Chapter V

Power Politics in Panchayati Raj and Rural Development

There is a misunderstanding in between bureaucracy or political leaders and the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj System in Manipur in general and Thoubal District in particular and it has its impact in the district too. There is a delay or slow pace in its implementation. All the power politics is apathetic towards the panchayati raj and rural development in Manipur in general and in Thoubal District in particular.

Conflicting trend in between power politics and the Panchayati Raj:

In Manipur, eighty percent of the total land covers rural area. All the districts except the central district remain a predominantly rural area though developed in some other aspects. But today, certain changes prevail with the forces of modernization. This is the impact of periodical elections, new techniques, social and political reforms along with uniform administrative system. After the establishment of a two-tier Panchayat Raj structure, all local level programmes are generally looked after by the Panchayat bodies. At the same time, the medium of development ranging from the Gram Sevaks of the Block to the Chief Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad has been carried out efficiently. As we know after the independence, the villages have become the hot bed of politics. In Manipur, the major area belonged to villages; so the levers of political powers should be in the hands of the villagers. The political rights of the people of Manipur seem to be unaffected by caste and creed. The villagers of the Thoubal District are conscious of their political power and at the same time, they are regularly and consciously making use of their right. For instance, the whole people including women, old and sick, can show remarkable enthusiasm during voting. At every polling station electors were standing in long queues waiting their turn to use their franchise in Thoubal District at every election. The poll percentage of the election in Thoubal District is higher than other districts of Manipur. Many problems were more happening
at every elections such as unknown persons snatched away the ballot boxes, mob of the public, force voting, boot capturing, destroy the ballot box, mass public violence and group clash. Rural politics has still been playing a very significant role in overall politics of the State. A study of rural political life is an important aspect towards the study of understanding state politics as well as national politics. It is helpful in the analysis of state politics where the village happens to be a primary political unit. We may now further study the rural politics under certain aspects as follows.

So far as the official administration of rural areas are concerned, there are official machinery and autonomous agencies. The autonomous agencies include such as Gram Sabha, Gram panchayat and Panchayati Courts i.e. Nyaya panchayat. Now the Nyaya panchayat is abolished. The panchayat looks after general administration. The main functions of the panchayat include such as the maintenance of roads, water supply, cleanliness, cottage industry, development works, education, medical aid etc. The Pradhan of the Gram Panchayat will preside over both Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha and he is assisted by Up-Pradhan. Regarding the dispensation of justice, it is entrusted to Panchayat courts whose judgments are final. If the cases are not finalized, then the matters are enforced to higher courts of the State. Under the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act 1975, the Manipur Government has been empowered to look after the affairs of the panchayats. The administration is given to the Panchayat secretary at the Gram Panchayat level who must be a government employee. The government is also authorised to suspend or dissolve a panchayat if it is proved corrupt. As a part of this study, Ram Nath Sharma in his study on "Indian Rural Sociology" has pointed out that "The government has the right to enquire about any matters related to Panchayats administration"\(^1\). Today the rural administration in the State involved in general national administration. A village is part of a block and through block, there is a district. Besides, members of Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha and Nyaya
Panchayat, the village administration is also connected with and under village level worker, Block Development Officer and Deputy Collector. There is another official which is so-called Ziladar who collects land revenue from villagers. Regarding the measurement of land-holdings, there is the government employee known as chain-man. Thus, we have a sort of double administrative system in villages i.e. villages are ruled by official on the one hand by the elected representatives on the other. However, it is to be noted that such system as just sited above may invite a host of problems in bringing development in the rural areas in Thoubal District. Indeed, officials of both sides should give cooperation to each other so that there could have proper functioning in the rural administration. According to A.R. Desai, the following criteria can help us to judge the village administration. (i) How far the administrative machinery is responsive to the opinion and wishes of the people? (ii) How far the people are associated with it and participate in the functioning? and (iii) How far it is cheap, efficient and sensitive to the problems of the people 2.

As the basic foundation of political strength is in the villages of Thoubal District each political party tries to dominate the village politics and serving the villagers to its fold. The main political parties like the Congress, the Communists, the Bhartatiya Janata Party and other local parties have their local ramifications in the villages. However, the Congress Party including the local parties have maximum influence in the village in Thoubal District. In fact, the Congress being the oldest party in India enjoys advantage in many respects. There are many political leaders in Thoubal District who became the Chief Minister of Manipur. So far as the situations of political behaviour in villages are concerned. It is found that many political parties including independent party are trying to dominate power in the local politics. The politics of groupism is haunting around certain factional leaders. In the rural areas of Thoubal District, political behaviour of all kinds of political party have been depicted to a great
extent. While some parties are trying to gain power through constitutional and valid means, others also are trying to gain it through illegal, and immoral means. Sometimes the political leaders particularly among the workers meet violent struggle at the time of supporting their political power. However, with the spread of democracy violence in the rural areas somehow rather becomes less and as a result people have started to recognize the value of peaceful competition in the election. In course of time, the propagation of democratic norms have become the best means of introducing self-government in villages of Thoubal District.

