Chapter X

The Process of Policy Formulation

The structure of government and administration

The process of policy formulation in India has to be within the framework of the Constitution. The Indian constitutional setup is often described as quasi federal in character.

1. Quasi-federal set-up

The Constitution defines the area of policy formulation between the Union Government and the States. The powers have been enumerated under three lists - Central, State and Concurrent. These allocations can be changed only through an amendment to the Constitution by Parliament.

Agriculture has been included in the State List. However, the Constitution was amended in 1954 to include certain specific aspects of agriculture like production, supply and distribution of certain agricultural produce in the Concurrent List. This amendment made it possible for the Union Government to pass legislation in the field of agriculture. Moreover, the Union Government enjoys powers in formulating policies in the general area of economic and social planning which lies in the Concurrent List. The Centre has used the Concurrent list to develop many administrative institutions in respect of agriculture and community development. The Centre has also sponsored many schemes through grant of funds for the programme under Article 282 of the Constitution. In the case of all such programmes the direction, control and regulation is exercised by the Central Ministries.

The
responsibility for the implementation of programmes has to be shared by
the Union and the State Governments.

b. Role of Parliament

In the democratic system of government Parliament is supreme. Bills can become Acts only by the approval of Parliament. Parliament also sanctions grants but only on the basis of full-fledged debate pertaining to the demands-for-grants of individual Departments and Ministries. Parliamentary Committees like the Public Accounts Committee, Committee on Public Undertakings, and Estimates Committee provide opportunities to Members of Parliament to go into the policies and programmes of various ministries. Each Ministry has a Consultative Committee of Members of Parliament which provides a forum for discussion in smaller groups on matters pertaining to the Ministry.

The role of the Parliament in the Indian political system is that of "policy influencer" than either of "policy-maker" or policy transformer. It has only marginal impact in the formulation of socio-economic policies. Given the environmental constraints, Parliament's competence to make or initiate policy measures is extremely limited. However, it has shown its capacity and willingness to modify various policy proposals coming before it for approval. It has also been effective in enforcing executive's accountability to itself.

c. Party manifesto and its influence on policy

The Government is of the party which has a majority in Parliament. A party comes into power on the basis of its manifesto and hence the framework of government policy follows the commitments made by the party at the time of elections. Policy resolutions in important areas of
economic and social life are based upon the decisions of the political party in power.

d. **Prime Minister and the political executive**

The executive authority of Government vests in the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister. Though President is the constitutional head, all executive power is exercised on the advice of the Prime Minister. In India the role of the Prime Minister in government has been pre-eminent. In recent years the Prime Minister's office has greatly expanded under the overall leadership of Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister.

The Cabinet has its standing committees on various topics including political affairs, economic affairs, and infrastructure.

e. **Civil Service organisation and policy formulation**

The Cabinet is assisted by the host of civil servants headed by the Cabinet Secretary. The Cabinet Secretary and the Cabinet Secretariat serve the Cabinet and its Committees. The Cabinet Secretary presides over the meetings of Committees of Secretaries which examine different ministry matters and issues concerning the government as a whole. The committees send their recommendations to the ministries concerned. Each ministry is responsible for policy formulation relating to matters which fall within its jurisdiction. In these functions the Minister is assisted by the Secretary and his other senior officers like the Additional Secretary and the Joint Secretary as well as technical personnel whose number is growing in the secretariat departments. The non-secretariat or field organisations also participate in policy formulation. Amongst them may be mentioned organisations like the Reserve Bank of India.
I. Role of Planning Commission

Apart from the set up of the ministries, another important institution which plays a major role in policy formulation is the Planning Commission which was established in March 1950 under the Cabinet Resolution No. I-P(C)/50. The function of the Planning Commission is to formulate plans for effective and balanced utilisation of country's resources. The Prime Minister is the Chairman of the Planning Commission and the Planning Minister is the Deputy Chairman. Besides the Minister of Finance and some experts are also members of the Commission. The National Development Council was established in August, 1952 by Resolution No. 62/CF/30 dated August 6, 1952. The National Development Council consists of the Prime Minister, all the Union Cabinet Ministers, Chief Ministers of all States and Union Territories and Members of the Planning Commission. It provides guidelines for the formulation of the national plan.

8. Research and Policy formulation

The Planning Commission often seeks the assistance of research institutions. However, the independent influence of research on policy formulation is somewhat limited even though professional economists have been members of the Planning Commission. The limited influence of research on policy formulation is attributed to the fact that "little policy-oriented social science research in India questions fundamentals. There are too few instances where policy failures have led to question the assumptions on which the policies rest. All too often failures in policy are simply attributed to the lack of implementation without recognising that policies must work within the existing administrative framework."² Researchers also feel that the governmental system is so
vast, so complex and so immobile that any kind of change and innovation is difficult. The bureaucratic system as a whole is not responsive to research. The departments prefer the experience of their own staff including research staff to research by outsiders as a source of knowledge. Another reason is that policy-related research is poorly disseminated. The research findings do not always reach the politicians who are at the helm of ministries.

h. Policy formulation in the States

It has already been stated above that in the field of agriculture and rural development, the responsibility for the policies and programmes is shared by the Centre with the States. The policy making structure in the State is similar to that at the Centre as could be seen in the following statement:

1. President
2. Parliament
3. Parliament and its Committees
4. Prime Minister
5. Cabinet and its Committees
6. Cabinet Ministers
7. Cabinet Secretary
8. Secretaries of Departments and their Field Organisations
9. Planning Commission

Governor
Legislative Assembly
Legislative Assembly and its Committees
Chief Minister
Cabinet and its Committees
Cabinet Ministers
Chief Secretary
Secretaries of Departments and their Field Organisations
Planning Board

The role of various agencies at the Centre and in the States in policy formulation is illustrated in this chapter with reference to some case studies relating to important policy areas in the field of agriculture and rural development.
The agrarian reform involving abolition of outdated land tenure system had been an important programme in the basic strategy of agricultural rural change in the country. While it was of all-India significance and general guidelines were issued from time to time by the Central Government and the Planning Commission, it had to be tackled separately in every State because every State had its own land tenure system and its own revenue acts and rules governing the system. Whether in the strategy of agricultural development, land reform should be given a priority or should await till agricultural production had been raised, had also been an issue. Some argued that agricultural production could be raised without land reforms; some argued that land reforms could even be a hindrance to agricultural growth; while others said that stagnation on the farm front was to a large extent due to an anachronistic system and could not be broken merely through technological breakthrough since new technology cannot be adopted by the majority of cultivators consisting of small and marginal farmers, tenants and share-croppers in the absence of land reforms. Apart from the arguments about the relative priority of land reforms vis-a-vis technological change, there was the question of the influence of the landed interest on the political party in power. The dominant interests in agriculture were also dominant in political system. The pattern of land ownership has been skewed as could be seen from the following table:
### Table 14

**Operational holdings of land by Size Class — 1971-76**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marginal</td>
<td>&lt; 1</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>1 - 2</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Medium</td>
<td>2 - 4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>4 - 10</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>49.6</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>&gt; 10</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>50.1</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>162.1</td>
<td>163.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Agricultural Census Reports

The equation of political struggle between the large and the intermediate holders on one side and the small, marginal and landless on the other, differed from State to State and influenced the pace of land reforms. Agrarian reform has been a process and the result of interaction between opposing forces. There have been three distinct groups with different interests. First, the landlords, intermediaries, plantations and religious institutions holding large holdings favoured maintenance of the status quo and resisted any change in land tenure because it would harm their income, social status and power. Secondly, the small holders, tenants, share-croppers, and landless labourers who had been the actual cultivators without ownership rights needed occupancy rights or ownership, reduction of rent, credit support and services. They were the ones to be benefited by agrarian reform. Thirdly, the political complexion of the State government and the role
of State administration. In theory, the civil servants understood the need for land reforms but they were worried about the disturbance of law and order. Land reform, thus, is pre-eminently an area where the process of policy formulation can best be seen at the State level.

During the struggle for freedom, Nehru was inclined to support the poor rural strata in their social struggles. Thus, Nehru wrote in his biography, "Taluqdars and big zamindars, lords of the land were the spoiled children of the British government; they did nothing at all ... and became complete parasites on the land".

