize}
the region should be isotropic surface, i.e. under condition of uniform distribution of population, purchasing power, resources, and transport facilities over a uniform terrain. But it is difficult to find such an isotropic surface and Aligarh district is not an exception. In the present study, some of the philosophical outlooks of Christaller’s model have been considered to carry out the different steps of planning procedure.

The central place model explains that there exists hierarchy of central places in the settlement pattern. The higher order central places provide functions, which are not available in the lower order places. However, lower order central places offers the facilities, are equally found in the higher order central places. The higher order central places are few in numbers and more widely spaced than the lower order central places. Another important thing is that the higher order central places have large area of coverage in contrary to lower order central places. The degree of influence on the surrounding settlements depends on the number and types of facilities available at the central places. Here an assumption is that people avail the goods and services from the nearest place.

**Basic Concepts of Central Place Theory**

There are six basic concepts that form the core of the classical central place theory. They are: (i) Centralisation as an ordering principle, (ii) the central place, (iii) Importance and centrality of a place, (iv) the central functions, (v) the complimentary region, and (vi) the economic distance and the range of a good.

**Centralisation as an ordering principle:**

Central place theory rests on the notion that centralization is a natural principle of order and that human settlements follow it. This centralistic order exists in all

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8 Sharma, R.C., ‘Settlement Geography of Indian Desert’ Kumar Brothers, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-16, 1972, p.171.
patterns of matters, whether inorganic or organic in nature. Christaller believes that services will concentrate in and around certain points which are more important than others. More important places will be less in number and less important places will be more in number.

(ii). The central place:

The central place is the most important aspect of the Christaller’s theory. It is the centre of a region which provides one or more services to an area larger than itself. The services may be extensive or limited, but the service function is common to all central places. A central place could be a city or a town or even a community which provides one or more services for the population living around it. V.L.S. Prakasa Rao explained the concept of central place as the crystallization of mass around a nucleus, which may be a town and is the focal point for its surrounding area. The town may be the service centre and its hinterland is complementary and not competitive.

Christaller states that importance of central place depends upon the central functions performed and the size of the population served by it. On the basis of functions and the size of the population served central places can be categorized into high order central places and low order central places. High order central places have large size of population served by it with greater functional specialization, whereas low order central places have small size of population served by it with smaller range of goods and services.

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(iii). Importance and the centrality of the place:

Importance and centrality are related concepts that identify respectively the aggregate and relative importance of settlements as central places. Centrality defined in a dynamic sense has to take note of not only the existing services and functions located in a settlement and their importance but also the potentialities. Clustering of central functions at a place reinforces the centrality as it generates the economies of agglomeration and induces the complementary services and facilities to get located at that place\(^{11}\). The theory says that the importance of a settlement is not the sum total of its inhabitants but rather of their combined economic efforts.

(iv). The central functions:

The central functions are defined as those that are non-ubiquitous in nature because of technological, economic or institutional consideration and their occurrence in certain localities helps in creating a hinterland and/or a chain of spatial interrelations thereby increasing the relative importance of that place\(^ {12}\). Central functions are classified as higher order functions and lower order functions. Higher order central place will provide higher order functions and lower order central place will provide lower order functions. The central functions considered by christaller are trade, banking, administrative, education, commerce and transportation.

(v). The complementary region:

The region for which a central place is the centre will be called the complementary region. If the centrality of a place is high then it means that its complementary region would also be high. It is not easy to delineate a complementary


\(^{12}\) Ibid.
region because it involves the demarcation of the variable ranges of many functions performed by a central place. If the deficit of the functions in the complementary region is counterbalanced by the surplus functions of a central place, they will fall under the surrounding area of the central place and thus forms the complementary region.

(vi). The economic distance and the range of good:

In the classical theory, spatial supply of and demand for goods and services are determined by freight, insurance and storage costs, loss of weight of the good, and the time factor; and, in the case of passenger movement, by travel cost, travel time and discomfort perceived by the consumer. Two notions are employed to describe the spatial movement of goods and services, one representing the maximum distance over which the demand for a good is positive, and the other, representing the minimum distance within which the minimum volume of demand for the good which ensures normal profits to the seller is located. The former is referred to as the range of a good or upper limit, and the latter as the threshold or lower limit\(^\text{13}\). Both the threshold and the range of goods differ from function to function. Larger threshold and range of central functions are seen in the central places of higher order while smaller threshold and range of central functions are observed in the central places of lower order. For example the threshold and the range will be small for the lower order function like primary school whereas for the higher order function like college will have large threshold and range of goods.

1.4 Relevance of Central Place Theory in Regional Planning

Although central place theory is criticized on many grounds, yet its

importance cannot be underestimated. With the emergence of central place theory, a new dimension was introduced in development of geography without which geography could not have survived till date. Central place theory is the first attempt made to develop a systematic geographical theory of location. In regional planning, central place theory provides an understanding of the functional linkages between different settlements of the region. To carry out comprehensive regional planning it is necessary for the planners to know the functional interdependence of various settlements within the region. The central places and central functions while planning regional plan gives ideas about functional capacity of individual settlements and their influence on its hinterland. Thus intra-regional disparity can be easily identified by demarcating poorly served areas. It is useful in considering the location of trade and service activity and the location of the provision of distinctive goods and services for balanced regional development.

1.5 Concept of Planning

Planning has been defined as the process of thinking through and implementing a set of appropriate actions to achieve some goals. Planning generally includes actions and designed to solve problems in the future. Oxford dictionary of geography defines it “Planning presupposes an ability to foresee events and a capability for analyzing situation and solving problems”. For the overall development of any region planning is an important requirement. The basic purpose of planning is to achieve definite targets and objectives within specified period of time.

The economist and other social scientist as well as researches perceived the process of planning in different ways so they suggest a set of prerequisite of

successful planning, like existence of central planning authority, strong and efficient
government, honest and sound administration, fixation of objectives and targets,
adequate statistical data, well formulated and integrated plan, socialistic economic
organization, mobilization of financial resources, flexibility in planning, public
cooperation, economic control, maintenance of power balance, proper development
policy, economy in administration, proper education, and the theory of consumption\textsuperscript{16}.

Planning is primarily a way of thinking about social and economic problems,
planning is oriented predominantly toward the future, is deeply concerned with the
relation of goals to collective decisions and strives for comprehensiveness in policy
and programmes wherever these modes of thought are applied, there is a presumption
that planning is being done\textsuperscript{17}.