The supremacy of rising political bosses in the local bodies has surely created some difficulties for the administration. My study confirms that every developmental practice at the local level has been politicised as the politicians are closed to the grass roots, and often concerned with local problems. At the same time, they are also interested in keeping themselves in power. As R.C. Joshi has pointed out that "a local politician is indeed a small fry. All that he has succeeded in catching a block of votes becomes as a leader of a big party once installed in powers, the politicians may be good for local development efforts on he can block progress to keep himself in office as he is unwilling to take unpopular decision such as taking the rural rich for development schemes, and the administration is thus faced with a difficulty and it thus leads to the ideas that politicians decide and administration obeys in the Panchayati Raj". He also further stated that, by giving wide opportunity for participation at local level through election to Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat etc. the development process is made more difficult, and the conflicts based on party factions are not helpful to the development process and it is highly unlikely that administration can play an effective role at all in such a situation. If political participation in development produces political conflict, it is unlikely that the political party might give any effective support to the administrators for the basis of development. So politicians at the local level are more likely to
choose soft options and depend on state government, and their distribution to build their own prestige and authority. Secondly, it is found that the villagers have low respect for the Gram Sevak or the so-called Village Level Workers. Perhaps there is often interference by non-officials in executing the official works. As a matter of fact, there is no effort to mobilize the retired engineers, agriculture officers, health and cooperative officers, teachers and progressive farms to give proper guidance to young Village Level Workers in the villages. However, it is possible to plan practical work on the farms for all young and old officers and staff for extension works. Finally, we may note the views of R.C. Joshi that "There is a tendency to start too many works, community wells, percolation tanks, lift irrigation schemes, rural water supply schemes with the cultural and State funds but as these funds fluctuate with the financial policies of the government, the worker started with much fanfare left unfinished for want of funds." As a result many problems create in the rural areas of Thoubal District. This also retard the development works. So the political sectors must have developed a strong pressure group so that they can realize the matters as desire by the officials. However, in most cases the political pressure becomes strong against the affairs of the administrators in the rural area.

So far as the problems in the rural areas are concerned, it is found that the immense problem of unemployed young people and also of illiterate agricultural labourers and small farmers is a grave problem of poverty. The creation of these problems are the result of politicization of panchayati raj institutions in the village and district levels. Today there is almost lack of supervision of the work done by the established institutions. Whenever the Block Development Officers of the Thoubal District C.D. Block and Kakching C.D. Block, the implementing authority, are being interfered by the local politicians, the progress at rural level is restrained. Sometimes, the Block Development Officers are transferred from one place to another on the political grounds. The politician can touch any matter of panchayati raj and rural
development in Thoubal District, Manipur. As examples, Ningthoujam Sarat Singh, Block Development Officer Thoubal C.D. Block had been transferred to Keirao Bitra C.D. Block, Imphal-East in 2003 by the influence of local politicians. Tenshubam Chandra Singh, Block Development Officer Kakching C.D. Block had been transferred to Moirang C.D. Block in 2006 by the influence of local politicians. This will naturally demoralize the working spirits of the Block Development Officer. If such atmosphere is created repeatedly, it is doubtful whether the Block Development Officer would extend his full cooperation to the upliftment of the rural masses. In short, an administration assisted by politicians, will not be helpful in getting the development targets of the various programmes existed so far for the rural people in Thoubal District. Adversely, it will restrict the implementation policies and programmes of the rural development scheme. It so happens that the Chief Executive Officers as administrators at the district level become subordinates to the politicians. This means that they have to do what the politicians wishes. In most cases, the decisions regarding location of development projects like medical dispensary or water supply scheme etc. are reached by political consensus in the Zilla Parishad. Besides the politicians also take a leading part in matters relating to the formation of alternative schemes. Of course, the officials can play a convincing role in getting political approval for schemes which are worthwhile.

Over and above, in the modern context, the bureaucrats have to usually obey the decisions taken by the ministers who may at any level of administration. R.C. Joshi has pointed out that “the bureaucracy has surrendered its decision-making role to the ministers who are the new masters and in some cases the senior administrators have been merely yes-men playing up to the minister in the hope of advancement and their advancement dependents not on ability and zeal but on favouritism of politicians, and therefore the bureaucracy is keen to further their career prospects by satisfying their political superiors”. In such a situation, the Block Development Officers of
the two blocks as just cited above at the rural level have to surrender their will to the political leaders of the area concerned.

The attitude of the Politician towards the Panchayati Raj system:

In many situations, it is noteworthy that the politicians play an important role in enthusing the rural people to participate in the various developmental functions. In the present society, politics seems to be inevitable in moulding the panchayati raj institutions. That the political parties would disturb the bureaucratic functioning, is not almost in the true sense. So Allen R. Ball has pointed out that "in spite of the claims of advocate of non-party or coalition government, they do not divide, in fact they unite". However, that there is political interference in the bureaucratic functioning of any government. As a result, this situation affects the bureaucratic functions.

It is also important to study whether the bureaucrats should be non-political or not. The Administrative Reform Commission reports have laid down a very beautiful ideas, that, "by and large, the civil servants at the centre would remain non-political and have loyally carried out the programmes of the government in power. But the real test will come if and when there is the prospect of governments of different political colours coming into power. Given correct leadership within the administration and the right attitudes amongst political leaders the civil service will no doubt pass the test when the time comes. It is of basic importance that the civil service should remain non-political though loyal to the government in power".

There is a general feeling that the bureaucrats are critical of the competence and ways of doing of the political leaders. On the other hand, the politicians are also unsparing in their criticism against bureaucracy. Richard P. Taub has made certain relevant statements referring the politicians in Orissa to understand officials attitude towards politicians and as such, he has divided the responses into nine categories and allowed up to two responses per person. The categories are as follows.
1. They are all right, trying their best, doing surprisingly well.

2. Compared to the other states or to past governments, they are not so bad.

3. There is a room for improvement.

4. The role of the politician is defective. It is the business of scoundrels, power is inherently corrupting, the whole political system is bad.

5. They lack skill, do not know how to administer, they are pushed around by bureaucrats, uneducated, don’t lead, don’t implement, just raw recruits, the best people don’t go into politics.

6. They promise a lot, but don’t deliver on their promises.

7. Those who fought for independence were self sacrificing and idealistic, these are different breed altogether, not upto that standard.

8. They are selfish, put their own party interests above the good of the state or nation, don’t represent the people properly, forget their responsibilities, don’t educate their constituents, don’t work hard enough.