Under his influence, the Central government formulated general guidelines and directives and pushed the State governments in whom vested the competence for implementing agrarian reforms. But the response differed from State to State. In what follows is described the process of introduction of land reforms in four States viz. Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.4

Land Reforms in Kerala

In Kerala, with high literacy and a low share of scheduled castes and tribes, the organisation of poor cultivators had a long tradition. They were well structured and were guided and supported by the two competitive Communist parties who were also in power in the state government from time to time. Land Reforms had swings with the swings of the political parties in power. Land reforms became a matter of tug of war between political parties. The first Communist Ministry was in power from 1957 to 31st July 1959. It was toppled and replaced by President's rule. This was followed by the Congress-PSP coalition, then a second Communist Ministry, and President's rule from 1965 to 1967; from March 1967 the third Ministry led by CPI(M) had coalition of
7 parties; again President’s rule followed by a left front government led by Achuta Menon of the CPI. The vicissitudes in land reforms went hand in hand with vicissitudes in politics.

The All-India Kisan Sabha formed through Congress meeting in Lucknow in April 1936, gave an impetus to the present movement in Kerala. It took organisational form in 1936. It demanded permanent security of tenure through amendment in Malabar Tenancy Act, limiting rent to the landlord to 25% of the produce, abolition of rent arrears, and prohibition of other levies.

In 1946 the Congress Government in Madras, on the recommendation of the Malabar Tenancy Committee, enforced the Madras Tenants and Ryots Protection Act, to protect the tenants from eviction.

After Independence, in the elections of 1951-52, CPI joined with other leftist parties demanding abolition of landlordism. In the following mid-term elections, agrarian issues took the forefront. The leftist front called for distribution of land to the landless and fixity of tenure for the tenants.

In the State Election in 1957, a most radical programme was formulated by the CPI. Congress and the Praja Socialist Party also put forward demands for the rural poor. After the elections the Communists were able to form the government. The new government announced its new policy of non-intervention in struggles between farm workers and tenants on the one hand, and landlords on the other. In June 1957, Agrarian Relations Bill was drafted and submitted to the Planning Commission in New Delhi for legal consultations. Its main objectives were: fixity of tenancy for tenants, reduction of rent by fixation of fair rents, rights to the tenants to purchase the lease land, ceiling on existing and future holdings, distribution of excess land to the landless, permanent
occupancy right to hutment dwellers and the association of the beneficiaries with the implementation of the legislation through the newly constituted land tribunals. The Bill raised a lot of controversy. Peasant organisations organised huge demonstrations in its favour while the landlords organised strong opposition. From the State to New Delhi they tried to topple the government and sent delegation to the Union capital. They invited the Central Government to dismiss the State Government. The demand was rejected by Prime Minister Nehru but the Bill was delayed from year to year. After discussions and many amendments, the Bill was finally passed in June 1959 and became the foundation of agrarian reform laws in the State. It stipulated fixity of tenure for all types of tenants; resumption of lands from hutment dwellers was prohibited, resumption for bona fide self-cultivation would be there only if peasants cultivated more than the ceiling acreage; fair rents were fixed between 1/20th and 1/4th as minimum and 1/6th to 1/3rd as the maximum. Land tribunals were constituted to decide about the important contentions arising out of this law. Tenants were entitled to purchase landlords' rights in lease-in land upto the ceiling on payment of compensation equivalent to 16 instalments; the ceiling of holding was fixed at 15 acres of double crop land for a family upto 5 members; all excess land was vested in the land board which was constituted for the whole state to settle and distribute compensation, to assign excess land and control the land tribunals. While the Bill was discussed in the Assembly, the Congress Party launched on the liberation struggle which led to violence, dismissal of the State government and imposition of the President's rule in July 1959.
In the following mid-term elections, Congress secured victory. It substantially diluted the 1959 Bill and enforced it in 1961. However, when the landlords appealed to the High Court, it suspended the law in November 1962 and in 1963 the government introduced a new Bill - the Agrarian Land Reform Bill which partly reiterated the suspended law. The Bill was passed in December 1963. Under this Law some groups of tenants were exempted from protection. Landlords were again permitted to resume for self cultivation, even though they already possessed land up to the ceiling. The fair rents were raised.

In 1967 elections the opposition parties raised several issues relating to land reforms policy in their election programme. A new Bill was framed under CPI(M) leadership in March 1967. In July, a Kerala Stay of Eviction Proceedings Bill was passed. In August 1968 the government introduced Kerala Land Reforms Amendment Act aimed at restoring the Kerala Agrarian Relations Act of 1959. It attempted radical solutions of the tenancy problem. Possession of land, not legal documents, became the criterion of a tenant. The definition of tenant was widened to include share-croppers, encroachers on State lands, and tenants of religious and charitable institutions. The right of resumption was restricted only up to 5 acres. All tenanted land was declared free from encumberances. The tenancy land was vested in government and legal relationship between landlord and tenant was broken. The government, however, fell in October 1969 when the CPI joined hands with the Congress (I). In the meanwhile the President of India signed a Kerala Land Reform Amendment Act of 1968 which was enforced on 1st January 1970.

On the fall of the government, the CPI(M) began a protest campaign mobilising the rural masses against the betrayal of the CPI. This led
to dissolution of the Assembly and new elections in which CPI(M) was defeated and a coalition led by CPI was reinstated.

The tug of war between land reform and counter reform dragged on. High Courts were flooded with complaints. The landlords appealed against several important provisions of the Kerala Land Reform Act. The government appealed to the Supreme Court and introduced Kerala Cultivators and Tenants Temporary Protection Bill of 1970. The CPI(M) threatened to organise encroachment of excess land of plantations if these were not distributed to the landlords. The government then enacted an ordinance to take over land occupied by the British planters for 100 years but not planted with tea, without compensation. The land was assigned for distribution.

In July the Kerala Land Reform Act of 1969 and 1971 were included in the 9th Schedule of the Constitution, thus making them irreversible.

The government accepted a strong involvement of non-officials in the implementation of land reform measures for speeding up its implementation. In October 1972, the Kerala Land Reform Amendment Bill was introduced and passed. It created village committees to advise land tribunals in the assignment of land to the tenants. The Kerala Agricultural Workers Bill was introduced in 1972 and passed in 1974 to improve the working conditions of the agricultural workers. It created a provident fund with the contribution of 5 per cent of the wage by both land owner and worker.

In May 1972 a programme of over one lakh houses to be built to improve the housing conditions of landless labourers in rural areas was taken up.
Thus, in Kerala, drafting, discussion and enactment of law was a long drawn out process under continuous influence and pressure from those who favoured land reforms and those who opposed. It was a stop-go procedure with the Communist led Ministry trying to push forward with the reforms and the Congress led Ministry or President’s rule attempting to hold up or undo radical changes. There was a deep intertwining between agrarian reform, agrarian movement and political development. The laws themselves involved popular participation in the administrative procedure related to land reform.

The land reform process in Kerala was hampered by absence of land records and the legal lacunae which were exploited by landlords. Officials were placed between government, landlords and beneficiaries. However, Kerala is often cited as a model for India for satisfactory implementation of land reforms.

Agrarian Reforms in Karnataka

Unlike in Kerala, where land reforms legislation was the product of the agitation of the tenants and agricultural workers organised by the political parties, in Karnataka the Land Reform Programme was initiated by the administration. The only movement of the lower rural strata in Karnataka was the Kagodu Satyagraha in 1946 against the non-standardized measures of the amount of rent. However, the movement against the landlords petered out soon because of lack of staying power of the tenants. The movement was actively supported by the Socialist Party.

The Karnataka State was the product of the reorganization of States on linguistic basis which led to Kannada speaking parts of Mysore, Bombay Presidency, Madras Presidency, Hyderabad State and a taluka of Cochin State brought together in the year 1956. In the same year, a
Committee under the Chairmanship of B.D. Jatti who later became the Chief Minister was appointed to prepare legislation which could unify agrarian relations. This was first enacted in 1961 but was radically amended in 1974 which stipulated that the actual cultivator would be the owner of the land. Before this legislation the Mysore Personal and Miscellaneous Inams Abolition Act of 1954 was passed. Under the Act, occupancy rights were granted to the former tenants. Compensation had to be paid by the cultivator.

Karnataka Land Reforms Act of 1961 was enforced in March 1962. It provided that the tenancy shall not be terminated merely for the reason that the lease had expired. Rent was fixed at ten times the land revenue. Eviction of tenant was made more difficult. Tenants had the first option if the landlord sold his land. Tenants were to be registered as occupants if they cultivated the land personally up to the ceiling. The occupants could purchase the land at rates which were 15 times the annual income. Land tribunals were constituted in each taluk and lawyers were not permitted to appear. The ceiling on land was fixed at ten units for a family of five. Land owners had to declare surplus land.

