CHAPTER ONE
Chapter-I

Introduction

The Prime Minister of India addressing the Collectors of the country on 20th May 2005 said "The Collector or the District Magistrate remains even today the lynchpin of the administrative system in India more than a hundred years after the creation of this institution by the British. The more I think whatever one's views about colonialism may be, I think the British Empire was an act of great adventure and enterprise and creativity. The institutions that we have inherited, many of them, have served our country well and all-India civil service happens to be one of those prize institutions which have been a proud legacy of ours for over hundred years. And the founding fathers of our republic were wise men. They recognized the need for an all-India Civil Service even though it was a legacy of the British Raj." 1

The aforesaid paragraph aptly describes the prominence of collector's office in India although it carries on its shoulder the tag of British legacy. Towards the middle of the eighteenth century the legendary East India Company shifted from trade to conquest and when it had to govern the acquired areas, it took recourse to Moghul administrative setup, where the empire had been divided into provinces and further sub divided into 'Sarkars' or districts, the key units. Philip Woodruff quotes Lord Wavell in 'The men who ruled India', who remarked during his farewell speech that
the British would be remembered not by this institution or by that as by the ideal they left behind of what a district officer should be. The ideal of an officer totally responsible for the primary political unit i.e., the district traces its origin to ‘Akbar the Great’ who after conquering Bengal broke it into ‘Sarkars’ with a single officer officiating as his agent.

Akbar’s naming of district as ‘Sarkar’ still holds good in the minds and imagination of the most common man in the country as for him ‘Collector’ or ‘District Magistrate’ is truly the ‘Sarkar’. An ignorant villager may not know anything of the constitution of the country, but he views the collector as the kingpin of district administration, a symbol of authority and a living reality to him. Individuals of all walks of life approach the collector for redressing their grievances and seeking remedies for their problems.

Much before the British ICS got merged into IAS, to restate the moral value of an Indian career British Prime Minister Lloyd George spoke in British Parliament and his speech till today carries the significance of British legacy attached to the much debated office of the Collector, "Their every word is a command, every sentence a decree, accepted by the people, accepted willingly with trust in their judgment and fairness, which might be pride of our race. I can see no period, when the Indians can dispense with the guidance and assistance of the small nucleus of the British Civil Service of British officials in India. This twelve hundred in a population of three hundred and fifteen million. They are the steel frame of the whole structure."
I do not care what you build on to it- if you take that steel frame out, the fabric will collapse. There is an institution which will not cripple, there is an institution, which we will not deprive of its freedom and privileges, and that is the institution which built up the British Raj in India— the British Civil Service in India.

Significance

So undoubtedly the attachment of immense significance to the office of the Collector was a powerful legacy of colonial administrative structure. For spearheading revenue administration, maintenance of law and order and ensuring social justice to the deprived and downtrodden sections of the society, general administration in Indian context has assumed unquestionable supremacy over functional and technical administration and at the district level, it is the collector who epitomizes general administration. District administration is one of the most prominent characteristic of the Indian administrative system and has been its most powerful institution. Right from the colonial regime, it has been rigorously designed to bring the totality of the government closer to the people. Surprisingly even many governmental institutions have suffered through the decay of democratic values, the District Collector is still accepted as the 'preminent' officer of district administration. For the people, he is the government and around him the concept and practice of administration revolves. The significance
of this office is evident also from the British point of view. The maintenance of position of the district officer was absolutely essential to the maintenance of the British Rule in India and any diminution in his influence and authority will be clearly purchased even by an improvement in the administration of justice.

**Evolution and Changing Role**

Although we ascribe British origin to the office of the Collector, this unique concept of district administration is quite unparalleled in the sense that nowhere in the world, such a powerful office exists. The concept of the district as a unit of administration in India, apart from the fact that it has proved a convenient and practical mode of governance and administration, derives somewhat from the pattern of French Prefecture, with the District Officer as the 'Prefect'.