9. They are insincere, lacking completely is character corrupted.

Here he again sums up, "It seems quite striking that even though officers are not permitted to speak critically of the government either of its policies or its personal a high proportion of officers did in fact express negative opinions about politicians" 11. In the light of the above observation, the behaviour pattern of the Block Development Officers as bureaucrats in their relationship with the politicians is evidently clear. In many respects, it is found that an overwhelming antagonistic attitudes of the bureaucrats against the politicians at every level of administration. Very often, they have bitterness in their tones. The politicians are sometimes, selfish, corrupt and dishonest. They want to get things done at their personal desires and motives. Their unnecessary interference in administration at all levels of departments has created hindrance to the smooth functioning of the administration in Thoubal District. This unnecessary interference in administration must be minimized.
The politicians often transfers some sincere administrators from one department to another in order to satisfy their own whims as cited above. If the politicians do not fulfil their interest, it is sure that the administrators have to be replaced by another administrators in the sense that they get their maximum benefits out of it. As Kuldeep Mathur has pointed out in his study on the bureaucratic attitudes towards politicians, "That the administrators are blamed for indiscipline in administration as they themselves are not disciplined and so long as the politicians are in power, they talk of idealism but once they are removed from power, they produce the worst possible atmosphere of demonstrations, strikes etc"\textsuperscript{12}. There is a general feeling among the bureaucrats that the politicians are working on the basis of their interests of caste, region and community and at the same time, their only selfish interest is to pile up money. Kuldeep Mathur remarks: "Politicians have been blamed encouraging casteism, regionalism and communalism in public life, for lowering the moral standards of public administrators and making justice a force in society"\textsuperscript{13}. Since the politicians are more corrupt, they also, make the government servants corrupt. There is almost lack of support in matters of decisions from the political bosses. It is also believed that an inefficient administration may be existed because of the inherent weakness of democracy for politicians are after all elected by the people who are themselves open to all types of prejudicial influences. The Block Development Officers have sounded that if there is no interference from the side of the politicians, the bureaucrats would be able to reduce corruption, and thereby bringing fair administration and justice to the people of Thoubal District. The politician did not like to give devolution of power to the elected representative of panchayat raj. They always feel power thirsty and interfere with the work of rural development in Thoubal District. The election of panchavati rai was not based on political parties.
panchayati raj and rural development in Thoubal District, such as transferring of official staff of panchayats, misuse of panchayats fund.

_The attitude and behaviour of bureaucracy towards the rural development:_

In a democratic country where decentralisation of administration is existed, the proper attitude of bureaucracy is highly essential. For bringing development in the rural areas, there should be a proper study of the attitudes and behaviour of bureaucrats. Because the success of development programmes in the rural areas is largely depended on bureaucrat’s acceptance, trust and confidence. Once beliefs are made up of facts, opinions, and general knowledge about issues or events, when beliefs are added to values, we have attitudes, and the attitudes are also acquired from one’s culture through its significant members. In organisation, attitudes are important because they affect job behaviours. So, in the rural development programmes, the bureaucratic pursuit as well as their attitudes towards the attainment of goals and its development are to be studied.

From the lowest to the highest, the main task of each public employee is to serve the people of the nation. It is the moral and official responsibility of civil servants to see that people get the kind of service they expect and deserve. Here what the civil servants do no doubt important but equally important in the way in which civil servants serve the public. In the new developmental role, the bureaucracy is not to feel the idea of being bureaucrats but he should be reformers on the transformation of state life. Regarding the formulation and implementation of developmental works, it should not be considered as a mere routine duty; it must be taken up with a sense of missionary zeal and dedication. The officials should serve the people and be devoted to the welfare programmes rather than reaching out to seek fame, power, position and material gain. Whenever, the issues of an acceptable bureaucratic nature of behaviour comes up at any developmental level, it becomes difficult to transform the traditional norms. As pointed out by Lutful
Haq Choudhury, "The public administration training programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops as well as public administration literature, must emphasize the necessity of this change" 14. For the success of various rural developmental programmes like integrated rural developmental programme, family planning programme, irrigation programme, rural works programme, and at the same time, for the upliftmen of rural areas of Haoribi Mayai leikal, Oinam Sawombung Khalakhong, Waikhong Mapal and Sangai Yumpham Cherapur in Thoubal District. It depends largely on bureaucrat's acceptance, trust and confidence as they are holding the key responsibility. In addition to this, proper interaction and participation is also to be maintained. Lutful Haq Choudhury has further pointed out that "the bureaucrats must encourage public participation in developmental works, and it should make a consistent effort to educate, and consult people and activate people's participation in development work" 15. A rational structure of bureaucrats are also needed. The bureaucratic organisation must be goal-oriented and action-directed and for having a well-dressing up performance and achievement, it should have its eyes fixed and sights set on the horizon of output. Very often the bureaucrats may have a tendency to examine the shortcomings of the rural areas of Thoubal District. As their job management is concerned there should be collaboration among themselves. Bata K. Dey remarks that "it may be necessary to juxtapose the order and build up the bureaucratic structure, in a development situation from the top instead of from the bottom" 16.

So far as the administrative needs for rural development are concerned, we may study basing on certain phenomena. Because, in the present context, in case the implementation of the various developmental programmes of the rural people are to be function properly, the administrators must maintain certain norms as a part of their skill so that they can work and successfully in their administration for rural development. So the following factors must be useful.
a) The administrators should understand the political aspiration of the rural people. They must work and extend to their administrative process according to the situation of politics as enforced by the concerned rural individuals. The administrators must even help the rural people to maintain peaceful means in every matter. They must be aware of the fact that any mishandling may lead to insurgency situation. So, prior action must be established with the help of peaceful means.

b) The administrators should always guard the economic interest of the rural people and protect their property and even their women folk from the exploitation by the groups.

c) The administrators should not interfere with their social life. He should maintain a stoic neutrality in religious matters and;

d) The administrators should take initiative in preserving and developing their aesthetic life which makes the Indian culture richer and more colourful.