Planning is a continuous movement towards desired goals and, because of this
all major decisions has to be made by agencies informed of those goals and the social
purpose behind them. Even in considering a five-year period, forward and long term
planning has always to be kept in view. Indeed, perspective planning is the essence of
the planning process. As this process develops, there is a certain rhythm of expansion
in the development of the people, and a sense of enterprise and achievement comes to
them. They are conscious of a purpose of life and have a feeling of being participants
in the making of history\textsuperscript{18}.

1.6 Types of Planning

Planning can be classified on the basis of different criteria as discussed below:

\textsuperscript{16} Ghose, B.N., ‘Economic Development and Planning’ National Publishing House, New Delhi,
1977, p.271.

\textsuperscript{17} Friedman, J., ‘Regional planning as a field of study’ in Friedman, J. and Alonso, W. (ed.),

\textsuperscript{18} Misra, R.P., Sundaram, K.V. and Prakash Rao, V.L.S., ‘Regional Development planning in India-
Non Spatial and Spatial Planning- Non spatial planning includes those in which the spatial dimensions are not explicit such as national economic planning, family planning, energy and social planning. However all of them when applied uniformly in all parts of a country can generate geographical effects. Spatial planning is defined as the one in which geographical dimension is explicit.

**Sectoral planning** is essentially a non-spatial planning concerted with the development of various sectors of the economy such as agriculture, industry, etc. This kind of planning lacks an integrated structure and may thus lead to social and human problems like environmental pollution, increasing inequality and mass poverty resulting in spatial imbalances. Sectoral developments can be implemented within a spatial framework according to the specific requirement of the different spatial units which may differ from each other in terms of physical, economic, social and cultural conditions. Sectoral development may not be achievable if due attention is not given to the regional characteristics and specialization.

**Physical and Economic Planning** -Physical planning involves the planning of an area’s physical structure i.e. landuse, communication, utilities etc. Economic planning is concerned more with the economic structure of an area and its overall prosperity mainly in terms of production, income, purchasing power etc.

**Imperative and Indicative planning**- Imperative planning is a type of planning where all economic activities and resources of the economy operate under the direction of state. On the other when the mainspring of economic growth is left to the private sector it may be called indicative planning.

**Centralized and Decentralized Planning**- Centralized planning is based on the top down approach where a central authority is the supreme decision making body. The entire planning process is based on bureaucratic control and regulation. Whereas,
decentralized planning is based upon the bottom up approach. Under it, a plan is formulated by the central planning authority in consultation with the different administrative units of the country. The state plans incorporate district and village level plans which are formulated at the respective levels.

**Single and Multi-level Planning**- Planning done at the national level alone is termed as single level plan, but its formulation at several hierarchical stages is called multi-level planning.

**Allocative and Innovative Planning**- Allocative planning is concerned with coordination, the resolution of conflicts ensuring that the existing system is ticking over efficiency through time in accordance with involving policies. Innovative planning is concerned with improving, developing the systems as a whole. It is known as development planning.

**Short-term and Long-term Planning**–Short-term of planning is designed to solve certain pressing problems which do not require large-scale change in the social and economic order. It may be used to increase production and employment opportunities; to adjust production to market demand and supply, and to meet the targets set by long term plans. Long-term planning some times erroneously called perspective planning, aims at the institutional and structural changes necessary for achieving the long-term social and economic goals of the society.\(^\text{19}\)

### 1.7 Concept of Regional Planning

Regional planning is a process of orderly and systematic anticipation of the future of a region, involving recommendations of the necessary remedial and constructive actions by public and private agencies to achieve the objectives of the plan/regional community. Regional planning may involve extensive areas that include

one or more regions or more limited areas such as drainage basins. Regional planning is a branch of land use planning and deals with the efficient placement of land use activities, infrastructure and settlement growth across a significantly larger area of land than an individual city or town. Regional planning addresses problems of economic, social and political transformations at geographical scales. Since the independence, the need for regional planning has arisen from changing social and economic phenomena affecting local communities and regions throughout the country.

Regional planning is spatial development planning, which tends to utilize the natural and human resources to the fullest extent for the enrichment of the quality of life of its population and to distribute the gain of development among the regions and groups within the regions, thereby minimizing socio-economic imbalance and improving living condition of the masses.

1.8 Regional Planning in India

Indian planning is essentially normative single-level economic planning, with a heavy reliance on the sectoral approach. Sectoral plans integrated into a single whole and fitted into framework of national goals and objectives, have been proposed and implemented since 1951, the year when the first five plan was launched. There has been greater emphasis on plan formulation than implementation. Indian planning is also marked to be centralized at the national level. Until very recently, no serious attempt has been made to prepare plans at lower territorial level such as the state, district, development block or region with the same competence and seriousness as at

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the national level. In the initial stage of its development in the 1930’s regional planning was generally understood as natural resource planning, and thus its role was confined to determine the ways and means of developing the natural resources of a region. However, with the passage of time, the emphasis on natural resources planning was reduced considerably as new dimensions of urban and metropolitan planning, environmental planning, human resource and community planning, planning for problem areas, etc., considerably emerged the scope and content of regional planning. In the beginning of planning era, it was exclusively at national level formulated at the centre. This sectoral macro level approach failed to attain success in reducing the poverty, unemployment and inter and intra regional inequalities in the region to attain balanced development. Consequently the planning process got decentralized to state level planning and new emphasis is laid on planning for regional development.

The first event which proved to be forebear of regional or micro level planning in India is the setting up of planning commission in 1950 and subsequent setup of national development council in 1952 to ensure the balanced and rapid development of all parts of the country. **First Five year Plan (1951-56)** had a two fold objective, firstly it aimed correcting the disequilibrium in the economy caused by the war and partition of the country, secondly it proposed to initiate simultaneously a process of all round balanced development which would ensure a rising national income and a steady improvements in living standards over a period. In the **Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)**, two surveys were conducted in context with regional planning, namely pilot regional survey of the Mysore state during 1956-58, and a diagnostic survey of Damodar valley region in 1957, for making an appraisal of existing

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24 Government of India, Planning Commission, First Five Year Plan, 1956, p.32.
resources and suggesting strategies for regional development. During this time “Intensive Area Development Programme” (IADP) was launched in 1960 in seven selected district of seven states. In 1956, Elwin committee recommended the approach for tribal areas. Consequently in 1957, “tribal development block” (TDB) approach was adopted. Due to wide regional disparities in India, the planners emphasized on the balanced regional development ever since the initiation of the planning process in India and perceived that the pattern of investment must be devised as to lead balanced regional development.\(^\text{25}\)