As a result of an amendment of the Land Reforms Act, cultivating tenants became owners. All the applications by tenants to be registered as occupants were considered and 60% were confirmed. In the process, some of the poor people who were physically or financially unable to cultivate the land, were dispossessed. There was no doubt, lot of corruption and misuse of judicial power by the land tribunals.

The surplus land was distributed to the landless, but the institutional credit agencies were unable to provide land to the new small holders. Also the extended lapse of time between passing of the
first law in 1961 and the actual accelerated implementation offered many opportunities to evade the law. However, the Act succeeded in destroying the old feudal power structure. The vigorous implementation of the law was because of the influence of the Chief Minister Dev Raj Urs who belonged to a small high caste community and used the populist measure of land reform to weaken the power of the powerful Vokkaliga and Lingayath castes in Karnataka politics.

Andhra Pradesh

The reorganized Andhra Pradesh included a part of the former princely State of Nizam of Hyderabad known as Telangana. One of the most vigorous of the agrarian movements in India developed amongst the agrarian and tribal people of this region. Shortly after Independence, peasant societies were formed in about 3000 villages, covering roughly 3 million peasants. Gram Raj for village was developed in the districts of Nalgonda, Warangal and Khammam in the North and North-East of Hyderabad. In these villages, the head landlords - the pillars of Nizam aristocracy in the rural areas - were driven away and their land seized by the peasantry under the guidance of the people's committees. All evictions were stopped and forced labour service was abolished. Usurious rates of interest were forbidden. The forest officials were forced to abandon the forest belt and the tribal people could enjoy the minor forest produce. The Central and the State Government ultimately succeeded in quelling the agrarian revolution but in one of the villages in the same area, namely Pochampalli, Vinobha Bhave's Bhoodan Movement was born. In the late 70's, naxalites were to take roots in the same region.
In spite of these peasant movements, the Land Reform Legislation in Andhra Pradesh and its implementation has not been as vigorous as in Kerala. Legislation began in 1949 in Andhra area where Inam estates were abolished in 1956. Similarly in Telangana area, 975 jagirs were compensated for and cultivators were given full rights to land. In Telangana, the Hyderabad Tenancy of Agricultural Act 1950 gave essential rights to both protected and ordinary tenants. But the Act required the tenant to come forward to avail himself of the opportunity to become the little holder by paying compensation. But he did not have the financial ability to do that and so the Act was amended to provide for compulsory ownership to the protected tenants.

In other main part of the State, i.e. Andhra area, the Andhra Pradesh Tenancy Amendment Act was enforced with effect from 1.7.1960. This fixed the maximum rent to 25 to 30% of the gross rent. The resumption of tenants land was limited and half the cultivated land was assured to the tenant. Tenants were given higher security for their occupancy. In case of sale by the landlord, tenant had the first priority of acquisition at the rate of five times the fair rent.

In 1961 the Andhra Pradesh Ceiling on Agricultural Holding Act was enforced. The ceiling was generous - 4.5 times of family holding for existing holdings and 3 for future acquisitions. As a result, only a small extent of about 15,000 acres were declared surplus of which 10,000 acres were given to the landless.

After the recommendations of the Central Land Reforms Committee in August 1971, the State government issued the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Land Ordinance, prohibiting alienation of land of 10 acres of wheat and 25 acres of rice. This was followed by the Andhra Pradesh Land Reform Act of 1973 enforced on 1.1.1975. Primary land tribunals were organised.
to deal with the declarations and decide upon the excess land above the ceiling. Government interest on the tribunals was represented by a special officer of the rank of tehsildar. There were also appeal tribunals. In each taluk, assignment review committees were established to propose and control land assignments. The taluk committees proved to be bottlenecks in the implementation of the law, because of the over-representation to the dominant section on these committees. Less than 1 per cent of the agricultural land was distributed and most of this land needed levelling and other development.

Andhra Pradesh is a state where the implementation of the land reforms has been weak. The political executive was not fully committed to progressive land reforms, and the administrative machinery also did not show enthusiasm in implementing it. In this state the landlords' lobby has been quite strong. Big farmers are politicians, ministers and merchants, who had no interest in implementing radical land laws.

West Bengal

The pressure on land in West Bengal is high due to high population density. Eighty six per cent of the area is cropped. Bengal was an area where the government let villages or smaller districts to zamindars who collected land revenue from the cultivators. The richer zamindars rented out to sub-zamindars leading to emergence of a whole hierarchy of intermediaries which aggravated the extortion and exploitation of the ultimate cultivators who were often share-cropper (bardagas) on whom agrarian reforms were focussed.

In the 1930's, the peasant movement demanded abolition of zamindari leading to government passing anti-moneylender legislation. The movement against rent payment to landlords and against money lenders
influenced each other. The Bengal Land Revenue Commission in 1939 estimated that more than 20% of the acreage was cultivated under the share-cropping system. The peasant movement demanded a rise in the sharecroppers' share from 50 to 66%. This became the fore-runner of the Tebhag Movement of 1946. The Tebhag movement spread to all parts of Bengal though it gave no tangible results.

After Independence, the new Ministry (1950) passed the West Bengal Bardagars Act which envisaged that if the land owner supplied draft animals and agricultural implements and manure, he was entitled to one half of the harvest; otherwise the share-cropper would retain two third. However, the Act gave the landlords the powers to evict the sharecroppers if he wanted land for his cultivation. The law, however, fanned the Tebhag Movement anew, followed by violent demonstrations. Later in 1969 there was a spontaneous mass movement (known as Naxalite movement) leading to large-scale seizure of big holdings.

The first substantial step in the new land legislation was taken with the Bengal Acquisition Act of 1953, which stipulated that all rights of intermediaries shall vest in the state free from all encumberances. This brought the Ryots in direct relation with the state. The intermediary was allowed to retain the land of his homestead and agricultural land upto a ceiling of 25 acres.

The second step was West Bengal Land Reforms Act of 1955 which fixed ceiling, provided for distribution of surplus and consolidated the unclear rights of the Bargadars. The ceiling was fixed at 5 standard acres for a family of 5 members. Land above the ceiling would vest in the state. The right of the Bargadars to cultivate the land limited to one hectare. Bargadars could not be evicted. The amendments in the Act
In 1966, 1970 and 1971 led to the Bargadar's share being raised to 75%. He was given saleable rights to the land he cultivated. The landowner could evict the Bargadars bona fide personal cultivation if the entire land did not exceed 7.5 acres and if the Bargadars were left at least with two acres.

Much of the land reform legislation was introduced by the left front governments. The CPI(M) ruled the state in coalition with smaller parties since 1967.

Operation Bargadar for implementation of the land reform began in 1978 and was pushed with energy. Under the crash programme initiated in June 1979, the state officers were asked to concentrate on priority pockets to be selected in consultation with the peasant organisation. Under this programme, village meetings were held, where the benefits to the Bargadars under the law were explained. The officers were asked to decide all the claims during the meetings on the spot and give Bargadars a written document about his land title or the patta. Thus, unlike in Kerala, where powerful Kisan Sabha mobilised the rural poor, in West Bengal it was the government which took the initiative and asked the poor Bargadars to come forward. The land reforms were followed by a special lending programme by the banks to share-croppers and beneficiaries of land distribution. As a result of these reforms 10 per cent of the rural households increased their paddy yields after changes in land tenure. Thus, land reforms did not lead to the depression of production. On the other hand, a strong feeling of security of tenure created a sense of stability. Land reforms added a new dimension of rural development which was not just a technocratic programme of extension of supply of inputs but a programme of land reforms which enabled the sharecroppers and the beneficiaries of surplus land to
participate in programmes of rural development. This brought about a significant change in the psyche of rural people. In Bengal ceiling law was vigorously implemented and more land was vested in the state than in any other state — 1.2 million in West Bengal against 4 million of the whole country. Thus, the agrarian reform in West Bengal set up an example to the rest of the country.

In all the four states the procedure of land reform was entirely within the framework of the constitution. Laws were drafted, discussed, passed and enforced. The parties could go to independent courts. There was no expropriation. Ceilings were fixed in such a way as to avoid harsh consequences. These were important exemptions from ceiling law.