Apart from the above discussion, it is also to be noted that in all the Five Year Plan heavy reliance has been put on the administration to achieve developmental targets in the rural areas of Thoubal District. With the initiation of community development programme for rural upliftment, the administrators are asked to elicit rural co-operation; and also told them that the administrative orientation towards rural development must shift completely from making decisions and giving orders to helping the people make decisions. To quote the view of Jawaharlal Nehru, our late Prime Minister, it is said that "I am quite sure that no new order can be built up in India so long as the spirit of the Indian Civil Service pervades our administration and our public services. That spirit of authoritarianism, cannot coexist with freedom. Therefore it seems essential that the Indian Civil Service and similar services must disappear completely, as such before we can start real work on a new order"17.
The intricacies of the assignment given to the administrators are best expressed in a statement by a former Union Home Minister of India, G.B. Pant, who pointed out that "officials cannot work with an attitude of condescension towards the villagers as superstitious men who deserve contempt for. To serve the villagers, you have to identify yourself with rural life, to find joy in the air you breathe and consciousness of the fact you are engaged in the act of building of a new society. You have to train people in the art of life and in the art of living. You have too see that they move, they move onward and they are pushed onward artificially. *Let them learn the art which will enable them to secure for themselves what we want them to possess and unless you try to influence without imposing something from above, your success will be short-lived*". Again he further said that "the whole thing is not a mercenary understanding. The officials are told to identify themselves with the villagers. You have to work in the field and the cowdung and out of it create a clean and whole some atmosphere*".

The report of the Administration Reform Commission on Delegation of Financial and Administrative Power, Government of India, 1969, envisages the maximum possible delegation of authority. The reports say that "excessive centralism, based on lack of trust for others, may be ruinous for development. There must be better communication throughout the organisation about its objectives and all functionaries must be imbued and indeed positively motivated, by organizational goals. Not merely intra-organizational relationships and inter-organizational relationships and inter-organizational behaviour pattern and more so, the relations of administrations with public must be realigned on much more constructive and sound lines. Here adequate training of officials for development of personal faculties and inculcation of correct attitudes towards work system should be taken up*". The forgoing observation indicates a smooth relation to be maintained between the administrators and the people, so that all-round developmental rural areas may be identified.
Officials think that most of the elected representatives are illiterate, lack of administrative knowledge, and selfish in nature. So the attitude and behaviour of bureaucracy towards the rural development is not excellent in Thoubal District on the other hand, non-officials have the pride that they are elected by the people and free in nature but the officials are public servants, proud, corrupted and irresponsible in nature. Such a condition both functionaries has not trust each other and they don’t like to work together for the rural masses in Thoubal District. There are so many communication gap in between the two functionaries. Besides both functionaries has been lacking to work for the people with devotion. They cannot perform the works assigned to them with sacrifice. They do not know the limit of their representatives. In this regard, the words of Shri Maheta known as the father of Panchayati Raj may be recalled. "The Weak Socio-Economic condition can be compared to a sick child. The mother with all her love and attention cannot cure the child alone nor a doctor with all his knowledge of medicine. It can only be cured by the love and affection of the mother combined with the knowledge of the doctor". Similarly, the love and well wishes of the elected representatives combined with the administrative and technical know how of the government servant only can bring the improvement of the socio-economic structure of Thoubal District. So the officials must give technical knowledge and advised to the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions of Thoubal District. The panchayati Raj Institutions is the instrument of the rural development.

The movement organized by elected members of Panchayati Raj Institutions:

The Inaugural Session of the 18th State level Manipur Panchayati Raj Sammelan held on the 9th and 10th May, 1997 was graced by the Hon’ble Chief Minister, Shri Rishang Keishing and Hon’ble Minister Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Manipur, Shri M. Kunjo Singh as Chief Guest and President respectively. It was organized by the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad. On this occasion distinguished invitees such as Shri Jason A-Shimray, Director Rural
Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Manipur, Shri H. Manisana Singh, Hon'ble Adhyaksha, Bishnupur Zilla Parishad delivered their valuable speeches regarding the matters of present changing trend of Panchayati Raj. The Hon'ble President, Manipur State Panchayat Parishad, Shri E. Shajou Singh who was the Pradhan of the Elang Khangpokpi Gram Panchayat in Thoubal District. and Hon'ble General Secretary, Manipur State Panchayat Parishad, Shri A. Lala Singh had presented the welcome address and introductory key note address respectively in the said inaugural session of the sammelan. The Manipur State Panchayat Parishad is the apex body of the elected representatives of the Panchayat in Manipur.

The Hon'ble Chief Guest had expressed in his address that only the Panchayati Raj Institutions are the responsive institutions to the fulfilment of democratic decentralisation of power in particular and he had full satisfaction of the Sammelan participated by the weaker sections particularly women representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions facilitated by the provisions of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. He had encouraged them. “The State Government is trying to devolve the power and functions to the panchayats at the earliest” he added. The Hon’ble Minister, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj had assured the delegates in the Sammelan to devolve the power and functions to the Panchayati Raj Institutions after the Assembly Session likely to be held during the last week of June and 1st week of July, 1997 in his presidential address. He appealed the non-official panchayat functionaries to extend their full co-operation to the State Government regarding the devolution of power to make the Panchayati Raj Institutions strengthen and improved. In this auspicious occasion the Hon’ble Chief Guest had released the 3rd Issue of PANCHAYAT PAOJEL published by the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad and distributed the awards to the best Gram Panchayat both for State level and Block level competitions for the year 1994-95 sponsored by the Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj,
Government of Manipur. The Pungdongbam Gram Panchayat, I/F-1 Block, the Wangoo Gram Panchayat, Moirang Block and Kang Yambem Gram Panchayat, Thoubal Block stood 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions respectively at the State level competition. The Hon'ble Adhyaksha, Imphal Zilla Parishad, Dr. Ibeyaima Devi gave her sincere vote of thanks to all the participants on behalf of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad. The Evening Session of the 1st day of the Sammelan was presided over by Shri E. Shajou Singh, President, Manipur State Panchayat Parishad and eight agenda including three new agenda proposed by the members were discussed with the permission of the Chair. After minutely discussed of all the agenda the following resolutions were adopted unanimously.