In the **Third Five Year Plan (1961-66)** for the first time some serious concern has been expressed to the problem of balanced regional development. This plan devoted a separate (chapter IX)\(^\text{26}\) to “Balanced Regional Development”. It was once again emphasized that balanced development of different parts of the country, extension of the benefits of economic progress to the less developed regions and widespread diffusions of industry are among the major aims of planned development. The approach in this plan was to (i) help the states in reducing intra state disparities (disparities among different regions of the same state) and (ii) initiate new programme and extend programme adopted in the previous plans to reduce inter-state inequalities (i.e. inequalities between different states). The three tier administration was developed during this plan, such as *panchayat* at village level, *panchayat* samities at the block level (group of about 100 or less number of villages) and zila parishad at the district level were actually meant to be associated with plan formulation and implementation. But their association with the plan was more formal than operational. **Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-74)** witnessed, an introduction of a number of schemes for the benefits of the rural poor such as, small farmer’s development agency, marginal farmer and agricultural laborer’s development agency,


drought prone area programme, cash scheme for rural employment, pilot intensive rural employment project, integrated tribal developmental programme. Since large numbers of rural poor live in relatively less developed regions, all these programmes were expected to benefit the less developed regions in comparison with the developed regions for the purpose of granting concession and financial assistance to industries established in such areas and weightage to backward states in the allocation of central assistance. In this plan the multi-level planning was started stressing the formulation of plans at district and lower level to provide adequate infrastructure facilities. 

Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-79), aimed that the strategy of the removal of regional imbalances of fourth plan would be kept continue in the fifth plan also on treatment to the approach of concepts of “Growth Centre” and “Central Places” strategies. The various areas development programme undertaken during this plan period are, drought prone area programme, the command area development programme, hill area development, the desert development programme, SFDA programme, the tribal development agency project and sub-plan for the hills and tribal areas. Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), placed great emphasis to provide an integrated approach to the problems of regional inequalities, the mechanism of area planning was adopted. In this plan special importance was given to follow the decentralized planning for eliminating inter and intra district socio-economic imbalances. Seventh Five Year Plan (1985-90) correctly recognized that two criteria determinants of a region’s economic status were agricultural productivity, and human resource potential and reduction in inter-regional disparities in these two elements would help greatly in the

task of reducing regional imbalances.\textsuperscript{30} Eight Five Year Plan (1992-97), has not placed any improvement over the earlier policies to remove regional disparity. Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002), advocated the continuation of earlier policies in achieving the regional balance. Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007), emphasized the development of regions by ensuring the socio-economic development in order to ensuring the harmony with the environment for developing an optimal spatial organization of the society. \textsuperscript{31}Eleventh Five year Plan (2007-2012) stressed on ‘Inclusive Growth’ which implies an equitable allocation of resources with benefits incurred to every section of the society. This plan emphasized on the development of hill areas through Hill Area Development Programme and Western Ghats Development Programme. In this plan district plan has been taken as the integral part of state plan.\textsuperscript{32}Twelfth Five year Plan (2012-2017) seeks to fulfill ‘Faster, Sustainable, and More Inclusive Growth’. It emphasizes on the inclusiveness of poverty reduction, inclusiveness of group equality, inclusiveness of regional balance, inclusiveness and inequality, inclusiveness as empowerment, and Inclusiveness through employment programmes. It also states that the inter-State and intra-State disparities are a major source of concern for faster and more inclusive development at national level\textsuperscript{33}.

1.9 Concept of Development

Development is defined as the gradual advancement or growth through a series of progressive changes. It is a process to achieve certain goals. Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving

\textsuperscript{30} Government of India, Planning Commission, Seventh Five Year Plan, 1985, pp.44.
\textsuperscript{32} Government of India, Planning Commission, Eleventh Five Year Plan, 2007.
reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system. It helps in improving the quality of human lives.

The planning process and developmental activities in the country have covered more than 50 years. The impact of developmental activities cannot be evaluated fully by any single indicator because it is a multidimensional process. Moreover, a number of indicators when analyzed individually do not provide an integrated and easily comprehensible picture of reality.\textsuperscript{34}

Development may either be natural or planned. When development is achieved with normal ongoing activities of the region, it is termed as normal or natural state of development. While, desired level of change attained due to planned efforts may be termed as regional development planning. Development is the function of planned efforts for the improvement of the region. In common usage ‘development’ has the implication of economic growth, modernization, improvement in the levels of material production and consumption and change in social, cultural and political structure to resemble more nearly those displayed in countries of economic demand developed.\textsuperscript{35}

According to Jan Drewnowski, ‘Development is a process of qualitative and quantitative growth of the social and economic reality which we can call either society or economy. Because of the close inter-relation of economic and social elements no ‘purely social or purely economic development is possible. Consequently it is better not to speak of social development separately .It is a single process which is best called simply development.’\textsuperscript{36}

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sectors in the economy, i.e. agriculture, industry, transport, communication and so on. Therefore in order to make a meaningful study of differences in inter-regional level of development one should take into consideration various physical indicators reflecting or measuring various sectoral level of development and combining all the sectoral indices together one can measure the overall level of development.

1.10 Socio-economic Development

Socio-economic development refers to the ability to produce an adequate and growing supply of goods and services productively and efficiently, to accumulate capital, and to distribute the fruits of production in a relatively equitable and accessible manner. In other words it is defined as social and economic transformations, planned or otherwise, that tend to increase social welfare or well being, material or spiritual, enjoyed by the citizens of that country. Social development refers to the complexity of social dynamics (the interplay of social structures, process and relationship) and focuses on the social concerns of the people as objective of development and people-centred participatory approaches to development. Economic development is the process of raising the level of prosperity through increased production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. The purpose of economic development is to improve the social and material well-being of all individuals and social institutions with the goal of achieving the highest possible level of human development. Socio-economic development therefore, requires the integration of both economic and social development. The indicators to measure socio-economic development are GDP per capita, life expectancy, literacy rates, measures of poverty, demographic indicators, disease indicator, safe drinking

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water, electricity facility, employment rate etc. To achieve socio-economic development, government of India has provided with certain policies and schemes for the betterment of the people. The policies and schemes related to the socio-economic indicators that have been taken for the present study are discussed in sequent manner.

**EDUCATION**

Education has always been given an honoured place in Indian society. The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well recognized. In the post-independence period, a major concern of the Government of India and of the States has been to give increasing attention to education as a factor vital to national progress and security. Problems of educational reconstruction were reviewed by several commissions and committees, notably the University Education Commission (1948-49) and the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53).