Thus, these four case studies show that a pre-requisite for successful agrarian reform is the political will. It also shows, as pointed out by the task force on agrarian relations of the Planning Commission that a certain degree of politicization of the poor peasantly and militant land is a pre-requisite for successful land reforms. Agrarian reforms cannot be successful by administration alone.

**Community Development**

Community Development Programme owes its origin to the efforts of one individual, Shri S.K. Day. He was an engineer working in the pre-independence period in Lahore in a multinational company. He came to India after partition and offered his services, free of salary, to the Minister Incharge of Rehabilitation for the work connected with the resettlement of refugees. He was asked to start a training centre at a refugee camp of Kurukshetra, 105 miles north of Delhi. Prime Minister Nehru visited the camp in the beginning of 1948. He was so impressed that he declared that he wanted “a thousand townships humming with the
music of muscles" such as he saw in that vocational training centre. Out of this, therefore, came the Nilokheri township for the refugees. The inmates of the township were to build a new world for themselves, provide for vocational training, employment in work centres, polytechnics, etc. The township of Nilokheri began to take a final shape in the year 1951.

The next stage was provided by the visit of Paul Hoffman, President of the Ford Foundation who visited India to explore how India could be helped to develop. Jawaharlal Nehru asked Shri S.K. Dey to meet Paul Hoffman. Out of this came the Technical Assistance Programme under the Ford Foundation to Government of India for an Agricultural Extension Programme on pilot basis in different areas of the country, each with a population of 60-70 thousand. A multi-purpose worker was to serve as an extension agent at the village level. Five training centres were attached to the progressive agricultural polytechnics, for training new functionaries. These came to be known as Extension Training Centres.

Another American to help the development was Ambassador Chester Bowles. He saw the work of Albert Mayers, an American architect at Etawah. This was a programme of agricultural extension and rural development in close collaboration with U.P. Government. He felt that the experiences of Nilokheri and Etawah should be blended. Out of this came the formulation of a new scheme known as Community Development Programme, which was approved by the Government of India. The purpose of the project was to give the "right to live" to the people in project areas. 165 community development blocks were to be started, spread over different States. Each block was to cover about 100 villages with a population of 60-80 thousand and an area of 150-200 square miles. 165 blocks were to be staggered over a period of one year.
The Indo-US Technical Cooperation Agreement was signed on May 31, 1952 which envisaged the creation of community projects administration to be responsible for planning, directing and coordinating the programme. The administration was attached to the Planning Commission and Shri S.K. Dey was appointed its administrator. The administration came into being on March 31, 1952 and the programme began on October 2 the same year, i.e. the birthday of Mahatama Gandhi. Talking of this programme Shri S.K. Dey says, "Out of this Indo-US cooperation grew a new programme for the revitalisation of rural India, pregnant with the seeds of far-reaching revolution in thought, action and administration".

The programme grew from sixty blocks to 165 and then to 400 within the course of one year because there was a "stampede" for the expansion of the programme from the rural population.

The emphasis of the programme shifted from amenities to production. One hundred village level workers training centres were set up to provide extension training programme to the village level workers for a period of two years. Similar training centres were started for the training of Block Development Officers and Block Extension Officers.

A new self-contained Ministry of Community Development came into being on September 19, 1956. In explaining the origin of the new Ministry Shri S.K. Dey has quoted Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru saying, "The tail which was CTA (Community Project Administration) instead of being wagged by the Planning Commission had begun to wag the Planning Commission itself and the time was ripe for giving a separate habitat to the tail so that it could wag but itself." Soon Community Development Programme gave way to Panchayati Raj and was combined with 'Cooperation'. Within a period of ten years, 5400
development blocks were established, each block having a primary health centre and an animal husbandry centre.

**Panchayati Raj**

The development of Panchayati Raj after Independence falls into two phases — the pre-Balwantrai Mehta Committee Report Phase and the post-Balwantrai Mehta Committee Report phase. The post-Balwantrai Mehta Report phase was an offshoot of the evaluation of the Community Development Programme taken up by the Balwantrai Mehta Study Team Committee which recommended that for the success of the community development programme it has to be placed under the representative institutions of the people at the local level. It was as a result of the follow-up of this recommendation by the Union Ministry that the States took action for the amendments to the legislation of Rural Local Government in various States.

But the legislation relating to Panchayati Raj in the pre-Balwantrai Mehta Committee phase, i.e. from 1947-57, was at the initiative of the State Governments themselves and these were attempts to improve upon the Local Self Government set up established during the British rule.

One reason for the States to take initiative was the fact that the Constitution, at the instance of Dr. Rajendra Prasad inserted a provision in the directive principles of the State policy. Article 40 laid down that the State shall promote Panchayats as a unit of the Local Self Government. Besides this, the Community Development Programme also included promotion of village panchayats. Jawaharlal Nehru often said that the school, the cooperative and the Panchayat should be treated as basic village institutions.
The various States took steps to modify the village panchayat legislation. Thus U.P. introduced the Village Panchayat Raj Act of 1947, later amended from time to time to meet the new requirements. The Act provided for the establishment of Gaon Sabhas. The Pradhan and the members of the Gram Panchayat were to be elected directly by the Gaon Sabha. Under the Act, Nyay Panchayats were also established to make justice cheaply available to the villagers. The field of taxation included land revenue, tax on trade, callings and professions, and animals and water rates. A Panchayati Raj Department was established with Director as its head working in the Ministry of Local Self Government. In Bihar also after the transfer of power, the Bihar Panchayati Raj Act was passed in 1947. The new unit called Halka was established for revenue as well as development purposes. At the higher level was Development Block consisting of ten Halkas. A Halka consisted of the jurisdiction of two Gram Panchayats which was formed for a population of one thousand adult members. There was also provision for Nyay Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat consisted of Mukhiya and eight members four of them elected by a secret ballot and four being nominated from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women and others. The Government of Bihar decided in 1955 that all development schemes should be executed through the agency of the Gram Panchayat. The Act provided for a Bihar State Gram Panchayat Board. Gram Panchayat Department was started to assist Government under a Director assisted by other staff. However, though Bihar Panchayat Act was comprehensive, its provisions remained inoperative in several respects, and the role of the gram panchayats remained largely on paper. The Gram Panchayats of Orissa were governed by Orissa Gram Panchayat Act of 1948. There also the Gram Panchayat was to be elected from amongst the members of the Gram Sabha.
The panchayat so constituted was to elect a Sarpanch. There was also a judicial wing of the Gram Panchayat. The tax revenue of the Panchayats, apart from the other taxes, included Kendu Leaf grant. The Panchayati Raj Department was headed by the Chief Secretary-cum-Development Commissioner. In Punjab, the administration of rural areas was governed by the Punjab Gram Panchayat Act of 1957. The Act provided for formation of a Panchayat for a group of villages of not less than 500 population, with five to nine Panchas. The Panchas were to be elected by the adult members who in them elected a Sarpanch from amongst themselves. Provision was also made for the exercise of criminal, civil and revenue powers by the Gram Panchayats. A Panchayat Fund vested in each Panchayat. The Act also provided for the appointment of Panchayat Secretaries. In Bengal, the Union Board formed the units for village administration. The West Bengal Panchayat Act was passed in 1957 which provided for Gram Sabha, and Anchal Panchayat for a population of five to eight thousand. While Gram Panchayat was elected by members of Gram Sabha, Anchal Panchayat was elected from amongst the members of the Gram Panchayats. Every Anchal Panchayat also constituted a Nyay Panchayat which was empowered to hear and try suits relating to contract and cattle. The Anchal Panchayat was invested with powers of taxation on professions, trade and calling. The Panchayat Raj Department was headed by a Director of Panchayats who was also an ex-officio Joint Secretary to the Local Government. District Panchayat Officers were appointed to be incharge of law, directly under the supervision of the District Magistrate.

Similar statutory provisions for the establishment of Gram Panchayats were enacted in other States also. In Bombay, the Act of 1937
continued until replaced by the Bombay Village Panchayat Act of 1958. In Madras, there was a Village Panchayat Act of 1950. The States created after re-organisation in 1956 enacted their own measures. The broad objectives of the different Panchayat Acts passed after Independence in each State were more or less the same with only minor variations in nomenclature, procedures and powers of taxation. Their functions were also more or less the same as even during the days before Independence. The Nyay Panchayats did not emerge as active institutions for dispensing justice for various reasons.