**Resolution No. 1**

a.) Resolved that the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act 1994, Act No. 26 of 1994 which is framed in conformity with the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 is welcomed by this Sammelan.

b.) But some provisions and sections of sub-sections of the Manipur Panchayati Raj are found defective. Therefore this Sammelan proposed to amend some sections or sub-sections as follows:

i) Section 49(b) of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 Amendment may be made as follows;

   “All members of the House of the People and the members of the Legislative Assembly whose constituencies wholly or partly fall within the Zilla Parishad area.”

   i) Section 27(2), (3) and Section 55(2) may be amended as follows:

   27(2) :- “Pradhan and Up-Pradhan shall be entitled to such salary and allowance as may be prescribed.”

   27(3) :- “Every member of the Gram Panchayat shall be entitled to receive such salary and allowances as may be fixed by the Government from time to time.
55(2) :- "The salary and allowances of members of the Zilla Parishad shall be such as may be prescribed."

i) Section 95(2) (c) may be deleted as Section 95(5) is already amended.

Resolution No. 2

The Government of Manipur may be requested to take up remedial measures for the problems faced by the present non-official or official panchayat functionaries as below:

a) New Gram Panchayat offices (Panchayat Ghar) should be constructed where there is no panchayat offices and repairing work Gram Panchayat Offices should be done where it is necessary.

b) Adequate infrastructure like furniture, staff and other requirements of the recently constituted 3(three) Zilla Parishad of Imphal, Thoubal and Bishnupur should be arranged and provided immediately.

c) The Government of Manipur should release immediately the fund granted by the 10th Finance Commission with the State matching share for the year 1996-97 to the Panchayati Raj Institutions of Manipur.

d) Warrant of precedence of the newly elected non-official panchayat functionaries should be published in the Official Gazette immediately.

e) All the items enumerated in the 11th Scheduled of the Indian Constitution should be transferred specifically to the Panchayati Raj Institutions with adequate funds.

f) The members of parliament and the members of the Legislative Assembly should not interface the panchayat functionaries when performing their assigned duties.

Resolution No. 3

Resolved that all the Rural Development Schemes and Programmes sponsored by the Government of India should be entrusted directly to the Panchayati Raj Institutions as per the guidelines of the said scheme or programme.
Resolution No. 4

Resolved that the Government of Manipur requested to extend the term of lease period of the Manipur Panchayat Bhavan allotted to the Manipur State panchayat Parishad for another period of 5 years by reducing the normal rate of Rs. 1000/- to Rs. 500/- per year.

Resolution No. 5

Resolved that the Sammelan approved the annual income and expenditure of statement of account for the year 1996-97 amounting to Rs. 35, 620.68 paise and also approved the Budgetary Statement for the year 1997-98 amounting to Rs. 1, 36, 652/- only.

Resolution No. 6

Resolved that the present information received regarding the Below Poverty Line Survey report is outdated, a new survey regarding the matter is highly needed. So it should be requested to the Government of Manipur to conduct a new survey of Below Poverty Line.

Resolution No. 7

51 General Council Members of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad have been duly elected.

Resolution No. 8

Resolved that the outgoing President and General Secretary, Shri E. Shajou Singh and Shri A. Lala Singh are included as Functional Expert of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad as per constitutional of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad and they shall be treated as Advisors of this Parishad.

Proceedings of indefinite hunger strike of Manipur State Panchayat Parishad held on 24th June 1999 to be launched with effect from 25th June 1999 at 11.30 A.M. in the hall of the Manipur Panchayat Bhavan at Porompat with Shri L. Birenyaima, President of Manipur State Panchayati Parishad in the chair.
There were 25 male and 39 female as members present on that day for demanding 9 demands such as devolution of powers; modalities of District Rural implementation; NSAP and Balika Samridhi Yojana implementation; release of T.F.C.; protocol of Panchayati Raj Institutions members; revision of salaries of honorarium of Panchayati Raj Institution; amendment of Section 49 of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994; staff of Zilla Parishad respectively. After the four days indefinite hunger strike going on i.e. 29th June 1999 the Government of Manipur was being invited to the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad to discuss the present demands. The Manipur State Panchayat Parishad is the apex body of Parishad. Any movements such as strike, bandh and rally were done through its apex body. The elected panchayats representatives of the Thoubal District can play an important role in the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad. Mostly, they were the President and General Secretary of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad. At present Th. Santa who is the Up Adhyaksha of Thoubal Zilla Parishad is the present president of Manipur State Panchayat parishad

The meeting which held on 29th June, 1999 in the Cabinet room at 11 a.m. was attended among others by the President, Vice-president and General Secretary of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad and four other Adhyakshas of Imphal East, Imphal west, Thoubal and Bishnupur. The meeting was mediated by one MLA and one Ex-M.P. The Chief Secretary, Manipur was also present. At the outset the Hon'ble Chief Minister welcomed all present and expressed his desire to proceed in a very democratic way towards bringing an amicable settlement on the demands placed by the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad. Similar introduction was followed by the Minister, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and appealed the Members present to discuss the issue with a view to making an amicable settlement. The demand of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad was then taken up one by one and discussed threadbare. After a thorough discussion the following resolutions were adopted.
Demand No. 1 Devolution of Powers.

It was felt that even though powers were devolved to the Panchayati Raj functionaries of Manipur vide Manipur State Extra-ordinary Gazette No. 192 dated 18th September, 1998 the so called devolution cannot be made effective due perhaps to technical or procedural reasons. To redress the problem the meeting decided to form an Expert Committee consisting of the following officers to look into the details and recommend working or functional modalities to the Government within 31st July, 1999.

