CHAPTER VII

PANCHAYATI RAJ AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Social change refers to the modification which takes place in life pattern of people. Change is ever present in the world because change is the law of nature. Similarly, society is not at all a static phenomenon but it is dynamic entity. It is an ongoing process. Social change has occurred in all societies and at all time. Now-a-days, there are many changes in our society through panchayati raj institutions in the rural areas of Manipur in general and Thoubal District in particular. The social change in Manipur society might be regarded as the same as any social change occur in any society of the world from the view point of external and internal forces, i.e. the forces of home and abroad.

People themselves have undergone a change, acquiring new knowledge of the world around them, new production, experience, new centrally sponsored schemes etc. Manipur society had change in all directions of livelihood through panchayati raj institutions particularly in the rural areas of Manipur. The panchayati raj investigates into the secular aspects of all round development which have had evidential impetus in bringing certain changes in the social milieu in Thoubal District. Panchayati raj and social change are the two synonymous words.

Social changes which are brought by panchayati raj are related with political justice, social justice and economic justice. The election of panchayat raj institutions was based on non-political parties. Prior to Manipur Panchayati
Raj Act, 1994, the election of panchayats was not held timely. Now, the election is conducted timely, by the State Election Commission. The State Election Commission was enforced since 1997 election in Thoubal District. To elect local leaders, such as pradhans, members regularly by the State Election Commission smoothly through universal adult franchise. The Pradhans take any responsibility for the overall development of village's level in Thoubal District as a Chairman of various committee, such as committee of education, committee of health and sanitation and any welfare committees at the village levels as examples phouldey primary school committee, Haoreibi Mayai primary school committee, Haoreibi Shalamkhong lower primary school committee, Haoribi Lairobakhong primary school committee, Haoreibi Chandamkhong primary school committee, Thoubal Wangmataba primary school committee etc. Even they decided to arbitrate petty cases namely Nupi Khainaba (divorce) Angang Chakthak (Baby brought-up expenditure) and petty money suits in the civil side a simple hurt and affray in the criminal side. They sometimes decided adultery cases by levying a fine of Rs. 50/- from the culprit and paying the amount to the husband of the women. It leads to people directly participated to the panchayati raj and rural development. This problem was happening frequently in the villages of Khekman, Moijing, Nungel, Athoukhong, Oinam, Leiprakpam, Haoreibi, Chaobok, Kiyam Siphai, Sabaltongba Nongangkhong under Thoubal C.D. Block and Kakching Khulen part-1, Kakching Khulen part-II, Irengband Kakching Wairi-I, Keirak, Laphutpat under Kakching C.D. Block.
Social justice cannot be established without equal opportunity. To bring all the units of society on an equal footing, everyone should have adequate opportunity. But mere granting of equal opportunity does not lead to social justice. Equal opportunity means providing adequate conditions. The Indian Constitution provides special facilities and opportunities like reservations for scheduled tribes, scheduled caste and women. This is a sharing of weaker Section in the administration of rural local bodies in Thoubal District, such as N. Angoubi Devi is the present Adhyaksha of the Thoubal Zilla Parishad. It is sometimes called remedial justice or positive discrimination. With the enactment of the Constitution Seventy-Third Amendment Act, 1992, which has come into force with effect from 20th April, 1993, State Government have prepared comprehensive State Acts on Panchayati Raj for the commitment of social justice in the State. This new Act of Panchayati Raj recommended (i) reservation of not less than one-third seats for women and also for weaker sections; such as Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, proportionate to their percentage in terms of the total population; (ii) establishment of State Election Commission for exercise of free-choice by the electorate in the Panchayati Raj Election for every five years; (iii) creation of Finance Commission in the State and devolution of power and financial resources to the Panchayati Raj Institutions enabling fullest participation of the people in the process of nation building and development. The Amendment confirms to the prevailing top down model of Indian Government in which a distant capital sees fit to ignore what
has been evaluated by the trail and error under dispensation in the attempt to regularise a new.