The developments in the field of Panchayati Raj after 1959 were the direct result of the recommendations of the Balwantrai Mehta Team on community development projects and national extension service agency appointed by the Committee on Plan Projects. This Committee was constituted by the National Development Council after taking note of the statement of the Minister of Finance made by him in his Budget Speech for 1956-57 that there was growing outlay on the programme of Community Development and there was need for economy. The Balwantrai Mehta Team was mainly to consider measures for economy and efficiency. The Team was also expected to go into the reorganization of district administration. The Team recommended a 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj institutions with an organic link between the Village Panchayat and the Panchayat Samiti. The new democratic system was to take charge of all aspects of development work in rural areas. This system of democratic decentralization was expected to prevent bureaucratization of the development programmes. This 3-tier system was commended by the Union Ministry of Community Development as a model to all the States, and all the States followed the guidelines. The Panchayati Raj system was introduced first in Rajasthan in October 1959 and Andhra Pradesh also
followed soon in 1960; and the same year also Tamilnadu, Assam and Mysore introduced the system in 1960; Orissa, Punjab and U.P. in 1961; Maharashtra in 1962; Gujarat in 1963 and West Bengal and parts of Bihar in 1964. There were undoubtedly many statewise variations, but all followed broadly the 3-tier structure, except Kerala which had only Gram Panchayats and West Bengal which had a 4-tier system. Tamil Nadu and Karnataka did not have non-officials on district development councils. The bold deviation from the Mehta pattern was in Maharashtra and Gujarat where instead of Panchayat Samiti it was the Zilla Parishad which was the point of decentralization to which substantial functions of development were earmarked. During the first five years of Panchayati Raj, from 1959 to 1964, there was a period of ascendancy; but after Nehru there came the decline. In the new government constituted by Indira Gandhi in January 1966, the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation was merged in the sprawling Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Even in the Lok Sabha demand was made to abolish the programme of Ministry of Community Development early in 1965. Schemes for rural development like Pilot Scheme for Growth Centres, the Dry Land Area Development Scheme for Rural Employment, Small Farmers Development Agency and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour Development Agency Schemes, pilot Intensive Rural Employment Projects started in 1972-73 and other employment schemes that followed were organised outside the infrastructure of Panchayati Raj. A new Department of Rural Development was created in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in October 1973, which dropped altogether the term "Community Development". Even in Maharashtra, special agencies were established outside the purview of the Zilla Parishad. Planning work in respect of this scheme was also
not entrusted to the Zilla Parishad but to a planning council under the Chairmanship of the Minister. The Asoka Mehta Committee recommended the restoration and full involvement of Panchayati Raj institutions in the process of rural development. However, even though the recommendations were accepted at the conference of the Chief Ministers, they were not universally followed up.

**The New Strategy**

The new agricultural strategy under the Green Revolution arose out of the conviction that agricultural development would not be possible without raising the technological base of agricultural productivity much above the traditional levels. This conviction was greatly reinforced by the droughts of 1966-67. The task of formulating the policies connected with new strategy and seeing them through the Cabinet and the Parliament and the country at large was shouldered by Shri C. Subramaniam who was Union Minister for Food & Agriculture and Community Development from 1966-67. In this task he got the political support from successive Prime Ministers as well as from scientists and senior public servants. Shri Subramaniam has himself given an account of how the strategy was formulated and executed.

After Lal Bahadur Shastri took over as Prime Minister on Nehru's death on 27th May, 1964, he offered the portfolio of Food & Agriculture to Shri Subramaniam. As soon as he took over, he told the Prime Minister that he would study the situation and come to him and the Cabinet with a paper. He made an extensive study of the agricultural situation, the reasons for the non-performance on the agricultural front and identify the constraints.
Price incentive

He found that one of the main constraints was the agricultural price situation which contributed to the stagnation of the agricultural sector. It is because of the price policy adopted since independence that Indian agriculture was a losing concern for the farmer. This policy which bore the rigours of the Second World War, consisted of rationing of foodgrains and procurement of foodgrains from the farmers at fixed prices which were advantageous to the consumer rather than the producer. This lack of incentive impeded private investment in agriculture. The Minister, therefore, felt that the price policy must undergo a radical change. He prepared for the Cabinet a paper pointing out that the past policy of unremunerative prices to the farmer must be reversed. While there was difference of opinion in the Cabinet, ultimately the Ministry's view prevailed. But before this the Minister had to request the Prime Minister to relieve him of the portfolio if his policy was not accepted by the Cabinet. After the Cabinet decision a committee was appointed with L.V. Jha who was then Prime Minister's Secretary, to go into the policy regarding agricultural prices. The Committee immediately recommended an increase of 15 per cent in the procurement price and accordingly the Minister made the announcement in October, 1964. The next step was the appointment of an Agricultural Prices Commission in January 1965 with a leading agriculture economist as the head of the Commission to make an intensive study of the price structure of the agricultural sector. Third step was intended to ensure that the farmer gets the price so fixed. In the absence of a public agency, it was the trader who could dictate the price. It was, therefore, necessary to bring into existence a public agency. That is how the Food Corporation of India came into existence. The FCI was
asked to purchase in the wheat surplus areas of Punjab, Haryana, Western U.P., M.P. and Rajasthan wheat during the harvest season at the support price so as to prevent the traders from depressing the prices below that level. The Food Corporation was given the target of one to two million tons of wheat and 2-3 million tons of rice for procurement. Thus the farmer had the actual support of the public sector organisation. The fourth step was a programme of storage construction with standards that could prevent deterioration of foodgrains. To undertake a big programme of storage, the Warehousing Corporation was brought into existence. It was essential to build storage facilities at various strategic points. The fifth step was the creation of processing facilities in the modern sector. This led to the establishment of modern rice mills which would procure rice in the form of paddy for conversion into rice.

However, ironically though the Minister wanted to sustain agricultural prices at high level, he had to step up the volume of imported foodgrains during 1964-65 to 1966-67 — about ten million tons — to prevent deaths due to starvation. In 1966-67 the import was of the order of 11 million tons.

It was, therefore, realised that price incentive was not enough and the new strategy must concentrate on increasing the productivity of land.

**Science & Technology**

For raising the productivity of agriculture the Minister was convinced that it can be done only through introduction of science and technology. The Minister differed from the view often held that farmers knew everything about agriculture. He was convinced that scientific methods of crop management have to be propagated and we have to alter
radically the whole set up of agricultural practices which were geared to the low level of productivity, and therefore to replace the out-dated ideas and outmoded tools of agriculture. The Minister's first pronouncement after assuming the office was to this effect. In order to encourage agricultural science it was necessary to give due recognition to the profession of agricultural scientists. The Minister, therefore, took his second Paper to the Cabinet on the subject of revision of the pay scales of the agricultural scientists. Secondly, the Minister put a top eminent agricultural scientist, Dr. B.P. Pal, as Director-General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research removing a permanent civil servant who was the incumbent. The third step was the reorganisation of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research as an autonomous body with the responsibility for administering all the research institutions — some 15 or 16 of them — which were being run as subordinate offices of the Department of Agriculture. This was not conducive to the growth of scientific culture. The next step was the reorganisation of the structure of non-food Commodity Committees. There was no coordination of the research work undertaken by these Committees. It was, therefore, decided that these research commodity committees should be abolished and the research undertaken by these committees should be coordinated under the ICAR within the framework of its general research programme. Since a number of Members of Parliament held positions with these committees like Chairman and Vice-chairman, there was hue and cry in Parliament against the abolition of these committees. The Minister was, therefore, obliged that the research work of these committees be handed over to the ICAR while the development work should
continue to be looked after by the Commodity Committees. The next step was the establishment of the Agricultural Research Service.

In order to promote research in the States the Minister felt that Agricultural Science research should be removed from the Departments of Agriculture and transferred to the Agriculture Universities which were to be set up in every State. Many of the progressive States immediately agreed to this and put the University in charge of agriculture science. As a result, there are twenty Agriculture Universities with eminent scientists as Vice Chancellors combining in them the interacting functions of education, training and research.

The three central institutes namely, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute at Delhi, the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Izzatnagar and the National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal were declared as institutes of national importance enjoying considerable freedom and autonomy in the reorganised sector.

A part of the coordinated research policy was to ask the research institutions to direct research towards specifically identified problems and their solutions and set time targets for scientific research work. There should be projects with precise targets and benefits.