To track the evolution of the office of the Collector, it's appropriately justified to take the British period as its starting point. During the British days, District was the focal point of administration and the prime task of district administration was collection of revenues and maintenance of law and order. Collector as the head of district administration was close to the people in general so far as providing solutions to their diverse problems were concerned. After independence, the district administration underwent...
a metamorphosis and as a result of this radical transformation the office is gradually assuming to wear a new look. The changing role of district administration has necessitated a drastic change in the structure and task of the Collector's office. While we analyse the evolution of the office of the Collector in the following paragraphs, it has to be constantly kept in mind that the factors like democracy and development have prompted virtual facelift in the image and status of Collector. In a welfare state like that of India the ultimate aim of the government is to bring lasting changes in the standard of living of the people. That's the reason the Collector is increasingly regarded as a public servant and agent of social change than a representative of the government as in the past, and the focus of administration has gradually shifted from maintenance of law and order to augmentation of social welfare.

The seven decades preceding the 'Sepoy Mutiny' was the formative years of district administration. The two prominent schools in this regard were the Cornwallis school and the Munro school. The principles of 'check and balance' and 'division of power' were cardinal principles of the Cornwallis school while Munro school emphasized the Mughal tradition of concentration of powers in the hands of a man making him the real ruler. With East India Company becoming the governing agency of British government in London, Collector of revenue became the principal representative of the district. Levy and collection of revenue were placed as
the primary task of East India Company which started with trading as its prime most role in India since Army with limited resource and manpower could not be present everywhere, collector also became responsible for maintaining law and order and dispensing justice.  

Lord Cornwallis was opposed to the concentration of administrative and judicial powers in one hand. So he broke the authoritarian legacy of Indian administrative history and tried to build the office of the District representative 'explicitly on the principles of English political tradition.  

The Magistrate and Collector in the Munro pattern (1818-1858) in Bombay, Madras and North-East province was an effective ruler with a large gamut of discretionary powers. The Collector was "practically a local Governor exercising a wider ranging superintendence over his district."

The Bengal system of district administration, where the district officer was mere a revenue collector underwent a change in 1859. Based upon the recommendation given by Halliday the first Lt Governor of Bengal, Lord Dalhousie and Lord Canning, it was decided to bring the districts of Bengal in line with Munro pattern under a Collector and District Magistrate.

**Era of Bureaucracy (1859-1919)**

The contribution of British imperialism in India was heightened with passing of Indian Council's Act of 1861, Land Revenue and Tenancy Laws.
and three landmark codes, The Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code and Civil Procedure Code (IPC, CrPC & CPC) respectively. The growth in legislative activities curbed the executive and discretionary supremacy of the Collector. Even the Collector remained as the chief agent of the government in his district overseeing law and order and overall well-being of the citizens.

With the growth of public business, new departments of highly specialized nature evolved which absorbed part of Collector's roles and responsibilities. Because of the technicalities and special training involved in the process, the concerned departments were represented in the district through their officials. This eventually gave rise to "a growing rigidity, hardening of arteries, an increasing uniformity, a sense of superiority and a lack of human sympathy, more red tape, more office work, loss of the old direct rule of one man." 13

The appointment of Sir George Campbell, a great protagonist of paternal school was a landmark in the process of Collector's evolution. He was of strong view to govern actively. By active governance he meant to "use the power and influence of the executive more actively and decidedly in promoting the honest performance by each class of the obligation which undoubtedly attach to it by law or otherwise." 14 Campbell’s primary move in the district was to strengthen the position of the district officer in the district,
so that the latter as govt representative could help him in governing more effectively. He tried to ensure that district level officers of specialized departments should not have too many masters. So in Campbell's model of governance necessary changes were made to make the heads of departments agents and inspectors of the government bound to advise and guide their local officers without exercising local authority over them. The whole intention was to make the magistrate-Collectors, no longer the jacks of many departments and masters of none but in fact the general controlling authority over all departments in each district. Buckland describes collector as the real executive chief and administration of the tract committed to him and supreme over everyone and everything except the proceedings of court of justice. But this unquestionable supremacy was confined in majority to the gamut of law and order especially police administration. Other district level officers could not be brought under the Collector in a clear cut manner. The purely technical aspects of their operations continued to be guided and supervised by their superiors at the provincial headquarters irrespective of the fact that certain amount of confusion and chaos prevailed in the line of command. Towards the close of the vice royalty of Lord Curzon it was made clear that civil servants in districts were more tied to their desks than to spend time in meeting people and listening to their grievances.
The Royal Commission upon decentralization (1907 to 1909) after carefully analyzing the position of the district officer found that the position has been substantially reduced and recommended that his position as the overall administrative head of the district should be acknowledged by all special departments. The Commission emphasized the unifying influence of the district officer over the various branches of government work in a district and recommended that he should be empowered to call for information which he thinks appropriate from any departmental official and in matters of importance such information should be spontaneously forwarded to him. In addition, the views expressed by the Collector should receive the fullest consideration.