Under the aegis of Indian Planning, social and economic transformation have brought social upheaval due to the conflict of traditionalisation vs modernisation. This stimulated the formation of numerous programmes for social reforms. For proper execution of these programmes, decentralisation has been used as a prominent theme of rural development programmes. It laid emphasis on administrative decentralisation rather than one devolution of power for decision making among panchayati raj leaders. This has duly been recognised in the new Act of Panchayati Raj, 1992. Likewise, Thoubal District has also been taken up this new pattern of social change through panchayati raj. Actually, the panchayati raj is an instrument of change in the society. The reservation of one third seats for women and also for the weaker section, such as Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes was implemented in the sixth panchayat election which was held in Thoubal District in 1997 under the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. There are 42 gram sabhas in Thoubal District. It has 481 panchayat wards where 174 wards are reserved for women including scheduled caste and scheduled tribe respectively. The maximum number of women can participate in the panchayati raj institutions. It is one of the best indicators for social change as a social justice in Thoubal District. It is a sharing of weaker section administration in the panchayati raj institutions. There were many centrally sponsored schemes which implemented in Thoubal
District through panchayati raj institutions as a social change. For Example, functioning of the most of the Anganwadi Centres are appreciated by the villagers in Thoubal District. There are 756 ICDS centres functioning in Thoubal District under Thoubal, Kakching and Lilong ICDS Projects of which 495 members of ICDS Centres, 281 in Thoubal, 169 in Kakching and 45 in Lilong are functioning in the rural areas. Most of the centres are running in the private buildings and local club buildings. The Anganwadi Centres at the village namely Yangbi Mayai Leikai, Keirak, Nongmaikhong, Khorsantabi, Wangoo Laipham, Pangaltabi and Irengband under Kakching C.D. Block and Langathel, Samaram, Atoukhong Maning Leikai, Oinam Sawombung, Chingtham, Uyal, Wangbal, Heirok Part-III and Khekman under Thoubal C.D. Block have been constructed by the DRDA Thoubal under EAS during the year 1996-1997; possession of own Anganwadi building for running the centres is a felt need for all the villages under the two C.D. Blocks namely Thoubal CD Block and Kakching CD Blocks. However, a mass awareness programme to the people about the entitlement of children under the ICDS programme is needed to avoid the misunderstanding created among the people and ICDS workers. In some families under Leishangthem Gram Panchayat, Khangabok Gram Panchayat under Thoubal CD Block and Sora Sarikonjil, Tokpaching and Yangdong Gram Panchayats under Kakching CD Block are getting safe drinking water facilities under the scheme of Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme. Since water and sanitation plays a vital role in improving the health conditions of the villagers, particularly
women and children, the link between water and sanitation and preventive health care giving stress to the sanitary behaviour related to the use of the facilities as well as personal and household hygiene education will have been an important subject in this area.

The male-female ratio in Thoubal District is loaded against the women and according to a survey the number of women for every thousand men has declined to 927 according to 2001 census. A law reserving 33 percent in legislatures for women is still pending before parliament. It is rooted in the centuries old struggle of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. Reservation Bill of Manipur was introduced on March 13, 2006 to the Manipur Legislative Assembly. Reservation policy should not be permanent. It is a temporary means to achieve certain ends and the state as well as the Union Government can change it from time to time. Making the above observation, Okram Ibobi, the Chief Minister of Manipur said that steps were already taken the resolution bill. He further said that the bill was waiting for taking concurrence from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the necessary assent from the Governor.

The Chief Minister said that 50% is set for general, as laid down by a Supreme Court ruling which cited that quota in general should no exceed 50%, 31% for scheduled Tribe and 2% for Scheduled Caste and the remaining 17% for Other Backward Classes. The Chief Minister said that as a result of demand raised by Muslim Community demanding separate reservation for them from
the 17% reserved Other Backward Classes on the basis of being a minority
community and economic backwardness, a commission has been instituted by
government to examine the feasibility of accommodating the demand. In this
context, the Chief Minister said that the Manipur Reservation Bill would be
introduced during the assembly session. On the question of using reservation
policy at times of promotion the Chief Minister said that reservation policy at
times of promotion the Chief Minister said that reservation policy should be
temporary and should be limited to the entry level. However, he said that the
details could be discussed when the bill was introduced.