Hybrid & Yielding Varities of Seeds

The third major step which was the proximate cause of the Green Revolution was the decision to import, develop and propagate Hybrid and High Yielding varieties of wheat and rice. The starting point of this momentous development was a meeting between Dr. Ralph Cummings of the Rockefeller Foundation in India and the Minister who gave the Minister an account of the high yielding varieties developed on the research farms attached to the research laboratories which were capable of
yielding around five to six thousand kilograms per hectare. Two years
had passed since the new seeds had been introduced. They had performed
well on the research farms without the emergence of any adverse factors
which would stand in the way of their extension to farmers' fields.
This was the new agricultural technology which was helpful in increasing
the production of wheat. The Minister, therefore, decided to formulate a
strategy to utilise the new varieties. He established three panels — a
scientists' panel, a panel of agricultural economists, and a panel of
agricultural administrators — to advise him in this field. Some
scientists suggested that we should develop our own varieties rather
than depend on seeds brought from Mexico, since it may not be possible
for the Indian farmers who were traditional farmers to adopt the new
technology. However, the younger scientists felt that we should take a
bold decision and proceed with the introduction of new varieties on a
large scale. The sociologists felt that only the big farmers would take
advantage of the new varieties and this would lead to disparity between
big and small farmers and lead to social tensions in the rural areas.
It would, therefore, be dangerous to introduce the new strategy until
Land Reform Legislation was fully implemented. Political controversies
arose. The Communists felt that this was an American idea and should be
resisted; otherwise it would lead to American domination in the field of
agriculture. In view of this position the Minister decided to bring a
paper about the new approach before the Cabinet rather than to ask the
Cabinet to give a decision. In addition, in order to proceed with the
High Yielding varieties he asked for and got the support of Prime
Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Mrs. Gandhi. The Minister was,
therefore, able to go ahead with his programme of High Bred and High
Yielding Variety of seeds. The Minister had to persuade the State Governments. The Minister did it through the Sub-Committee of the National Development Council on Agricultural Production and Irrigation.

The Minister felt that the new strategy could not wait until land reform legislations were implemented. Even though there might be social tension because the benefits were distributed unequally, the new technology would provide a potential and prospect of self-sufficiency for foodgrains and would eventually be available even to the small farmer. As regards the American domination of Indian agriculture, it was much better to introduce the new technology rather than to depend on America for imported foodgrains. Thus an atmosphere was created sympathetic for the introduction of the new technology.

Two high-yielding varieties of wheat namely, Lerma Rojo and Sonora-64, imported from Mexico showed the greatest production potential. Experimentation was also done by way of exposing plants to atomic radiation.

As regards the rice varieties, the Minister collected small quantities of new varieties of rice during his visit to the International Rice Research Institute at Los Banos, Manila where he had been to attend an FAO Regional Conference. Of these varieties, the Taichung Native I and Tainan-3 were found more suitable.

While the nucleus seed was produced under controlled conditions of research farms, their propagation to the farmers had to be done by the seed producers. For the purposes of seed multiplication, the National Seeds Corporation was established at the National level. A State Farm Corporation was also established at the national level to be incharge of state farms like the Suratgarh Farm in Rajasthan. The Centre recommended that similar corporations should be established at the State...
level which should take over management of the seed farms. Thus production, processing and distribution of seed was developed as an industry with the help of private sector.

Since the new varieties could give high production only after they were given adequate doses of fertiliser, the Minister approached the Finance Minister for resources for the import of fertilisers. Necessary foreign exchange was secured to mount a big import programme for fertilisers. Finally, the programme of modernisation of the irrigation system and the controlled irrigation was undertaken to have an optimum crop water impact.

**Extension, publicity and training**

Extension was another pre-requisite of the new strategy. The adequacy of the existing extension agencies for delivering the message of the technology had to be examined. The village level workers were made responsible only for agricultural operations and retraining programme for them was chalked out.

In addition to the extension services, publicity on large scale was given throughout the country to create responsive atmosphere for the new technology through radio, press and cinema.

Apart from the village level workers, the progressive farmers were also attuned to the new technology. It was felt that the enthusiasm and interest of the progressive farmers would spark off a general reaction in the countryside leading to expansion in agricultural production.

Thus research, extension and training were fully integrated. It was calculated that out of a total of 130 million hectares under the crops at least 1/10th, i.e. 13 million hectares, would be covered under
the HYV within a period of five years. If every hectare yielded additional production of 2.5 tons per hectare, it would mean extra production of 32 million tons.

A dozen National Demonstration Plots were also set up on farms belonging to farmers. Minister himself visited a number of these farms during 1965-66. The farmers were amazed at the level of productivity achieved. Particularly, farmers in the Punjab took to the new technology like fish to water while other States like U.P. and Bihar, even though endowed with facilities for assured irrigation and suitable climate and soil, did not equal the performance of the Punjab who were hardy lot of enterprising people.

Objection of the Member, Planning Commission

However, the new initiative involving large investment was objected to by the Member of the Planning Commission incharge of Agriculture, since till early 1966 the Minister had bypassed the Planning Commission. The Member complained to the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister asked the Minister whether he had the support of the Planning Commission. The Minister, therefore, met the Member and frankly told the Member that seasons and events could not wait till the Planning Commission Members became convinced about this new programme. Thus, according to the Minister, the Planning Commission also became a bottleneck.

Gearing up administration

In order to ensure that the new strategy was properly followed up, the Minister picked up a civil servant who was Chief Secretary, Orissa, for the post of Secretary (Agriculture). For dealing with the problem of food imports and distribution he chose another competent civil
servant as Food Secretary. These two officers proved to be the pillars of various action programmes on the side of food, production and distribution.

Credit

Special steps were taken to provide credit facilities for the small farmer.

Small and marginal farmers programmes were started to provide special credit facilities and inputs on a preferential basis. As a result even small farmers adopted the new strategy.

Pests and diseases

The use of the new varieties introduced new pests and diseases. So continuous research was undertaken to evolve new varieties which would be resistant to these diseases.

Mechanisation

New strategy led to greater use of tractors, machine harvesters and threshers. At the same time, three crops were raised and as a result, despite of mechanisation, more agricultural employment opportunities became available during the post-harvest operations and during the three-crop seasons.

Irrigation

Then there were problems of irrigation management. Irrigation was a separate Ministry and Irrigation Department felt that agriculture existed for irrigation and not irrigation for agriculture. The Minister, therefore, put forth the point of view that the three ministries — Agriculture, Community Development and Irrigation — had to be combined. It was, however, only later that 'Irrigation' was added
on. The problem of rising water table under irrigation project like Bhakra-Nangal was also to be tackled. To remove extra underground water and control salinity, conjoint irrigation was introduced in the shape of tube-wells which became very popular with the Punjab farmers. As a result of the new strategy, Punjab which was a traditionally wheat-growing area took to rice, and West Bengal, a rice-growing area, took to wheat-growing.

Impact of the policy

Such was the success of the new strategy that a distinguished economist in U.K. predicted that while there would be a widespread famine in the year 2,000 throughout the world, it could not occur in India!

White revolution

Following the Green Revolution, there was also the 'white revolution' in the shape of increased milk production which was achieved through the organization of cooperatives. Here the lead was given by AMUL (Anand Milk Units Limited). This cooperative was formed at the initiative of Sardar Vallabh Jhal Patel. The Anand Milk Cooperative Union was based on village societies. Each village society was so organized that there was a person to purchase milk and another to test milk. Prompt payment to the farmers was also ensured. Various services were provided to the milk producers in the shape of mobile units and artificial insemination services. With the collaboration of Denmark and Newzealand, the best available dairy processing technology was introduced. The Union was fortunate in having the services of Mr. V. Kurien who provided dynamism to this dairy enterprise.
In 1964, Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, visited Anand to open a new Baby Food and Cheese factory. The Prime Minister was so impressed that he asked Mr. Kurien to investigate whether AMUL experience could be duplicated in other districts, not only of Gujarat, but other States also. The Prime Minister discussed this with the Minister for Agriculture. A series of discussions were held leading to the establishment of the National Dairy Development Board under the chairmanship of Mr. Kurien. Another organization, the Indian Dairy Corporation, was established to provide financial resources needed by the dairy plants in various States. The Dairy Development Board was to provide technical assistance to cooperative societies of State Governments which wanted to set up modern dairy plants.

The development of dairying and demand for equipment required for dairy led to a big demand for stainless steel. So a plant had to be set up to produce stainless steel material.