The Collector during Constitutional Reform (1919-1947)

The new Legislative Council hinted upon making departmental activities independent of district officer particularly in the departments like education, excise, agriculture and cooperatives. In the old setup, the advice of the district officer was irreversibly sought on questions of policy. In the revised circumstances, although the Collector was consulted on such issues, the views of the legislative body and local politicians carried weight. This substantially reduced the scope of his endeavors in relation to local administration. The Collector was left ordinarily with the duties of collection of revenue and enforcement of law and order. According to a govt report of
1930 Collector had the duties of maintaining the fabric of the government and securing a 'good part of the revenue needed for such maintenance'  

During the reforms period the role of district officer as the collector did not alter much but as district magistrate his role became prominent so far as combating non cooperation movement and handling communal riots. The Simon Commission strongly opined for not further weakening of the position of the district officer and suggested that in spite of the transformations taking place the Collector must remain a very important person in the district and the "embodiment of effective authority, and the resource to whom the countryside turns in time of difficulty or crisis." 

Collectors in Independent India

The British Civil Servants became champions of Indian Democracy

In the initial years after the independence, distrust was implicit in the reaction of newly created government towards civil services because it was enormously viewed as the last remains of British Raj in India. But due to the high respect exhibited by the civil servants to the norms of constitution and demonstrated ability in protecting the common man from breach of social justice the spell of distrust was not too long.

Collectors as Inter Departmental Coordinator
After independence a number of departments proliferated and there was steady increase in the feeling of departmental loyalties of district level officers. This grossly resulted in rise of independent and disconnected activities. Whenever government tried to take up any activity, anew department came up with qualified personnel at regional, district and field level. At field level there was lack of proper coordination and in fact no sense of common objectives. As a result development activities in the district had no unity of approach and were disrupted for paucity of resources and manpower to carry out the extension works.  

Collector as an Agent of Development

The Grow More Food Enquiry Committee constituted after the introduction of community development and National Extension Service focused on the need for an organization for intensive rural work that would reach every farmer and result in coordinated development of rural life in totality. While providing the basis for reorganization of district administration, the Planning Commission pleaded for strengthening and improving the machinery of general administration and integrating activities of various development departments in the district and providing a common extension organization.
The community development project administration, which started in October 1952, initially was not an organic part of the administration and the community development projects were 'virtual islands' in the administration. Consequent on the starting of National Extension Service Blocks, speedy execution of programmes became inevitable but was hampered by lack of financial and administrative authority over departments and absence of proper delegation. In order to make this programme a success it became absolutely necessary to ensure coordination among the districts and Sub-divisional heads of departments. So these pressing factors transformed the Collector's role to that of principal development and welfare officer of the district.

According to Dimock this pattern of supervisory authority and control of the collector is called 'dual hierarchy' which is so for the best proved solution for the problem concerning lack of coordination. This theory is an important organization concept and John D Millet opines that only in dual hierarchy we can build an integrated structure for field oriented administrative operation.