1) Chief Secretary – Chairman
2) Commissioner (Finance) – Member
3) Secretary (DP) – Member
4) Secretary (RD & PR) – Convenor

Rural Development would work out an issue order by 29th June, 1999.

Demand No. 2 Modalities of District Rural Development Agencies

The demand was for merger of the District Rural Development Agencies to the Zilla Parishad. The Panchayat Representatives felt that even of total merger is not feasible at present, they wanted to allow the Chief Executive officers of the Zilla Parishads to work as Project Directors or Project Officers of the valley District Rural Development Agencies. Governments agreed to it and a proposal should be sent to the Department of Personnel on 29th June, 1999.

Demand No. 3 Involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the Implementation of EAS

Government has agreed to the demands and orders have been issued on 26th June, 1999. Further corrigendum or amendment to include Block Development Officer should be issued on 2 or 3 times.

Demand No. 4 NSAP and Balika Samridhi Yojana Implementation thereof

Others have been already agreed. Inclusion of Old Age Pension Scheme in the devolution of power would be examined and placed before the Cabinet if required.
Demand No. 5 Release of T.F.C.

Government has agreed to the release of balance fund under T.F.C. for the years, 1996-1997 and 1997-1998 on receipt of Utilisation Certificate from the Panchayati Raj Institutions or District Rural Development Agencies.

Demand No. 6 Protocol of Panchayati Raj Institutions Members

Chief Minister has assured review of the Warrant of procedure of the Panchayati Raj Institutions members. The same would be finalised within 10th July, 1999.

Demand No. 7 Revision of Salaries or Honorarium of Panchayati Raj Institutions

This matter was under active consideration.

Demand No. 8 Amendment of Section 49 of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994

The proposed amendment should be tabled before the State Assembly as early as possible.

Demand No. 9 Staff of Zilla Parishad

The proposal is at the final stage and action is being taken for placing it before the cabinet. At the close of the discussion the Hon'ble Chief Minister and Minister Rural Development and Panchayati Raj appealed the striking Panchayati Raj Institution members to suspend or call off the present agitation in view of the assurances and actions taken demand wise. The meeting was closed with vote of thanks to the chair. The indefinite hunger strike of the Manipur State Panchayat Parishad was suspended on 7th August, 1999 which appealed by the Minister of Panchayati Raj and Rural development after a long agitation. During the long agitation, many members of Manipur State Panchayat Parishad were lathi charged for marching a rally and 41 members were arrested and sent to Shajiwa Jail on 2nd July 1999. Most of the members of Manipur State Panchayat Parishad were injured and hospitalized in that incidence. As a result, Yaima Bibi w/o Md. Ibo of Yambem Gram Panchayat member of Ward No. 9 in the Thoubal District at the age of 53 was died for the long fasting of strike due to the problem of stomach on 8th January 2000. It was a very sad news as a part of agitation.
The Government of Manipur issued an Order on 13th June, 2000 in pursuance of the decisions taken in the joint-meeting of the Ministers, Members of Legislative Assembly or Officers and representatives of Manipur State Panchayat Parishad held on the 29th June 1999 under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister, Wahengbam Nipamacha.

The Order was that an expert Committee consisting of 1) Chief Secretary as Chairman 2) Commissioner (Finance) as Member 3) Secretary (DP) as Member and 4) Secretary (RD & PR) as Convenor to examine and work out the functional modalities of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in Manipur indicating a clear cut demarcation of various functions to be carried out by the Zilla Parishad and Gram Panchayat separately and to examine and prescribe the functional modalities for implementation of the report of the Manipur State Finance Commission by the State Government and to work out the modalities for transfer of fund from the Government Department to the Panchayati Raj Institutions as grant-in-aid was constituted vide Government’s order No. 9/13/95-Dev (P) / Pt – III dt. 29th June, 1999; and whereas the Expert Committee held discussion with the Principal Secretaries / Commissioners / Secretaries and Heads of Department as per scheduled programmes; and whereas the Expert Committee has submitted its report to the Government; and whereas the Expert Committee after having discussed with the concerned officers of the individual Departments and also after obtaining the consent to the concerned departments, recommended the following power and functions to be transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions giving a clear cut demarcation to be carried out by the Gram Panchayats and Zilla Parishads respectively with due regard to the relevant provisions of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 and Rules framed there under.