Economic justice is very relevant in Manipur Context when we look at the
poverty, unemployment and inequality prevalent in Thoubal District. Giving a
right to vote to the poor does not ensure success of a democracy. It would be
an unjust society when there is a big gap between the rich and the poor. So,
there should be equality not only in political life but also economic life. People
should have equal opportunity to acquire wealth. Without economic equality,
political equality will be meaningless. Since 1952, the Government has started
many programmes such as Jawahar Rozgar Yojna, National Agricultural
Extension Service, High Yielding Varieties programme, Employment Guarantee
Scheme, Minimum Needs programme, National Rural Employment programme,
National Seed Programme, Rural landless Employment Guarantee programme,
Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme etc. to give relief to the rural poor
in Thoubal District. It was based on non-profit grass root level. It could
construct rural infrastructure, such as, road construction, school building construction and repairing upto the primary levels, water supply facilities, agricultural activities etc. The Community Development Programme was set up on 2nd October, 1952 on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi in Thoubal District for the first time in Manipur. This is a unique development of Thoubal District compared with other districts of Manipur regarding the panchayati raj and rural development. While admitting that non-release of utilisation certificates for ongoing projects and scheme taken up under Central Government funding have led to the slackening of development activities, Okram Ibobi Singh, the Chief Minister of Manipur maintained that the State’s performance in this respect has improved considerably in the last couple of years. He admitted that the State government’s failure to submit utilisation certificates for implementation of centrally funded schemes. Due to acute financial crunch two years back, State government could not meet State share requirements for various projects, and as a result there were delays in timely issue of funds utilisation certificates. However, along with the gradual improvement of the State’s financial position since last two years, the projects and schemes under central funding have been given priority and their progress is being strictly mentioned. Altogether 58 projects or schemes have been taken up under Central funding in the state with the total Central share of Rs. 548.48 crores in 1998-99, of which, so far 14 projects have been completed and the other 44 are in various stages of progress. Within the last two years, out of a total of Rs. 378.77 crores released
by the Centre, an amount of Rs. 316.77 crores have been utilised. The State government has already earmarked Rs. 42 crores\(^4\) to clear the State's matching share for various schemes and projects so that requisition of next instalment of funding for the utilisation certificates.

Dr. Manmohan Singh, the Prime Minister of India launched the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme on 2nd February, 2006 at Antapur District in Andhra Pradesh. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 marked a paradigm shift from all earlier and existing wage employment programmes as it is an act, not just a scheme. It provided that the law was to ensure at least 100 days local employment in a fiscal year to every rural household. Its minimum wage is Rs. 80 per day. For the first phase, there were 200 districts in 26 states of India for implementing the above programme by the Planning Commission on certain criteria of backwardness. The district selected includes 23 in Bihar, 20 in Jharkhand, 13 in Andhra Pradesh, 7 in Assam, 1 in Manipur, 11 in Chhattisgarh, 18 in Madhya Pradesh, 22 in Uttar Pradesh, 19 in Orissa, 12 in Maharashtra etc. He further said that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme would be extended to the whole of nation near in future. The Tamenglong District is one of the first district in Manipur for implementing this programme because of most backward district in Manipur. The Government of Manipur is trying to implement this programme in Tamenglong District. The Central Government has given Rs. 25 lakhs to the government of Manipur for implementing this programme to the above district. This programme
is implemented by the panchayati raj institutions implementing agency. There is no panchayati raj institutions in the hill districts of Manipur so that programe is going to be implemented by the District Authorities in Tamenglong District, Manipur. In order to implement such programe, there is also a Committee which is known as District Scheme Implementing Committee of which, the Chief Secretary is the Chairman.