**Educational Policies in India:**

The National Policy on Education (NEP) is a policy formulated by the Government of India to promote education amongst India's people. The policy covers elementary education to colleges in both rural and urban India. The first NEP was promulgated in 1968 and the second in 1986 by the government of India. It emphasizes three aspects in relation to elementary education:

- universal access and enrolment,
- universal retention of children up to 14 years of age, and
- a substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve

**National Policy on Education (1968)**-Based on the report and recommendations of the Education Commission (1964–1966), the government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi announced the first National Policy on Education in 1968, which called for a
"radical restructuring" and equalize educational opportunities in order to achieve national integration and greater cultural and economic development. The policy called for fulfilling compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14, as stipulated by the Constitution of India, and the better training and qualification of teachers. The policy called for focus on learning of regional languages, outlining the "three language formula" to be implemented in secondary education - the instruction of the English language, the official language of the state where the school was based, and Hindi, the national language. The policy also encouraged the teaching of the ancient Sanskrit language, which was considered an essential part of India's culture and heritage. The NPE of 1968 called for education spending to increase to six percent of the national income\(^\text{39}\).

**National Policy on Education (1986)** - The new policy called for "special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunity," especially for Indian women, Scheduled Tribes (ST) and the Scheduled Caste (SC) communities. To achieve these, the policy called for expanding scholarships, adult education, recruiting more teachers from the SCs, incentives for poor families to send their children to school regularly, development of new institutions and providing housing and services. The NPE called for a "child-centred approach" in primary education, and launched "Operation Blackboard" to improve primary schools nationwide. The policy expanded the Open University system with the Indira Gandhi National Open University, which had been created in 1985. The policy also called for the creation of the "rural university" to promote economic and social development at the grassroots level in rural India\(^\text{40}\).

National Policy of Education (1992) - The 1986 National Policy on Education was modified in 1992. Programme of Action (PoA), 1992 under the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 envisaged conduct of a common entrance examination on all India basis for admission to professional and technical programmes in the country. For admission to Engineering and Architecture/Planning programmes. This takes care of varying admission standards in these programmes and helps in maintenance of professional standards. This also solves problems of overlaps and reduces physical, mental and financial burden on students and their parents due to multiplicity of entrance examinations.\textsuperscript{41}

- After this in 2004 National Common Minimum Programme\textsuperscript{42} was introduced by the government of India for further enhancement in educational development.

- **Right of children to free and compulsory Education Act 2009**\textsuperscript{43}

  This Act explains that every child between the ages of 6 to 14 years has the right to free and compulsory education. This is stated as per the 86th Constitution Amendment Act added Article 21A. The government schools shall provide free education to all the children and the schools will be managed by school management committees (SMC). Private schools shall admit at least 25% of the children in their schools without any fee. The National Commission for Elementary Education shall be constituted to monitor all aspects of elementary education including quality.


\textsuperscript{42} National Common Minimum Programme, Government of India, May 2004, retrieved from: pmindia.nic.in/cmp.pdf.

Educational Schemes to promote Education.

Education in rural India gets major boost under various schemes by the government. The Government of India in association with the state government has initiated a lot of programmes to provide the children of remote areas to primary education. Deprived of basic education, children of rural areas are encouraged to attend schools. The schemes provide those stipends, mid-day meals, free education, etc with special attention to girl child education. The mid-day meal scheme help attracts students to educational institutions.

Mid day Meal\textsuperscript{44} - With a view to enhancing enrollment, retention and attendance and simultaneously improving nutritional levels among children, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme on 15th August 1995, initially in 2,408 blocks in the country. By the year 1997-98 the NP-NSPE was introduced in all blocks of the country. It was further extended in 2002 to cover not only children in classes I-V of government, government aided and local body schools, but also children studying in EGS (Education Guarantee Centre) and AIE (Alternate and Innovative Education centres). Central Assistance under the scheme consisted of free supply of food grains @ 100 grams per child per school day, and subsidy for transportation of food grains up to a maximum of Rs. 50 per quintal.

- In September 2004 the scheme was revised to provide cooked mid day meal with 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein to all children studying in classes I-V in Government and aided schools and EGS/AIE centers.
- In July 2006 the scheme was further revised.

\textsuperscript{44} Mid Day Meal Scheme, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, retrieved from mhrd.gov.in/middaymeal.
Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)\(^45\) is being implemented in all districts of the country as a flagship scheme for education. The aim of SSA is to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in the 6-14 age groups by 2010. The programme covers the entire country with special focus on educational needs of girls, SCs/STs and other children in difficult circumstances. The programme seeks to open new schools in those places which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grant. The SSA has a special focus on girls and children of weaker sections. A number of initiatives, including distribution of free textbooks has been initiated under this programme. The SSA also seeks to provide computer education even in the rural areas.

Kanya Vidhya Dhan Scheme

The Kanya Vidya Dhan scheme encourages girl students from economically backward families to pursue higher studies after their Intermediate. Under this scheme girls are provided with a one time amount of Rs.30, 000 to pursue education after Intermediate. The scheme is however applicable only to those whose annual family income lies within a said range. The girls are through this scheme encouraged to take up higher studies and are thus provided with means of doing so. The one-time financial assistance is given for the sole purpose of higher education.

Though the government is providing many programmes and schemes for the development of education among urban as well as rural areas. But the significant increase in the educational development is seen in urban areas than rural areas. In rural areas a wide functional gap is seen between the availability of educational

45 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, retrieved from ssa.nic.in.
facilities and the population served by these facilities. So the main aim is to provide educational facilities at optimum location taking under consideration of accessibility, social security, political unbaisness, etc. In the study area (Aligarh district) out of 1180 inhabited villages in the district, 1030 villages or 87.3 per cent have been provided with the education facilities of one type or the other. Similarly out of total rural population of 21,27,592 persons in the district, 20,24,058 or 95.1 per cent have educational facility of one or the other type. 152 villages do not have primary school in their villages and out of these villages, children of 142 villages have to travel less than 5 kms. for schooling. Out of total inhabited villages as many as 815 are deprived of middle school and 1,175 of Degree College. Of these 635 avail the facility of middle school at a distance of less than 5 kms., 163 at a distance 5-10 kms. and the remaining 17 at a distance of more than 10kms. In respect of degree college 190 avail this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., 367 between 5 – 10kms. and rest 618 villages at a distance of more than 10kms.