Now, therefore, the Governor of Manipur, in exercise of powers conferred under Section 35 and 61 of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 as amended from time to time is pleased to order the devolution of powers to the
Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in Manipur to enable them to function as vibrant institutions of self-government as also implement and supervise schemes for economic development and social justice in Manipur the following table as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Name of Department</th>
<th>Particulars of Items</th>
<th>Powers &amp; functions of Zilla Parishad</th>
<th>Powers and Functions of Gram Panchayat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>i. Maintenance of Bus stands and Terminus.</td>
<td>Maintenance Terminus along the National State Highway/District roads and collection of parking fees subject to framing of rules by the Deptt.</td>
<td>Maintenance of bus stands / Terminus along the villages/inter village roads and collection of parking fees subject to rules by the Deptt.</td>
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<td>ii. Collection of Bus parking fees subject to framing of Rules by the Transport Dept.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Fisheries</td>
<td>i.) Promotion of individual pisciculture schemes such as paddy cum – pisciculture / pond culture etc.</td>
<td>Supervision / monitoring &amp; implementation of schemes / programmes including centrally sponsored schemes / Programmes under FFDA.</td>
<td>Identification of beneficiaries with the approval of the Gram Sabha.</td>
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<td>ii.) Procurement &amp; supply of IMC / Exotic carps to pisciculturist at Govt. subsidized rates.</td>
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<td>iii.) Procurement &amp; supply of feeds / fishing equipments to the progressive fish</td>
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<td>through Panchayats.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Science &amp; Technology</td>
<td>i.) Establishment of non-conventional energy sources such as bio-gas plant / solar cooking plants.</td>
<td>Supervision / Monitoring and implementation of the schemes.</td>
<td>Identification of beneficiaries with the approval of the Gram Sabha.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ii.) Procurement &amp; supply of solar lamps.</td>
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<td>iii.) Introduction of smokeless / chullaha / improved portable chullaha.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Food &amp; Civil Supplies</td>
<td>i.) Associating / coordinating with the concerned Deptt. in identification / selection of rationing agents and also supervise proper distribution of food grains in the Z.P. areas.</td>
<td>Finalising / selection of rationing / S.K. Oil agents &amp; constitution of Vigilance Committee.</td>
<td>Recommending names for selection of rationing agents and members of Vigilance Committee.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>ii.) Construction of Vigilance committee.</td>
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<td>iii.) Promotion of public Awareness through the Z.Ps. by providing funds under the Plan Head.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Industries</td>
<td>i.) Establishment</td>
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<td>Identification of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation of Cottage In – of beneficial industries beaneries of KVI’s fitting rural and entreprenue artisans and hours in service development of sectors. Asso-entrepreneurs clation with in service 3e-Task Force for selection of beneficiaries under PMRY.</td>
<td>beneficiaries with the approval of the Gram Sabha</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.) Arranging collaborative support from other organisations like KVIC, KVIS and other industrial organisations.</td>
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<td>6. Vety &amp; A.H.</td>
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<tr>
<td>i.) Selection of beneficiaries for providing subsidy in kind in respect of; (a) Cross breed female calf rearing &amp; (b) Improved piglet rearing in the Gram Panchayat areas.</td>
<td>Selection of beneficiaries / supervision &amp; monitoring in implementing of schemes.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ii.) Posture Development (common) grazing ground &amp; also fodder mini-kit programme with supply of seeds free of cost from the vetty. &amp; A.H. Deptt.</td>
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<td>iii.) Construction &amp; maintenance of slaughter houses wherever required will be entrusted to the respective Gram Panchayat.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Power</td>
<td>Help in the recovery &amp; collection of electricity charges on commission basis subject to framing of laws.</td>
<td>Supervision control, monitoring in collection of electricity charges to achieve the revenue target fixed by the Govt. from time to time.</td>
<td>Recovery &amp; collection of electricity charges on commission basis subject to framing of rules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>i.) Distribution on improved agricultural tools &amp; implements &amp; the inputs to farmers.</td>
<td>Consolidation supervision, monitoring of programmes in the implementation of programmes &amp; schemes.</td>
<td>Identification of beneficiaries through Gram Sabha.</td>
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<td>ii.) Distribution of improved high yielding seeds to the farmers.</td>
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<td>iii.) Promotion of measures to increase</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 9. Horticulture | i.) Selection of beneficiaries may be done through Panchayat in respect of;  
  a) Expansion programme;  
  b) Demonstration programme;  
  c) Expansion of Pineapple by adopting improved practices.  
ii.) Selection of site/beneficiaries may be one through Panchayat for;  
  a) Assistance to small & marginal farmers in the construction of small engineering structure & land levelling.  
  b) Construction of water harvesting structure. | Consolidation supervision, monitoring of programmes in the implementation of programmes & schemes. | Identification of beneficiaries through Gram Sabha. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tribal Development Welfare of Worker Section (Sc &amp; ST)</th>
<th>Implementation supervision &amp; monitoring in the implementation of programmes for S.C.</th>
<th>Selection of beneficiaries through Gram Sabha.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.)</td>
<td>Selection of beneficiaries for family oriented schemes like animal husbandry, fishery, Agriculture, Industry etc. may be done by the Panchayat.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.)</td>
<td>Selection of works under community schemes like construction of village approach roads, community hall, school building etc. may be done by the Zilla Parishad.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Co-operative</td>
<td>To associate with the Deptt. in the recovery of loan &amp; make plans for extending credit to farmers.</td>
<td>To associate with the Deptt. in the recovery of loan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.)</td>
<td>Assistance by Gram Panchayats during intense group loan recovery programme.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>P.H.E.D.</td>
<td>Supervision &amp; monitoring in the implementation of schemes / programmes and Finalisation of proposal for collection</td>
<td>Identification of beneficiaries through Gram Sabha.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.)</td>
<td>Repair &amp; Maintenance of drinking water wells, tanks &amp; pond.</td>
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<td>ii.)</td>
<td>Prevention &amp; control of water pollution.</td>
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<td>iii.)</td>
<td>Maintenance of</td>
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<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Type of Arm/Department</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Beneficiary and Other Programs</td>
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</table>
| 13 | Irrigation & Flood control | i.) Construction of water charges on commission basis subject to framing of rules by the Administrative Deptt.  
   ii.) Implementation of emergency flood control works costing less than Rs. 20,000/- | Supervision & monitoring the collection of water charges & implementation of emergency flood control works.  
   Recovery and collection of water charges of commission basis sub to framing of rules & identification of location of works. |
| 14 | Public works | i.) Maintenance of inter village roads including minor bridges & culverts.  
   ii.) Providing ferry services  
   iii.) Construction of inter | Finalisation of proposal for works programme & association with the works advisory committee Supervision & monitoring in the  
   Identification of location of works through Gram Sabha. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Minor irrigation</th>
<th><strong>Gram panchayat roads.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Implementation of work.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Identification of work sides &amp; collection of water charges on commission basis.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.) Maintenance of M.I. Channel, ponds/tanks &amp; wells for benefiting SF/MF.</td>
<td>Preparation of works programme, implementation, supervision &amp; monitoring in the implementation of programmes / schemes and collection of water charges.</td>
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<td>ii.) Exploitation of ground water for irrigation purposes.</td>
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<td>iii.) Collection of water taxes subject to framing of laws.</td>
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<tr>
<th>16. Forest</th>
<th><strong>Plantation of trees at villages panchayat lands and road sides</strong></th>
<th>Supervision &amp; Monitoring in the implementation of programmes /schemes procurement of seedlings / sup lings from the forest Deptt. for distribution to Gram Panchayat and plantation of trees / observance of vana rahoslas etc.</th>
<th><strong>Selection of sites for plantation of trees.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.) Plantation of trees at villages panchayat lands and road sides</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.) Protection of village grazing ground &amp; plantation of fuel &amp; fodder at village waste lands.</td>
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<td>iii.) Cultivation and regeneration of minor forest produce (MFP) species like tejpatta, Dalchini, Betal leaf, Mekruk sandal wood etc.</td>
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<tr>
<th>17. Rural Development</th>
<th><strong>Planning / formulation of workers / shelf of projects,</strong></th>
<th><strong>Planning / formulation of work programme / shelf of projects implementation of</strong></th>
<th><strong>Identification of beneficiaries / location of works through Gram</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.) Planning / formulation of workers / shelf of projects,</td>
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<td>ii.) Repair &amp; Maintenance of</td>
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<tr>
<td>implementation and supervision &amp; monitoring to ensure proper implementation of prog. Relating to the following works:</td>
<td>prog. And supervision &amp; monitoring in the implementation of programme including newly introduced programme viz. SGSY &amp; JGSY.</td>
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<td>Sabha.</td>
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<tr>
<td>a) IRDP</td>
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<td>b) JRY</td>
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<td>c) IAY</td>
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<td>d) DWCRA</td>
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<td>e) TRYSEM</td>
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<td>f) Millions Wells</td>
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<td>ii.) Community Development programme for implementation of centrally sponsored programme whom under item 1 above is to be made adhering to guidelines issued by the Govt. of India from time to time.</td>
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</table>