Likewise, this programe shall be implemented in Thoubal District near in future phase by phase which is the national policy of the wage employment programe. The Government of Manipur must devolve the powers and responsibility to the panchayati raj institutions so that the Thoubal District could harvest the fruit of proper implementation of overall programmes of the panchayati raj and rural development. In order to implement such programe in Thoubal District, this district may become a model district in Manipur.
NOTES and REFERENCES

1 Personal interview with Md. Tomba Village level worker of Thoubal C.D. Block

2 I meet Md. Abdul Hekim of Phoudel, Social Worker at his residence.

3 Personal interview with S. Indramani Upper Division Clerk, Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Thoubal.

CONCLUSION

In this work I have made an attempt to study the nature of panchayati raj and rural development particularly in the Thoubal District. The identification of the beneficiaries has been made the responsibility of poorly paid village level workers. As a result of their low status, they cannot suppress the pressure of the influential group of people who try to get the benefits of the centrally sponsored schemes. Moreover, there is also political interference in the selection of beneficiaries in the villages. Thus, the poor are left behind. This problem is found in the case study of the implementation of centrally sponsored schemes in Thoubal District. Corruption destroys the vitality of the poor villages. So far as the old administrative system was concerned, it was mainly concerned with the maintenance function of the state, viz. regulation, tax, revenue collection and maintenance of law and order. Today, the logic development process is, however, different and as a result, it is based on the process of the social development. With the attainment of independence, major priority is given towards the process of the rural development through the role of responsible bureaucracy. As a part of national objective basing on the socialistic pattern of society, the state of Manipur has also appeared to exist the democratic ways of social development in the concerned rural areas. The task of the rural development is being entrusted to the respective bureaucrats and the Block Development Officer as an administrator of the community development has recalled a direct responsibility towards the functioning of the programme of the rural development.

In early days, Manipur was having some forms of panchayat both in the hills and valleys as different names, traditional panchayats as we called them.
In the meantime Khangjeng which was old pattern of panchayat system in Thoubal District. The modern panchayat system was first introduced in Manipur in the year, 1960 by adopting U.P. Panchayat Act, 1947. Panchayati Raj Institutions in Manipur have not been able to function properly to the desired extent due to lack of adequate authority and resources. The transfer of power and responsibilities to these bodies have not been upto the desired level inspite of State Government’s earnest effort. This is mainly due to the lack of State resources. However, efforts have been made to involve the panchayati raj bodies in the implementation of all rural development programmes in general and the poverty alleviation programmes in particular in the State. The gram panchayats are involved fully in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes. But it can not reach to the grass root level of the rural areas. This is mainly due to improper function of the gram sabha. The gram sabha meetings are not held at the time of the solution of the beneficiaries of poverty alleviation programmes. The beneficiaries are selected through in the gram panchayat meetings only. So we cannot select the right person from the grassroot level. The role of the Pradhan is very important to the grass root level of the panchayati raj. He not only must keep the guidelines of the centrally sponsored schemes but also must focus the special package which is bringing for the rural masses. Generally all the funds of centrally sponsored scheme of Thoubal District was misused by the elected members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions as well as drained to the insurgent elements.

This study has grown out of the major concern particularly to analyse the problems of the roles of politics and bureaucracy towards development in the rural areas, with special reference to Thoubal District which has launched the various programmes for the rural development since the inception of its
independence. The main aim of this effort is to provide a greater understanding about the relationship between the Panchayati Raj Institutions and bureaucracy namely Block Development Officer at the block level and Chief Executive Officer at the district level as the important administrator within the framework of the community development block. Today, the State Government has laid down many beautiful plans and schemes for the rural areas, but the crucial part has been of their implementation and the success of this implementation depends on a responsible bureaucrat. So to explore the content of such orientations, it is concerned with the roles of the Block Development Officer as a bureaucrat at the grass root level and the Chief Executive Officer at the district level.