Dairy Development on cooperative basis on a nationwide scale was done through a big programme called Operation Flood. As a result, fourteen plants on the Anand Model were set up. The introduction of such enterprise in the country-side brought about change in the attitude of the people.

**Integrated Rural Development**

This concept was evolved in the process of formulating a science and technology plan for India. The Minister put it to the National Committee on Science and Technology as to how science and technology could contribute to rural transformation. It was suggested that a comprehensive survey of the natural resources should be made with the use of 'Satellite Technology' with the help of the Institute called
'National Remote Sensing Agency'. It could be used for estimating available quantities of underground water. Arising out of these discussions a national approach was evolved in the shape of plans for regeneration of rural areas which were called Integrated Rural Development. Various components like agriculture industry, cattle development, health and education had to be integrated to change the situation in the rural areas. In 1976 Shri Subramaniam who was Finance Minister, submitted along with his Budget a paper on Integrated Rural Development. One district in each State was selected for the introduction of this project. The subject was also taken up at the Science Conference at Waltair held on 3-7 January, 1976. The Chairman's address was given by Dr. Swaminathan which brought out various aspects of Integrated Rural Development, and how science and technology could contribute to the success of the programme. However this line was not followed after Subramaniam's departure from the administrative scene and what came eventually to be established as IRDP was, indeed a very different kettle of fish.

Rural Development Programmes

Formulation of the Programme of Small and Marginal Farmers:

This followed the Report of the All-India Credit Review Committee (1969) appointed by the Reserve Bank of India in July 1966 to assess the working of the Integrated Scheme of Rural Credit. The Committee was chaired by Mr. B. Venkatappiah and a member of the earlier Rural Credit Survey Committee appointed in 1952. He later became Member of the Planning Commission in 1967. Among the members of the Committee were Professor D.R. Gadgil who later became Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, and Mr. B. Sivaraman, the then Secretary, Ministry of
Agriculture, who later became the Cabinet Secretary. In its interim Report in 1969, the Committee recommended the establishment of Small Farmers Development Agency. As regards the Marginal Farmer, the Committee recommended a "far-reaching programme of rehabilitation including/extending beyond mere credit". The recommendations were considered by the Government of India. The Planning Commission also studied the problems of the small farmer and felt that the approach and institutional strategy proposed for small farmer were also applicable to the marginal farmer. The Planning Commission, therefore, decided in consultation with the Minister Incharge, to launch a programme for the marginal farmers and agricultural labourers in addition to the programme for small farmers. As a consequence, the total package was included in the Fourth Five Year Plan in the shape of two schemes of pilot projects in the Central sector — one for the Small Farmer Development Agency, and the other for Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour. These agencies were provided with special funds from Government of India with a nucleus staff under a Project Officer, and were intended to act as catalysts for the development of the districts of their operation. The Commissioner/District Collector was made the Chairman of the agency and representatives of the Departments and institutions concerned were its members.

**Drought Prone Area Programme**

Significant expenditure was incurred from the National Exchequer during the drought years on drought relief operations for stabilising and upgrading the economy of the drought prone areas. During the period from 1969-70 to 1971-72 the expenditure on drought relief was nearly Rs.420 crores. For 1972-73 the expenditure was in the neighbourhood of
Rs.370 crores. In a State like Rajasthan the annual expenditure on relief was as large or even larger than the annual plan outlay for the State. The Planning Commission felt that this expenditure on drought relief can also be used to generate employment in the rural sector. This led to the announcement of the Rural Works Programme by Government of India. The Central Coordination Committee for Rural Development Programme was constituted under the chairmanship of Member (Agriculture) of the Planning Commission. The Committee appointed an official sub-committee known as the Gidwani Committee to identify drought prone districts where rural works could be initiated on the basis of criteria like incidence of rainfall, extent of irrigated area in the district, chronic liability to drought, etc. Taking into account the recommendations of this Committee and the proposals sent by the State Governments, the Government of India identified 54 territorial units as representing drought prone areas extending over 72 districts.

Though the idea of Planning Commission was to integrate rural works programme with the broader framework of development strategy, the actual proposals from the States consisted of district schemes without any attempt to integrate the work within the broad framework of development strategy within which the programme was to operate. While the schemes were designed to provide employment, they did not reflect the definite approach to solve the drought problems within a long-term perspective.

At the time of mid-term appraisal of the Fourth Plan this programme was re-designated as a Drought Prone Area Programme, and was classified from non-Plan to central Plan Scheme. In order to relate the works programme to a long term strategy of development, the Planning
Commission established in 1971 a Task Force on Integrated Rural Development under the Chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Minhas with the following terms of reference.

a. To spell out the main elements of broad strategy of integrated rural development oriented towards more employment and better production base in the fifth five Year Plan;

b. To work out the pattern of technology, investments and institutions for rural development programme appropriate to different agro-climatic conditions and levels of development; and

c. To review in the light of (a) and (b) long-term special programmes for rural employment and suggest modifications for synthesis into a programme of integrated rural development.

This Task Force submitted its report in January 1973. The Committee, as the Central Coordinating Committee on Rural Development, considered the report and recommended that the DPAP should not be restricted to four specified activities namely, minor and medium irrigation, afforestation and soil conservation, roads and water supply, but also must cover cattle, sheep and husbandry, dairying, etc. which are highly relevant to the situation in the drought prone areas.

Thus the policy formulation which led to the emergence of the Drought Prone Areas Programme was the result of several discussions and reviews by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Central Coordinating Committee on Rural Development of the Planning Commission.

Integrated Command Area Development

The programme emanated from the realisation that optimum utilisation of irrigation facilities brought into existence was not
taking place. During the appraisal of the Third Five Year Plan it was emphasised that the pace of utilisation of irrigation facilities would remain slow unless reasonable planned investment on command area development takes place. The decision to make such an investment was taken in 1964-65. But very little was done during the Third Plan period. During 1966-69, the period covered by the Annual Plans, a package approach to Command Area Development was formulated. It consisted of the soil surveys, land levelling and shaping, water management, drainage, localisation of cropping policies, consolidation of holdings, provision of inputs like credit, seed, fertilisers, pesticides, etc., building up adequate research base, extension and farmers' education and training, rural roads, marketing and storage and processing industries. During the Fourth Plan, the Union Government agreed to finance a comprehensive Command Area Programme provided the States agreed to arrange for necessary services and inputs for the package of Command Area Development. Original provision made in the Fourth Plan was Rs. 15 crores in the Central sector and covered ten irrigation commands. As a result of the mid-term appraisal of the Fourth Plan, the Central sector provision was increased to Rs. 25 crores. The International Development Association, an affiliate of the World Bank, also supported this programme.

The idea of integrated irrigation development programme was also discussed by the Irrigation Commission in 1969 and later accepted by the National Commission on Agriculture. A sub-group on agriculture administration was set up by the Union Cabinet with Mr. V.P. Naik, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, as Chairman. The proposal of Integrated Command Area Development was discussed in great detail by this group. This led to the preparation of a paper by Mr. Sivaraman, Member of the
Planning Commission, which was accepted by the Group. In 1973, the Irrigation and Command Area Division of the Planning Commission brought out a detailed paper programming Area Development Authority for Irrigation Command. This paper identified the following programmes:

a. Modernisation of the various operations of the irrigation system;

b. Development of main drainage system;

c. Development of field channels and field drainage system;

d. Land shaping of watershed area;

e. Exploitation of ground water for general irrigation; and

f. Fixing and enforcing suitable cropping schedule so as to get maximum output per unit of water and land.

The suggested plan of action was discussed in detail with the State Governments by the Member, Planning Commission at regional meetings under the leadership of Mr. Sivaraman which led to the following decisions:

1. Creation of Command Area Development Programme at the State level;

2. Command Area Development Authority at project level; and

3. Legislative enactment for enforcement of an appropriate rostering system of irrigation, on-farm development and enforcement of the cropping pattern.

On the basis of these decisions, the Union Agriculture Secretary wrote to the State Governments for the setting up of Command Area Development authorities by April 1, 1974.