Collector in the phase of democratic decentralization

The Balwantray Mehta Study Team Report which has been described by Tinker as the "most influential survey of local administration which had..."
appeared since independence” recommended the Collector to be the chairman of Zilla Parishad. The committee recommended that the Collector should be kept outside of the three tier system and as the agent of the government informed of the happenings and general trend. But under the chairmanship of Jaiprakash Narain, AVARD a voluntary organization suggested in its report that Collector should be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Zilla Parishad. Surprisingly among many suggestions in the 73rd amendment, the recommendation of AVARD, 28 have been placed with proper sanctity. As a result, the Collector is now acting as the Chief Executives of DRDAs those are governed by Zilla Parishads with the President, Zilla Parishad acting as the Chairperson and the Project Director DRDA, a member of IAS or a senior member of provincial civil service acting as the secretary to Zilla Parishad.

The changing role of Collector

For a long time in the past the Collector enjoyed absolute powers. In many circumstances and eventualities, his administration was epitome of autocratic rule and hardly there was possibility of interference from any quarter. Collector’s unquestionable supremacy has been truly summed up in Montagu Chelmsford Report “The district officer has a dual capacity. As Collector, he is head of the revenue organization and as a magistrate, he exercises general supervision over the inferior courts and in particular
police work. In areas where there is no permanent revenue settlement, he can at any time be in touch with, through his revenue subordinates every inch of his territory. Several other specialized services exist with staff of their own. But in varying degrees, the district officer influences the policy in all these matters and he is always there, in the background to lend his support or if need be to mediate between specialized civil service and the people.\textsuperscript{29}

During the British Raj the Collector was answerable to only the Board of Revenue and government. First time to define the authority conferred on Collector, Regulation II of 1803 was passed in Madras Presidency. In the aforesaid regulation Collectors were declared to have authority to superintend and control under the orders of the Board of Revenue, all persons employed in the executive administration of the public revenue, all Zamindars or proprietors of land paying revenue, and all farmers' securities, raiyats or other persons concerned in or responsible for any part of revenue to government as far as the said superintendence and control may relate to the executive administration of the revenue under regulations now enacted or to be hereafter enacted.\textsuperscript{30}

Although the work of the Collector differed in various provinces as per the conditions and peculiarities of revenue administration, primarily the job of the Collector during British rule hovered around collection of revenue and
this job gave him the designation of ‘Collector’. To quote the legendary British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald “he is the eye of the government and its tongue. He has to keep his finger on the pulse of his district and nothing of any importance is supposed to happen. A sparrow ought not to fall without the incident coming to his ears.”

The love for routine and red tape was inherited by the bureaucrats because of the eminence attached to the office during the British rule and the sluggish promotion channel to reach this coveted chair. Since independence the office of the Collector has aroused a sizeable number of debates both in public and private forums. Formerly a symbol of authority and state’s coercive power has now become a harbinger of social service and apostle of human rights. His role has become alarmingly multifarious and devastatingly complex, at times risky beyond imagined propensity level. The boom of decentralization and the meteoric rise of Panchayatiraj institutions has significantly robed off Collector from the earlier luster and made him vulnerable to large scale political interference, often falling prey to nepotism and corruption those are termed as natural corollaries of a developing economy.

Despite the fact that the office of the Collector has undergone a vast process of change, the Collector remains till today the prime most representative of Indian Republic in the district and supreme of general.
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administration The administrative efficiency in a district is often resultant of Collector’s zeal and enthusiasm. As pointed out by great institutional thinker V T Krishnamachary, "The Collector’s role has changed but not diminished for he now has the function of guiding democratic bodies. Often he has to carry conviction with members of democratic institutions." So invariably, Collector in all the districts of India plays a key role in fulfilling goals of Panchayat raj and rural reconstruction. The Collector as the Leader of the district team not only leads the process of achieving the objectives of development with optimum utilization of available resources but also guards the interests of the majority from the lobby of vested interest. The Community Development and Rural Reconstruction departments, christened by Govt. of India those later on got transformed as Panchayat raj department surprisingly revolves around the kingpin, the Collector even if Collectors in majority cases opt out from being maligned with charges of invading into the sanctum of democratic decentralization.