The data for the present study are based on the survey and questionnaires and collected mainly from a selected region of the Thoubal District of Manipur which consists under the preview of the Block Development Officer. This has become the reason why the Block Development Officers are chosen in the sense that they are local administrators and also the vital functionaries of the community development administration. Among the administrators, in the context of development, the local administrators are very significant because the government and people could meet together for their development administration for which the government has launched to initiate development change in the rural areas. So I attempted to provide relevance to my study by discussing the roles of the Block Development Officer of the block and the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad. The roles of the Block Development Officer is at the block level and the Chief Executive Officer in the Zilla Parishad are very important. The Chief Executive Officer must be the ex-officio Secretary of the General Standing Committee and the Finance, Audit and
Planning Committee of the Zilla Parishad. The Chief Executive Officer must be entitled to attend the meetings of all the Standing Committees.

I begin with the historical development of panchayati raj and rural development through various stages at different level. Major attention is made to analyse the conditions of the bureaucrats right from the ancient period down to the British regime. An attempt is also made to analyse the basic needs of the rural development which has become the centre of study within the framework of administration. Through the institution of national planning and its policies towards a socialistic pattern of society, the district has given a significant role in the socio-economic development particularly for the rural masses.

As a part of rural development through the administrative process, I study the position and power of the bureaucrats at the base of hierarchy. Besides this, the study of his dual role is also included. Since government is not run by the ministers only, needs the advice of the experienced persons. It also studies the action and interaction between the politician and the bureaucrats in order to realise real and exact relationship which are now useful for a proper functioning of the administration. A good administration is established on the basis of mutual and co-operative relationship between the bureaucrats and the politicians.

I have already proposed for the successful working of panchayati raj in Manipur. All the members of the panchayati raj must be properly educated on panchayati raj and its role in our parliamentary democracy and in our economic planning and process. There must be proper training to the members of panchayati raj institution regarding their powers and functions. Adequate remunerations and allowances must be given to all the members. The
concerned ministry or Department must know the responsibleness and responsiveness of their duties.

A system of liberal bureaucracy is highly needed, because, every aspect of development involves the target of acceptance, trust and confidence of the bureaucrats. The administrators should know certain aspects like political aspiration, economic interest, a sense of dedication with an attitude of condescension towards the villagers. Most of the bureaucracy in this state have a tendency of serving their work for the welfare of the masses.

A behavioural analysis of the Block Development Officer is also given basing on certain factors viz. rural background, parental occupation, personal or socio-economic basis, job-satisfaction, personality variables along with the practical analysis of experience. This study of practical experience of the respondents become significant in moulding the rural transformation at various developmental levels. In keeping with this view, a picture of rural developmental administration system has also been depicted in the light of rural transformation. Certain scheme like cooperative efforts through the structure of governmental reform is also taken up in this study as a part of the rural re-organisation. People particularly the rural farmers can get benefit as support of their production through this cooperative efforts.

In any administrative organisation, the idea of relationship has become the major focal unit of study. In the light of this fact, I have attempted to study the role of relationship between the bureaucrats and the politicians at the rural level. Since the political scene is largely dominated by the people residing in the rural areas, the interest of the villagers has to be seen first. Often I came across the interaction between the bureaucrats and the politicians as a result of the existence of double administrative systems in the villages. Nevertheless, the
rural areas is not free from party politics. Although the bureaucrats have to play a key role in the administration, in most cases, they are seemed to be exploited by the political bosses for their ends. In view of this, an attempt has been made to study the process of relationship between the bureaucracy and the political heads. Above all a thorough study has been made regarding their role perceptions as partners in the functioning of the panchayati raj administrative structure.