| 19. Market and Fairs | i.) Identification of suitable marketing sites.  
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20. Medical         | i.) Maintenance of building of PH SC & Dispensaries  
ii.) Organisation of training camps and sanitation programmes  
iii.) Implementation of family welfare schemes | Supervision & monitoring and implementation of programmes & also to promote organisation of programme relating to drug abuse / AIDS. | To associate in the implementation of the programme. |
<p>| 21. Social          | i.) Associating Zilla | Supervision &amp; | Identification of |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welfares</th>
<th>monitoring and implementation of programme</th>
<th>beneficiaries / location of Anganwadi centres through Gram Sabha</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parishad in the selection of Anganwadi centres.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ii.) Implementation of NSAP except Old age pension scheme</td>
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<td>iii.) Prevention of drug abuse.</td>
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<td>iv.) Implementation of BSY(Balika Samridhi Yojana schemes.</td>
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22. Further, it is ordered that the Department concerned shall take the following on the recommendation of the expert committee.

a) All the concerned departments are required to frame rules for collection of bus parking fees, recovery and collection of electricity charges or takes water charges or taxes on commission basis.

b) All concerned departments are required to identify the budgetary allotment of foods to be for the scheme or works to the Panchayati Raj Institutions including these schemes or works under the centrally sponsored Schemes or Central plan Schemes. Such funds shall be transferred to the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department.

c) All the concerned Departments shall provide technical guidance for implementation of the schemes or works minimum skeletal staff either son attachment basis or on demand from the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department as may be decided by the Department concerned.


Notes and References

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2 A.R. Desai, Rural Sociology in India, popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, p.49
3 R.C. Joshi Bureaucrats and politicians at the Rural level, Indian Journal of public Administration, Vol. XXI, No. 2, April-June, 1975, p.192
4 Ibid p.193
5 Ibid p. 194.
6 Personal interview with Md. Tomba, village level worker of Thoubal C.D. Block.
11 Ibid, p. 109
12 Kuldeep Mathur: Bureaucratic Response to Development, National publishing House, Delhi, 1972, p.33
13 Ibid, p. 39
15 Ibid, p. 382
18 G.B. Pant(The Right Approach to the people, Kurukshetra, op. cit, p. 59) by Kuldeep Mathur, Bureaucratic Response to Development, p. 6
19 Ibid, p. 7

MINISTER AND OTHERS
Shri W. Nipamacha Singh, Chief Minister, Manipur.
Shri M. Nilachandra Singh, Minister (IFC).
Shri H. Lokhon Singh, Minister (Finance).
Shri N. Bilhari Singh, Minister (RD & PR).
Shri M. Kumar Singh, Minister (Education – U).
Shri Y. Jiten Singh, Minister (Commerce & Ind.).
Shri Govindas Konthoujam, Minister (Power).
Shri N. Biren Singh, Ministert (Fish / L&E).
Md. Heshamuddin, Minsiter (CDA / LDA / E & S).
Shri H. Bidhur Singh, Minister (PHRD).
Shri S. Rajen Singh, MOS (Edn. S).
Md. Mohamuddin Shah, MLA.
Shri Th. Chaoba Singh, Ex – M.P.

OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF MSPP
Shri K.B. Kothang, Adhyaksha, Thoubal Zilla Parishad.
Smt. S. Maipaksana Devi, Adhyaksha, Imphal West Zilla Parishad.
Shri H. Manisana Singh, Adhyaksha, Bishnupur Zilla Parishad.
Shri L. Birenaima Singh, President, MSPP.
Shri I. Ibochouba Singh, Vice-President, MSPP.
Shri K. Tombi Singh, General Secretary, MSPP.
Shri Kh. Loken Singh, Joint Secretary, MSPP.
Shri S. Merajao Singh, Member, MSPP.
Shri S. Saratchandra Singh, Member, MSPP.
Shri H. Dolen Singh, Member, MSPP.

OFFICIALS

Shri H. Jelshyam, Chief Secretary, Government of Manipur.
Shri H. Shanti kumar Sharma, Deputy Secretary, Government of Manipur.
Shri Y. Neta Singh, Director (RD & PR).
Shri S. Budhachandra Sharma, Deputy Director (RD & PR).