HEALTH

The health of a nation is an essential component of development, vital to the nation’s economic growth and internal stability. It has been declared a fundamental human right. This implies that the State has a responsibility for the health of its people. National governments all over the world are striving to expand and improve their health care services. It may be noted that as many as nearly 30 different major health programmes have been introduced ever since independence in India. These programmes are sometimes generic in nature and applicable to the entire population; at times they aim at controlling specific mass diseases; sometimes they target women and children, and a few programmes are meant exclusively for children. These programmes are National Family Planning Programme (1952), National
Malaria Control Programme (1953), National Filaria Control Programme (1955), National Leprosy Control Programme (1955), National Malaria Eradication Programme (1958), Primary Health Centres Programme (1958), National Goitre Control Programme (1962), National Small Pox Eradication Programme (1962), National Tuberculosis Programme (1962), School Health Programme (1962), Applied Nutrition Programme (1963), Mid-day meals Programme (1963), Maternal and Child Health Programme (1964), Iron and Folic Acid Supplementary Programme (1970), Special Nutrition Programme (1970), Anemia Control Programme (1971), Vitamin A Prophylaxis Programme (1971), Minimum Needs Programme (1974), ICDS Programme (1975), Integrated Health Scheme (1975), National Programme for Prevention of Blindness (1976), Expanded Programme of Immunization (1978), National Diarrhea Control Programme (1980), National Leprosy Eradication Programme (1983), Universal Immunization Programme (1985), ARI Control Programme (1990), CSSM Programme (1992), Pulse Polio Eradication Programme (1995), Reproductive and Child Health Programme (1996) etc. In India, however, health has traditionally received low priority in the central and state budgets. Expenditure on the health sector comprised, for instance, less than 1% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in 1999 – one of the lowest in the world. Further, there was a considerable urban bias characterizing health policies and investment strategies – about 75% of the resources and infrastructure were concentrated in urban India. The resultant increase in the incidence of both communicable and non-communicable diseases, coupled with poor health facilities in rural areas resulted in high infant, child and maternal mortality rates. In Rural areas a major step taken by the government for the health of the people is with the introduction of National Rural Health Mission.

National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) is an Indian health program for improving health care delivery across rural India. The mission, initially mooted for 7 years (2005-2012), is run by the Ministry of Health. The scheme proposes a number of new mechanism for healthcare delivery including training local residents as Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), and the Janani Surakshay Yojana (motherhood protection program). It also aims at improving hygiene and sanitation infrastructure. The mission has a special focus on 18 states Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Madhya Pradesh, Nagaland, Orissa, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

The major objectives of the National Rural Health Mission are decrease the infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate, provide access to public health services for every citizen, prevent and control communicable and non-communicable diseases, control population as well as ensure gender and demographic balance, and encourage a healthy life style and alternative system of medicine through AYUSH. But the objectives of NHRM could not be achieved as it was expected.

To achieve better health care services it is important to have proper health facilities like sub-centres (SCS), primary health centres (PHC), community health centres (CHCS) where health care can be delivered. As per NRHM report it is seen that there is lack of rural health care facilities inspite of a better planning. There is lack of diagnostic centres in rural areas due to which patients have to travel long distances that result in their deteriorating condition and even death.

As per 2001 population the existing number of Sub-centres, Primary health centres and Community health centres were 144,998, 22,669, and 3,910 respectively. While the required number of Sub-centres, PHCs, and CHCs were 158,792, 26,022, and 6,491 respectively. The per cent shortfall of Sub-centres, PHCs, and CHCs were 13.16, 18.46, and 40.87 respectively. The maximum shortage at the Community Health Centres level is adversely affecting the secondary health care and linkages.

The public health system in our country has various drawbacks. They are:

i. The conceptualization and planning of all programmes is centralized instead of decentralized using locally relevant strategies.

ii. The provision of infrastructure is based on population norms rather than habitations leading to issues of accessibility, acceptability and utilization.

iii. The gap between the requirement and availability of human resources at various levels of health care is wide and where they are available, the patient-provider interactions are beset with many problems, in addition to waiting time for consultation/treatment.

iv. There is no incentive for those who work well and check on those who do not.

v. Quality assurance at all levels is not adhered to due to lacunae in implementation. This results in semi-used or dysfunctional health infrastructure.

Despite a steady increase in public health care infrastructure, utilization of public health facilities by population for outpatient and inpatient care has not improved. The data obtained from NSSO show a major decline in utilization of the public health facilities for inpatient care and a corresponding increase in utilization of the same from private health care providers in both rural and urban areas. With the exception of a few states, there has been very low utilization for outpatient care as
well. Critical shortage of health personnel, inadequate incentives, poor working conditions, lack of transparency in posting of doctors in rural areas, absenteeism, long wait, inconvenient clinic hours, poor outreach, time of service, insensitivity to local needs, inadequate planning, management, and monitoring of service/facilities appear to be the main reasons for low utilization.

In the study area, out of 1180 inhabited villages 512 villages (43.4 per cent) have medical facilities of one type or the other. Out of total population 57.4 per cent of the population has medical facilities. There are 1,151 villages in the district which are devoid of Hospital facility and 1,160 villages which are deprived of PHC facilities. Of these 343 villages have the facility of Hospital available within 5 kms. while in respect of 470 villages the inhabitants have to cover a distance of 5-10 kms. in order to avail this facility. Similarly 338 villages have this facility at a distance of more than10 kms. As regards PHC 291 avail this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., 450 at a distance of 5-10 kms. and the remaining 419 have to travel a distance of more than10 kms. to avail this facility.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Rural roads are the basic infrastructure requirement and play a vital role in socio-economic upliftment of rural community. They contribute significantly in rural development by creating opportunities to access goods and services located in nearby villages or major town/market centres. Provision of rural roads increases mobility of men and materials thus facilitating economic growth. These, in turn, assist in reducing poverty and leads over all socio-economic development. Rural roads are the tertiary road system in total road network which provides accessibility for the rural habitations to market and other facility centres. Since 1940’s the Government of India and the State Government had drawn several policies, programmes and
conceived various schemes for the development of rural roads in India. Since Fifth Five Year Plan, funds are allocated under various rural development programme such as Minimum Needs Programme (MNP), National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY), etc for the development of rural roads. During the Fifth Five Year Plan period (1974-1979) rural roads were included as a part of Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) of the Central Government and received importance for development. The programme envisaged connectivity of all villages with population of 1,500 and above, as per 1971 census, with an all weather road by the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan. It also proposed a cluster approach for connectivity in respect of hilly, coastal, tribal and desert areas, where the villages are smaller in population size. The criteria for connectivity under MNP were periodically revised. During the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-1997) the criteria for linkage of villages to a road were modified. Priorities were accorded to link all villages with a population of 1000 and above on the basis of 1981 census and special efforts to accelerate village connectivity in respect of backward regions and tribal areas. The connectivity criteria under MNP were once again revised for the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002). The criteria for the plain areas is that 100% of all villages with population above 1,000 and 75% of all villages with population between 500-1,000 and for hilly areas 100% of all villages with population above 500 and 75% of villages with population between 200-500. For tribal, coastal, riverine and desert areas 100% of villages with population above 500 and 75% of villages with population ranging 200-500 should have connectivity of road 49.


**Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana**

On the recommendations of the National Rural Road Development Committee, Government of India has launched a nationwide programme called ‘Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana’ (PMGSY) on the 25th December 2000. For the first time the focus is directly on the rural connectivity under dedicated road fund. The objective of the program is to provide road connectivity, through good all weather roads to all rural habitations of targeted population. The programme aimed to provide connectivity to all habitations up to 500 and above population in plain and in respect of hilly, desert and tribal areas the habitations with 250 and above population is targeted. The connectivity status under PMGSY was that the total number of eligible habitations was 172,772 out of which 56,638 number of habitations was approved to cover under this project and finally the number of habitation connected were 27,303\(^{50}\).

**Bharat Nirman**

It is a flagship programme of the Government of India conceived as time bound business plan to provide rural infrastructure during 2005-06 to 2008-09. Six major rural infrastructures namely, rural roads, telephone connection, irrigation, water supply, housing and electrification are identified. The programme was initiated during the year 2005-06, under rural road component, it targeted to provide all weather connectivity to all habitations having population of 1,000 or more (500 or more in hill, tribal and desert areas) by 2009\(^{51}\).

Currently, the Road Development Plan Vision-2021 has been brought out to guide the Central and State Governments in developing the road infrastructure of adequate standards in the country. The strategy proposed in the vision document for

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planning rural roads emphasized the need for preparation of master plans for rural road network in each district. The planning of network for the district may cover all habitations with minimum population of 100 and above to be served by all-weather roads. It also suggested for providing connectivity to all the habitations by the end of this decade (2010)\textsuperscript{52}.

In the study area there are 919 or 77.9 per cent villages which have been linked with the \textit{pucca} road. Out of total rural population of 21,27,592 persons in the district, 1,82,2623 or 85.7 per cent have been provided with the facility of approach by \textit{pucca} road. It is seen from the above data that a good number of villages as well as population is served by the availability of \textit{pucca} road facility but people have to face the problem because of poor maintenance of these roads which leads to progressive deterioration of the road network. These roads get destructed especially during the rainy seasons because of bad quality of material to be used by the constructor. Another problem faced by the people of the study area is that even though the government is providing the facility of \textit{pucca} road to each and every village but the availability of public transport system is lacking. Due to which they have to travel long distance to avail the facility of buses.

Post Offices in India constitute the largest network in the country offering financial, communication and other retail services. Department of Posts has been involved in rural development for the last 150 years. With its more than 139,000 Post Offices in rural areas, it provides support in various critical functions through communication, financial services, life insurance products and other retail services. Till March 2011, 4,271 Panchayat Sanchar Seva Kendras have been functioning in the country. Panchayat Sanchar Seva Kendras are opened at \textit{Gram Panchayat}

\textsuperscript{52} IRC (2001): Road Development Plan Vision 2021.
headquarters where Post Offices do not exist. This scheme is implemented by Gram Panchayats through an agent appointed by them. Post Office Savings Bank is the oldest and the largest banking institution in the country. The money collected through Post Office Saving is also utilized as investment towards nation-building by the Government and various State Governments. Small Savings Schemes operated at Post Offices in the rural areas contributing to the cause of rural development include Post Office Saving Account, Post Office Recurring Deposit Account, Post Office One, Two, Three, and Five Years Time Deposit, Monthly Income Scheme, Public Provident Fund, Senior Citizen Savings Scheme and National Savings Certificate. Department of Posts introduced Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI) in 1995 for the benefit of rural population with special focus on weaker sections. It aims to ensure access to substantial cash at periodic intervals to meet life cycle expenses on education, marriage and old age. RPLI offers various policies like Whole Life Assurance (Gram Suraksha), Convertible Whole Life Assurance (Gram Suvidha), Endowment Assurance (Gram Santosh), Anticipated Endowment Assurance for 15 and 20 years (Gram Sumangal), 10 years RPLI (Gram Priya) and Children Policy (Bal Jiwan Bima). The Government enacted the MGNREGA in September 2005 and the scheme came into force in all districts in the country with effect from 1st April 2008. Department of Posts has taken the responsibility to disburse the wages through Post Offices by opening savings bank accounts in the names of MGNREGA beneficiaries. Starting with Andhra Pradesh Postal Circle in 2005, the Scheme of disbursement of MGNREGA wages through Post Offices accounts is currently operational in the entire country excepting Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir and Tamil Nadu Postal Circles (Tamil Nadu and Puducherry). The Scheme is operational through 98,168 post offices. The Department is also contributing to the efforts in financial
inclusion by payment of benefits under various social security pension schemes viz. IGNOAPS (Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme), IGNWPS (Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme) and Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana (IGMSY Scheme), a Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) Maternity Benefit Scheme. Such payments are being effected either through money orders or Post Office Saving Bank accounts. Thus encouraging Post Offices to remain involved in the activities of rural financial inclusion will ensure sustainable all round development of the rural population. The above features make postal network the most effective vehicle of rural development. In the study area, post office facility which includes facilities like telegraph office and post & telegraph, 306 villages constituting 25.9 per cent of villages have been provided with this facility within the village. Out of total population in the district, 45.1 per cent population has post office facility. 874 villages do not have this facility in the village itself. Of these majority i.e. 773 have this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., another 124 villages avail it at a distance of 5-10 kms. In the remaining 17 villages habitants have to travel a distance of more than 10 kms.

Rural telecommunication has been an important area on which the government has been giving sustained emphasis since seventies. Lots of incentives have been made available to the rural areas to bridge the gap between urban and rural areas in terms of access to telephones. It is believed that as telephones gets cheaper and accessible to rural areas, it would definitely initiate tremendous transformation in various aspects of rural society, particularly in the rural economy. The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has expressed concern over the low telephone penetration in the rural area. The Authority noted that despite several attempts over

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the last more than 10 years, the gap between penetration of telephony in rural (1.7 per cent) and urban (19.7 per cent) areas is widening and measures need to be taken to reduce this gap.