For the improvement aspect, it is necessary to improve the morale of the staff which is at a low level in Thoubal district of Manipur. It should try to improve the supervision of the work of Extension Officers, Village Level Workers and other field staff within the official at the block level. There should be a communication channel between the levels of the various developmental departments and it can help in gathering the impact of the development programme without fear of retribution. It also should develop an effective system of evaluation based on results in the field, results which will be verified to a great extent. There should be a system of giving rewards in order to produce good workers in the village areas. The relationship between the politicians and the bureaucrats should be developed in a proper way in the same that both must appreciate the important role and must share responsibility without having any resentment. There should be a close relationship between the extension staff and the villagers and corruption must be abolished in the interest of the public. On the other hand Government organisations and Non-governmental organisation must go hand in hand. They are not in the water tight compartment. They must require co-operation and co-ordination.
Broadly speaking, a smooth administration can only be established when the politicians and bureaucrats work together with a team spirit, otherwise the notion of rural development and welfare state will never be realised. The politicians should also give up the practice of interference in the affairs of day-to-day administration. On the other hand, the bureaucrats should not misunderstand the elected representatives of the masses if they give suggestion for the improvement of rural administration.

With regard to the functioning of the office of the bureaucrat, the administrative structure of block has been included in the study to realise the different subordinate officials who would assist him in the administration. Here major priority is given to construct an informal relationship between the staffs. Besides, the cause of inefficiency and weakness in block administrative process has also been studied dealing with the aspects of fallacy of paper work, low-morale, political interference and lack of co-ordination. Among these aspects, major attempt is made towards the study of political interference. The bureaucrats in most cases express their view that, due to political interference, there is no efficiency in the administration. So, the politicians should not disturb the work of bureaucracy.

Social and political perception of the Block Development Officers as bureaucrats are observed in eleven-dimensional categories such as democraticism, hierarchical barriers, cynicism, power decentralization, skepticism, functions and dysfunctions, efficiency, rapport, sense of dedication, removal of corruption along with trust. Democraticism implies the conscience and faith in democratic values and institutions. Inhibitions within the hierarchy and perception of the superiors being status conscious correlated with cynicism. Power decentralisation is correlated with the desire for decentralisation of
administrative powers and responsibilities from upper to lower reaches of administration. Lack of faith in departmental officials and lack of organizational ability to give rewards to its members formed the dimension of skepticism. Dysfunction is correlated with the politicization of civil services and the negative functioning of the bureaucrats. Efficiency consisted in the perceptions of efficiency and efficient functioning of the civil servants. Rapport is with the perception of decreasing status distinctions and harmony in bureaucrat–citizen relationship. After all, the sense of dedication as an important dimensional category indicates the desirousness of sacrificial mood to the developmental work for the welfare of the masses. The removal of corruption perceives the existence of justice in the society, and the aspect of trust also correlates with the idea of belief to improve the task of administration. In fact the perceptions of the Block Development Officers are taken as significant in the dimensional category of democratism, power-decentralisation, trust and rapport, hierarchical barriers. Moreover major priority is given on power decentralisation. Because it helps us to know the exact importance of decentralisation in the rural administration. It also further discusses the strong impact on rural development through the process of decentralisation. On the other hand, the Chief Executive Officer is taken as significant role in the Zilla Parishad, such as, no-confidence motion, development planning.

I also devote to analyse the relationship orientation between bureaucracy and the people. Today a viable bureaucratic system has become a vital factor in moulding the society. The administrators in a right perspective, have to extend their responsibility of imposing on them the quality of cooperation in the affairs of administration. The aspect of favouritism, political pressure, economic pressure along with the aspect of affectivity has retarded
the smooth relationship. The process of deviancy of people may again makes
the unfavourable nature of relationship. On the other hand personal qualities
such as honesty, politeness, tolerance and affectionateness have to be
improved. The panchayati raj and rural development are bold experiments in
bringing democracy and development to the door-step of majority of men. They
are very important components of the whole system. Today since major priority
is given to the bureaucrats the problem of the administration is to be effective
at the lowest level. Although the government has framed many beautiful plans
and schemes, yet proper care must be taken at the implementation stage as to
receive the goal of development. Therefore this study shows certain criteria to
turn research attention on the local administrators from the higher civil service.