The Collector of Today

While analyzing the present status of Collector we need to recall that until the establishment of British rule in India, the concept of settled administration, rigorous supervision and strong discipline never existed in India which are really essential in imposing a single person’s authority over a large geographical territory like that of districts in India. To quote Simon...
Commission's Report"Apart from exceptional areas such as the presidency towns, every inch of soil in British India forms part of a 'District' and at the head of every district there is an officer, known in some provinces as the Collector and in others as the Deputy Commissioner who is in the eyes of most of its inhabitants 'the government' \[33\]

The position of the Collector according to Simon Commission's report was reviewed from two aspects, the part which they are expected to play in the administration of their districts and the status they occupy in the eyes of the people of the district. Looking back at history, the Commission reviewed" In its early days, the British Administration in the districts was conducted, as under the systems which preceded it, by single organization controlling all government activities, and it is this organization which the Revenue department and the district officer now represent\[34\] Now a days every district has a number of district level officers who are reporting to their departmental heads as nodal point persons. But leaving aside some matters of pure routine the Collector needs to be informed of almost all activities in all these departments. But what makes the office of the Collector such vital in an era of information? Simon Commission's report provides the basis of such explanation. This organization in the first place, serves its peculiar purpose of collecting the revenue and of keeping the peace. But because it is so close knit, so well established and so
thoroughly understood by the people, it simultaneously discharges easily and efficiently an immense number of other duties.  

For example the Collector deals with settlement of disputes, registration, alteration and partition of holdings, management of indebted lands, agricultural loans and most important of all revenue administration and disaster response in totality. Because he collects revenues and controls excise, he also manages general administration, but most importantly as a friend, philosopher and guide he is always there in the background to extend his support for various administrative functionaries.

The Collector occupies huge power of patronage. Irrespective of the fact that he makes some minor appointments and recommends for some awards and honours, the preservation of his influence often becomes almost concern to the administration. Conveying their impression of the general position and prestige of the Collector the Simon Commission wrote: “It is difficult to convey to an English reader how great is the prestige of the Collector of a district among the inhabitants whom he serves. To most of them as we have said, he is the embodiment of government. The authority which he derives from his statutory powers is augmented by the constant exercise of advice and direction in matters where he is expected to give a lead.”
The Collector and District Magistrate

The District Officer was known as Magistrate and Collector in the regulation provinces like Madras and Bombay. It was evident from the fact that revenue functions of the district officer in these areas were more than the criminal functions as compared to Zamindar areas. Therefore, the term 'Collector' was much emphasized in the context than the 'District Magistrate (DM)'. In the non-regulation provinces as they were known during British days, the District Officer was designated as Deputy Commissioner (DC). Though the differences exist and the designations are retained as a legacy of British rule in India, there is virtually no difference between the two terms so far as roles, responsibilities, and authority of the District Officer are concerned. But in reality, the roles and responsibilities of Collector are neither comprehended in the designation of 'Collector & DM' nor in the term Deputy Commissioner (DC). So, many critics remark that he should preferably be termed as the district officer. Although many officers representing various departments spread across the district location right from its inception, historical records have categorized the position more as the District Officer.

Traditional functions of District Officer and

Changes after Independence.
Whether called Collector and District Magistrate or Deputy Commissioner, the District Officer is either a member of Indian Administrative Service or a senior member of state civil service. An officer cannot become a Collector unless he puts in a long period of apprentice as Asst Collector, Jt Magistrate or Asst Commissioner. In case he is a member of the provincial civil service, he would have rendered many years of distinguished services before he is elevated as a Collector. The Collector is resident in the territory where he performs revenue, magisterial and executive functions. So Collector is the overall RME Officer of the district. Although Sub-Collector and Tehsildar are also RME Officers in their respective areas, Collector enjoys some extraordinary powers and privileges. In some sense, he is the principal representative of the government which is quite unexampled in case of any senior govt functionaries.