In the past decade, India has seen a veritable telecommunications revolution which is the result of effective regulatory and policy environment coupled with an enterprising telecommunications sector made of both public and private service providers. The growth of rural teledensity is remarkable as it has risen to 36% as on 30th August 2011 from a mere 1.7% in 2004. In fact, today rural teledensity is growing at a much faster rate than urban teledensity. At the beginning of 2011, there were 282.29 million rural connections (most of which are wireless), as compared to a mere 4.84 million (only landline) phones in the year 2000. Practically all growth has come from mobile telephony and the private sector has played a huge role in this expansion. With an average family size of five, it may be assumed that almost every rural household owns a mobile phone. If not, then there are public Calling offices and universal service obligation fund sponsored village public Telephones in almost every inhabited census village in the country. Telecom connectivity constitutes an important part of the effort to upgrade the rural infrastructure. Under the Bharat nirman programme (Bnp), Rural Teledensity of at least 40% by 2014, Broadband Coverage of all 2, 50,000 village panchayats and setting up Common service Centers at panchayat level by 2012 are proposed to be achieved. Under this programme it will be ensured that 66,822 revenue villages in the country, which have not yet been provided with a Village Public Telephone (VPT), should be covered. Out of the above villages, connectivity in 14,183 remote and far flung villages will be provided through digital

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55 Kurukshtetra, A journal on rural development vol.60, no.3, Jan 2011.
satellite phone terminals. Assistance for both capital as well as operational expenditure for these VPTs will be met out of the Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF)\textsuperscript{56}.

Ever since the government has opened the telecom market for private players, rural India has been on the private operator’s radars. Most private telecom operators claim that they are providing rural connectivity at its best, but they have not done enough. Service providers, though claiming to provide rural telephony in adjoining villages, have installed towers on highways and only those villages that come in the periphery are connected. That’s the definition of rural telephony for private operators. The major constraints for the low rural teledensity have been lack of investible resources, non availability of appropriate technology combined with difficult geographical terrain and continental size of the country. In the study area 409 or 34.7per cent villages have been provided with the telephone facility. Out of the total rural population, 9, 53,591or 44.8 percent have telephone facility. There are 771 villages in the district which are without telephone facility. Of these 268 avail this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., 286 at a distance of 5-10 kms. and remaining 217 have to travel a distance of more than 10 kms.

**DRINKING WATER**

Historically, drinking water supply in the rural areas in India has been outside the government’s sphere of influence. Community-managed open wells, private wells, ponds and small-scale irrigation reservoirs have often been the main traditional sources of rural drinking water. The first government-installed rural water supply schemes were implemented in the 1950s as part of the Government policy to provide basic drinking water supply facilities to the rural population. Since then, the

\textsuperscript{56} www.archive.india.gov.in/sectors/rural/index.php?id=7
involvement of Government has increased with corresponding decrease in the role of communities in the rural water supply sector. The Government of India’s role in the rural drinking water supply sector started in 1972-73 with the launch of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) to assist the States/ Union Territories for providing potable water to the rural population. Earlier (1972-1986,) the major thrust of the RWS sector development was to ensure provision of adequate drinking water supply to the rural community through a centralized Public Health Engineering System. The second generation programme started with the launching of Technology Mission (1986-87), later renamed as Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission in 1991-92. The importance of water quality, appropriate technology intervention, human resource development support and other related activities were introduced in the Rural Water Supply (RWS) sector. The third generation programme started in 1999-2000 when new initiatives through Sector Reform Projects was introduced to involve community in planning, implementation and management of RWS schemes, later scaled up as Swajal dhara in 2002. Inspite of collective effort of the State and Central Governments and huge investment of about Rs 72,600 crore in the rural water supply sector, under both State and Central Plans upto 2009 since the beginning of the planned era of development, the objective of providing adequate potable drinking water to the rural community at a convenient location is yet to be achieved. In the study area drinking water facility is available in1178 or 99.8 per cent villages. Out of total population 99.99 per cent have got drinking water facility. Out of total households 473,975 of the district 87.7 per cent of the households have improved drinking water facility. The proportion of rural and urban area drinking water facility is 85.6 and 93.3 per cent.

ELECTRICITY

Rural electrification is the backbone of rural economy and a basic input for rapid rural development. It is also the main infrastructure for ensuring speedy growth of the agriculture sector and agro based industrial structure in rural areas. India is home to 35% of the global population without access to electricity (IEA, 2002) and only 44% of all rural Indian households are electrified. As per 2001 Census, 6.02 crore households use electricity as the primary source of lighting out of a total of 13.8 crore households in the country. Government of India from time to time has launched a number of schemes for electrification of rural areas in the country. These include: -

Minimum Needs Programme: It was started in the Fifth Five Year Plan and rural electrification was one of the components of the programme. Under this programme, funds were provided as central assistance to the states in the form of grants and loans. The areas covered under MNP for the purposes of rural electrification were remote, far flung and difficult villages with low load potential. From 2004-05 onwards the scheme was being merged with the new scheme Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY).

Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY): This scheme was launched in 2000-01 but rural electrification component was added only in the next year i.e. 2001-02. It was being implemented by State Electricity Boards/Electricity Departments/Power Utilities which were designated as implementing agencies. Difficulties were faced under this scheme on account of no clear cut earmarking of percentage of funds for

rural electrification. The states had discretion of utilizing the funds for different components as per their own priorities. At least one dalit/tribal basti was to be included in each un-electrified village being taken up for electrification. This condition was relaxed if there were no dalit/tribal basti left to be electrified in that village. In the states where 100% villages were already electrified, the implementation agencies could take up dalit/tribal bastis and if all the dalit/tribal bastis had also been electrified, they could take up electrification of hamlets or load intensification.

**Kutir Jyoti Scheme**: This programme was launched in 1988-89 for extending single point light connections to households of rural poor families below the poverty line including harijans and adivasi families. However, it was merged into programme for "Accelerated Electrification of One Lakh villages and One Crore households" in May, 2004. In the Kutir Jyoti Yojana, the outlay used to be allocated amongst the states based on two indicators i.e. size of rural population below the poverty line and level of village electrification obtained in the state in a manner that higher weightage is given to states with larger population of rural poor and with low electrification level. According to an evaluation study set up by Ministry of Power, one of the reasons for low willingness on the part of beneficiaries to go for this programme was un-reliable and poor quality of supply in states like Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It has been found that because of these reasons beneficiary did not pay the bills as there was no use of the connection.