The process of formulation of policy leading to Command Area Development Programme consisted of identification of the problem of under-utilisation of irrigation potential, discussions at various levels, recommendations of two Commissions and a Committee of Ministers
with inter-locking membership and support of the Planning Commission as well as the Ministries of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Thus in respect of all these programmes the basic policy choice was given by a Committee — in the case of SFDA and SMFA by the Rural Credit Review Committee in 1965, in the case of DPAP by the Task Force under Dr. Minhas, and in the case of Command Area Development by the Committee of Ministers, Irrigation Commission and National Agriculture Commission. The decisions of the Committee were based on specialists' reports as well as wide discussions. The inter-locking membership of the Committees provided the base of support. The technical aspects of the subject were handled by the Secretaries of the Committees as well as by the supporting Ministries. The Committees performed important functions in policy formulation by pooling knowledge and experience and expertise. The process of the report formulation by the Committees also made it possible for the Government to gauge public reactions and increase the acceptability of the approach. It is also seen that the political system has limited contribution in formulating the content of policy though it may be contributing towards the articulation of goals. The participation of politicians in the policy formulation process is only of a reactive character in the sense that as Members of Parliament and as Chief Ministers of States in the National Development Council they only react to the proposals placed before them. However, reacting to a proposal is different from being involved in exercising a choice. A more positive participation of the politicians in the process of policy formulation can both increase its acceptability as well as make it more relative to the wider framework of economic and social life.
The process of policy formulation in the field of agriculture and rural development which has been traced in the previous chapters can now be viewed in relation to the theory of policy contained in Chapters I and II.

The theory of incrementality says that policies at any point are only incremental to the already existing structure of policies. While this theory may hold good in developed countries, one doubts whether this is valid for developing countries. It is well known that the state in the developing countries is anxious to bring about rapid transformation in socio-economic life. In this context, therefore, what the state is anxious to introduce are not incremental policies but innovative policies calculated to bring about not marginal but structural changes. The State wants to bring about major departures through positive policies. The analysis of evolution of policies in the previous chapters shows that whether in the field of land reforms, cooperation, Panchayati Raj, new strategy of agriculture, anti-poverty programmes, fixation of agricultural prices of procurement and distribution of foodgrains through public agencies, in all these fields innovative policies were introduced. New institutions were established making a sharp departure from the past. The theory of incrementalism in policies must, therefore, be definitely rejected in the situation of developing countries such as ours. Theory of Incrementalism in policy formulation appears to be a counterpart of the theory of marginalism in economics and both seem to have little relevance to the situation in developing countries. On the other hand, the concept of symbolic policy is not without relevance. There is considerable element of populism in the policies of the governments whether at the Centre or in the States.
This is particularly reflected in respect of anti-poverty programmes. While populism must have its place in politics, government should not go in for policies and programmes which can fritter away scarce resources without durable benefits. So far as the Indian experience is concerned, it can be said that perhaps the element of policy analysis and the formulation of policies on the basis of such analysis is stronger than the symbolic policy.

Role of Expert Committees in the Process of Policy Formulation

The policy analysis was facilitated by a number of expert committee reports in almost every field of policy. This may be considered to be a strong point of the policy-making process in India.

In the formulation of policies in the field of agriculture (including food) and rural development, Government rightly sought the advice of expert committees from time to time. To the labours of these committees eminent publicmen, academic experts, seasoned administrators and socio-political workers brought to bear their wide knowledge and experience.

Some of the Committees in the field of Food Policy were:

1. Food grains policy Committee 1943\textsuperscript{10} (under Theodore Gregory)
2. Famine Enquiry Committee 1943\textsuperscript{11} (under Woodhead)
3. Foodgrains Policy Committee 1947\textsuperscript{12} (under Furushottamdas Thakurdas)
4. Food grains Procurement Committee 1950\textsuperscript{13} (under Thirumal Rao)
5. Grow More Food Enquiry Committee 1952\textsuperscript{14} (under V.T. Krishnamachari)
6. Food grains Enquiry Committee 1957\textsuperscript{15} (under Asoka Mehta) and
7. Food grains Policy Committee 1966\textsuperscript{16} (under P. Venkatappiah)
Some of the Committees in the field of agricultural policy and administration (including cooperation) were -

1. Royal Commission on Agriculture 1928
2. All India Rural Credit Survey Committee 1954
3. Study team (Paiwantra Mehta, Chairman) for study of community projects and national extension service 1957
4. Agricultural Administration Committee 1958
5. Ford Foundation team on agricultural production 1959
6. Working Group on Cooperative Farming 1959
7. Working Group on interdepartmental and institutional coordination for agricultural production 1963
8. Administrative Reforms Commission on agriculture administration 1968
9. All India Rural Credit Review Committee 1965
10. Task Force on Agrarian Relations 1973
11. National Commission on Agriculture 1976

I have constructed Chart I below to show the element of policy analysis as against political interaction in the policy-making process:

It brings out fairly clearly the predominant element of policy analysis in the policy formulation process.

In Chart II we have referred to 'Path Analysis', i.e., an analysis of the variables in the environment on the formulation of policies, and further of the impact of policy, direct and indirect, on the socio-economic situation. Chart II uses the technique of path analysis to depict the relationship between environment and proximate causes and policy formulation on one hand, and the impact and consequences of policies and the constraint from which the implementation of policies suffers on the other hand.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Decision</th>
<th>Policy Analysis</th>
<th>Political Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Land reforms</td>
<td>Reports of Committees appointed by political parties and the Planning Commission</td>
<td>a. Mainly a tug of war between political parties — with leftist parties and progressive elements in the Congress party supporting them and conservative elements in the Congress party sabotaging them in the process of implementation.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Peasant movements as against landlord lobbies.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Court decisions often delaying, sometimes obstructing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Administration not always very enthusiastic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Community Development</td>
<td>1. Evaluation and other reports.</td>
<td>a. Background of the pre-independence experiments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Annual Conferences of Development Commissioners</td>
<td>b. Pilot projects for development and refugee rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Jawaharlal Nehru's vision and support to the initiatives of S.K. Dey.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>d. Early popular enthusiasm for rural development.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Policy Decision</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Reports of National Commission on Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. CRAPICARD Report</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>New Agricultural Strategy</em></td>
<td>a. Intensive analysis within the Ministry in consultation with agriculture scientists under the leadership of Minister (Subramaniam)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Advice of leading American Scientists like Norman Borloph and Ralph Cummine.</td>
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<th>Policy Decision</th>
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<th>Political Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6. SEBA and MPAL Programmes</td>
<td>d. Report of the National Commission on Agriculture.</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. T.P.A.P.</td>
<td>Report of the Rural Credit Review Committee</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Employment Programmes</td>
<td>Report of the Task Force and other groups.</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. RBMP</td>
<td>a. Pandekar-Eath Study of Poverty in India.</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Establishment of Agricultural Prices Commission and Food Corporation of India</td>
<td>b. Studies of the Planning Commission.</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Nationalization of Wholesale trade</td>
<td>Analysis in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.</td>
<td>Initiative of the Prime Minister to create a popular image of Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>Direct Impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inequitable system of land tenure, rural of parties</td>
<td>Land reforms</td>
<td>Some Relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In India's predominately rural economy and society, a pre-colonial</td>
<td>Panchayat Raj</td>
<td>a. Rural community made conscious of all fulfilled development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-colonial</td>
<td></td>
<td>b. Network of rural development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. Rural infrastructure created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study team for Evaluation of Panchayati Raj</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Panchayati Raj</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperative development from 1964 onwards</td>
<td>Pl in approach and impart teams recommended integrated co-operative development</td>
<td>Cooperation - Integrated Rural Credit System, establishment of marketing &amp; pricing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pressing need for increased food production and raw materials</td>
<td>a. Availability of Hybrid &amp; HYV seed</td>
<td>New Agricultural Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New technology &amp; cooperatives not adequately benefitting small &amp; marginal farmers</td>
<td>Recommendations of the Natural Credit Review Committee</td>
<td>SFTA and MFAL programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain shadow Drought prime areas needed special treatment</td>
<td>Recommendations of the FAP</td>
<td>Report of the task force</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environment</th>
<th>Proximate</th>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Constraints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underemployment and disguised unemployment in rural areas</td>
<td>employment generation one of the principal goals of planning</td>
<td>Employment Programmes</td>
<td>a. Purchasing</td>
<td>Rise in Agricultural wages</td>
<td>In some cases inefficient implementation, corruption and leakages and lack of durable assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A number of rural development schemes already introduced</td>
<td>Need for their coordination</td>
<td>IRDP</td>
<td>b. Prevention of landless starvation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Programmes not always suitable to specific and different situations in different parts of the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonal instability of agricultural prices</td>
<td>a. Perception of the Minister in charge</td>
<td>APC</td>
<td>Incentive price to the production farmers</td>
<td>a. Operational efficacy of procurement agencies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>