The role of the bureaucrats like the Block Development Officers and the
Chief Executive Officers rise in significance with the creation of every new
public institution. For bringing better development in the rural areas, such
responsible bureaucrats must be giving strong efforts into the spirit of the
development system. They must be provided with more impressive position to
enable to carry out the various development tasks for the masses. In fact, the
tasks at the Zilla Parishad level are largely depended on such efficient and
genuine bureaucrats.

Women by nature are generally found to be hard working, sincere and
dedicated to any cause starting from their own family. If given a chance
through proper motivation, education and training, they would come forward
and participate in the socio-economic activities. Their participation is essential
in all spheres of life for a simple reason that they constitute nearly 50% of the
total population. The process of development would be hampered if the
participation of half of the human resources is ignored. We need optimum utilization of human resources to speed up the process of development.

Secondly, the human resources available in women in the form of knowledge, experience, skill, creativity, aptitude, ability, capabilities, attitude, etc. in different fields should not be ignored. They should be given due recognition and acceptance. In order to explore the potential resources of women, we need the support of a formal or informal organisation through which they can reach the outside environment to bring a better socio-economic change. The Meetei women had no less significant role to play as had been evident in any other societies of other countries of the world. Therefore, the Panchayati Raj Institutions are the only means for women, specially the downtrodden women to come up and participate in the socio-economic affairs. There is a need to build up sense of confidence, self-esteem and self-worth among women for productive participation in all socio-economic spheres of life. The social status of women is closely related to her economic status. If we look deeply into the three aspects of women empowerment, i.e., social empowerment, economic empowerment and political empowerment, we find them as closely interrelated and interdependent. Hence, there is a strong need to empower women in all aspects for bringing a better society.

The panchayati raj and rural development movements are to be the two solid pillars on which a prosperous, dynamic and genuinely democratic rural social system. The panchayati raj is also claimed as a real democratic political apparatus which would bring the masses into active political participation and also would establish a genuine political control from below from the vast majority of the weaker power sections of rural masses. It is the organs of self-government at their respective levels. The functioning of panchayati raj has to
be judged by the progress made towards achieving these vital objectives. To bring about the direct and willing participation of the villagers in development the planning process has to start from the village panchayati raj institutions were expected to give the lead in this matter. The success of panchayati raj has to be judged by the event to which the objectives set for it have been achieved. The study highlights the importance of social changes relating with political justice, social justice and economic justice. It is creating a socio-economic and political structure, reinforcing ways and means to participating democracy. To achieve the goal of distributive justice, the problem of rural service delivery system for weaker sections has been studied in the changing political system of the New Act of Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. It is sharing of weaker section in the administration of rural local bodies.

To achieve the goal of welfare society, the ideology of women administration in the Panchayati Raj Institutions calls for to obey rule of law and evolve a democratic government at the grassroots. Rural potentials for growth and development can be sustained only in the preservation of social democracy and strengthening the local political institutions. Social change in its dynamic dimensions is a unique concept to the Third Worlds Countries. In fact, it is an network of harmonization of two competing values freedom and social equality. Panchayats and rural development in Manipur are very old concept of democracy, wherein people associate together as human beings, on the basis of equality, for the promotion of economic interest with a social content. Panchayati Raj Institutions are accepted to take up the overall view of the economic and social well being of the people, while the co-operatives have to meet economic requirements. Truly speaking the Panchayat is to help in the day to day administration of the village and co-operatives is to manage its
economic affairs. It is a perfect socio-economic cum-administrative order, wherein, with the full centralization of the power. We can achieve the objective of making the society as one organic whole as a social change. For economic growth and social justice, Panchayati Raj Institutions should take steps for different promoting and strengthening cooperative societies within their areas as agriculture production programmes can be implemented only if credit and supplies are provided by co-operatives. So far, nobody has not taken up such a research work of this theme of Thoubal District. I ventured to take up to task this theme. I also confronted many difficult problems regarding procuring of data and materials due to frequent inundation and burning of the panchayat office. I would like to propose that the Government must honestly devolve the powers and responsibility to the Panchayati Raj Institutions so that Thoubal District can become a model of democratic decentralisation in Manipur.