**Accelerated Rural Electrification Programme (AREP)**: The scheme was introduced in the year 2003-04 under which interest subsidy of 4% was to be provided on loans availed by state governments/power utilities from financial institutions like Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), Power Finance Corporation (PFC), Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), National Agricultural Bank and Rural
Development (NABARD) etc. for carrying out rural electrification programme. The assistance was limited to electrification of un-electrified villages, electrification of hamlets/dalit bastis/tribal villages and electrification of households in villages through both conventional and non-conventional sources of energy.

**Accelerated Electrification of One lakh villages and One crore households:** In 2004-05, Government of India launched a scheme "Accelerated Electrification of One lakh villages and One crore households" by merging interest subsidy scheme AREP (Accelerated Rural Electrification Programme) and Kutir Jyoti Programme. Under this scheme, there was a provision for providing 40% capital subsidy for rural electrification projects and the balance as loan assistance on soft terms from REC.

**Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidutikaran Yojana (RGGVY) 2005:** Government of India under the National Electricity Policy has taken a decision to electrify all villages and provide accessibility to all households in rural areas over a period of four years. To ensure that electricity reaches all villages and rural households, the provision has been made to create Rural Electricity Distribution Backbone (REQB) at the block level besides covering BPL households in rural areas. Since this programme envisaged to cover un-electrified villages and households, all villages, including bordering villages were expected to be covered. In order to achieve the above objective, Government of India conceived and launched "Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana" with the requirement of Rs 160 billion of which Rs 50 billion has been provided for Tenth Plan to cover 50,000 villages. The scheme will be implemented through the Rural Electrification Corporation (REC). This scheme merges the Minimum Needs Programme for rural electrification, and scheme of "Accelerated Electrification of One lakh villages and one crore households".
In Aligarh district, 92.6 per cent villages have electricity facility, in which highest per cent has been observed in Chandaus and Lodha C.D. blocks. The condition of electricity in the rural areas of study area is found to be highly erratic.

FINANCE

Agriculture and rural sectors play an important role in India’s overall development strategy in terms of income, employment generation and poverty alleviation. Great significance has, therefore, been accorded to developing appropriate institutions and mechanisms for catering to the credit requirements of these sectors. Government of India promoted Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) through the RRBs Act of 1976 to bridge the gap in the flow of credit to the rural poor. The RRBs have a special place in the multi-agency approach adopted to provide agricultural and rural credit in India. These banks are state-sponsored, regionally-based and rural-oriented. Besides the RRBs, commercial and co-operative banks have been catering to the credit requirements of the rural sector. In 1982, to consolidate the various arrangements made by the RBI to promote/supervise institutions and channel credit to rural areas, the National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) was established. Rural areas suffer from insufficient access to financial services. This is mainly due to the requirement of asset deeds, identity and income proofs among other documents by banks and financial institutions and absence of enough branches in these areas. Out of 1180 inhabited villages in the district only 5.2 per cent villages have been provided with bank facility and 6.1 per cent with agricultural credit societies. Out of total rural population of 21, 27,592 persons in the district, 2, 84,722 or 13.4 per cent and 2, 84,055 or 13.4 per cent have been provided with the facility of bank and agricultural credit societies respectively. In the entire district 1,122 villages

are deprived of Commercial Bank and 1,171 of Co-operative Bank. Of these 1,122 villages which are deprived of Commercial Banks, 513 villages avail this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., 459 between 5-10 kms. and the remaining 150 at a distance of more than 10 kms. Regarding Co-operative Banks out of 1,171 villages 231 villages avail this facility at a distance of less than 5 kms., 479 at a distance of 5-10 kms. and remaining 461 at a distance of more than 10 kms. 1,108 villages do not have agricultural credit societies. This facility to 491 villages is available at a distance of less than 5 kms., 466 at a distance of 5-10 kms. and the remaining 151 at a distance of more than 10 kms. In Aligarh district out of a total 1180 inhabited villages, overwhelming 423 have a population of 1000-1999 persons. Of these, 6 villages (1.4 per cent) have Bank facility and 22 villages (5.2 per cent) have been provided with the agricultural credit societies. Out of 312 villages, which fall in the population range of 500-999 persons, 3 villages (1.0 per cent) have been provided with bank facility and none of the village has agricultural credit society. 290 villages fall in population range of 2,000-4,999 persons. Of these 33 villages (11.4 per cent) have bank facilities, 33 villages (11.4 per cent) have agricultural credit societies. There are 46 villages in the district which are covered under 5,000-9,999 population range. In this range 14 villages (30.4 per cent) have bank facility, 13 villages (28.3 per cent) are having agricultural credit societies.

**MARKET**

Marketing is the pivot of economic development in rural areas. It is an essential component in income and employment generation in farm and non-farm sectors. Village economy can not be developed without effective and efficient rural marketing. Very little attention has been paid in the planning era towards the
development of rural marketing. Some of the market facilities provided by the government for the rural population have been discussed one by one.

**Public Distribution Shop or Fair Price Shop**

A public distribution shop also known as Fair Price Shop (FPS), established by Government of India, is a kind of shop in India which is used to distribute rations at a subsidized price to the poor. Locally these are known as "ration shop" and chiefly sell wheat, rice, kerosene and sugar at a price lower than the market price. For buying items from this shop one must have a ration card. These shops are operated throughout the country by joint assistance of central and state government. In the study area there is almost uniform spatial distribution of fair price shop and the poor people get wheat, rice, kerosene, and sugar at lower price but there is poor supervision of fair price shop and lack of accountability have spurred a number of middlemen who consume a good proportion of the stock meant for the poor. There is also no clarity as to which families should be included in the BPL list and which excluded. This results in the genuinely poor being excluded whilst the ineligible get several cards.

**Local Market or Haat**

Marketing has a crucial role in development of rural non-farm sector and rural haats are an integral part of the rural market system. Rural *Haat* enables small farmers /rural artisans / producers / traders to sell their agri-produces, handicrafts and other products. *Haat* encourages face to face contact between sellers and buyers, there by eliminating the middleman. Rural artisans do not have wherewithal to connect themselves to the market as they lack adequate capacity, market intelligence and negotiation skills. Provision of permanent marketing centres at Village level would
help them to bridge these inadequacies. Permanent marketing Centers will help them to promote marketing of products and will give boost socio-economic development. For strengthening rural *haat*, NABARD has decided to provide grant assistance to the *gram panchayats* for developmental construction of Rural *Haats*. The amount of grant assistance will be up to 90% of the construction cost or Rs.5.00 lakh whichever is lower. Similarly Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGYS) has taken step for setting up of *haats* for promotion of rural products at village level\(^61\).

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\(^{61}\) Guidelines for setting up haats for promotion of rural products at village, district and state levels under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, 2009.