Revenue Administration

Revenue administration not only relates to the land and the people but also reflects on the viability of the state system and legitimacy and stability of the government as a whole. The district administration in India "doesn't undertake the management of land but assumes the responsibility for its administration. It maintains accounts for all types of land and their transfers and classifies the land in private custody with a view to assess the revenue due from it. In all land acquisition and land alienation and transfers, the
revenue administration has a fundamental or prominent role to play. It is the principal authority in the determination of ownership and possession of land and more so, for the execution of decrees passed in this regard by courts of civil jurisdiction. It has statutory powers to settle the interminable boundary disputes and also evict every encroachment.

The revenue functions are of two types, non-judicial administrative or general and judicial or quasi-judicial. The main duty of the Collector is the collection of land revenue as he has to justify the age old designation. Evidences show that in states like Bengal and Bihar, the procedure was simple while it involved coercion in areas where Collection was to be made from a large number of land holders. In case of Rayatwari areas the Collector was responsible for ensuring ‘Jamabandi’ work every year. The Collector is squarely responsible for the proper maintenance of accounts as regards to collection of land revenue. Many times he collects government dues other than land revenue. The Collector to a large extent acts as the Govt’s chief collecting agency and maintains account of govt dues.

In its early days the district administration was “conducted by a single organization which the revenue department and the district officer represented. It was a multipurpose department and the officers of the department were multipurpose functionaries. After independence, changes have taken place in the nature and contents of his revenue functions. The
abolition of Zamindari has placed new responsibilities on him. Instead of dealing with a few intermediaries responsible for the payment of land revenue, he has now to deal with hundreds of thousands of cultivators in connection with land revenue, canal dues, Taccavi loans and many other such things.

In relation to land records of the district, the Collector supervises a large number of staff, ensures proper maintenance, verification and correction of land records. He receives number of reports on land records from the concerned staff and passes orders to maintain the efficient working of the administrative system. The work is complex and tedious but extremely important as it concerns the land rights of millions of people.

Land acquisitions and consideration of land holding have become the most challenging tasks before the present day Collectors. Land acquisition “used to nominal before Independence. Now due to various industrial projects and development schemes, considerable land has to be acquired for public purpose. Though the Collector is assisted in the discharge of his revenue work by an Additional Collector or a Revenue Officer, as the case may be, the main responsibility has to be borne by him. He is also called upon to dispose off a specified number of revenue cases besides inspecting Tehsils and Sub-Divisional offices.
The Collector is also responsible for consolidation of various statistics from urban and rural areas of the district for timely submission to higher authorities. From various periodical reports and spot inspections, the Collector keeps track of agricultural prosperity in the rural areas and suggests remedial measures in case of unprecedented fluctuations. He also takes note of variations in rental demand collections in cultivable areas and condition of tenants. In case of progressive decline of cultivable areas, the Collector suggests alternative measures. In case of deterioration in irrigation facilities, he may instruct the departmental authorities to go for renovation of existing water bodies or development of water harvesting structures. In case of drastic fluctuations in the areas cultivable by landlords, he takes notice of atrocities by commercial class ousting the agricultural classes from the land. Sales and land mortgage records in this regard provide him a clue for further action. It's a fact that a series of debt relief legislations in our country have been prompted by the inspection reports of the Collector. Sometimes it is brought to the notice of the Collector that a commercial crop is supplementing a food crop because of higher prices fetched by commercial crops over food crops. Accordingly, steps are taken by the Collector to regulate the market rate of commercial crops like sugarcane. The Collector makes special visits and augments efforts of revenue administration during agricultural calamities assuming phenomenal proportion like drought, floods, water logging, spread of weeds, soil erosion, ravages by wild animals, diseases and pests of crops.
serious epidemics, cattle diseases, locusts etcetera has been never a year when one or more of these have not posed problems for the district administration led by the Collector. Agricultural loans are distributed by the Collector, relief work is taken up in war footing, food and clothing provided on an extensive scale and general health arrangements to be looked after. In a predominantly agricultural economy like that of India, "the district administration is the actual government in action for the overwhelming majority of the people. The mainstay of Indian life is the village and it is in the village, the country’s superstition, ignorance, oppressive traditions and above all the caste system are deeply rooted."\(^{[41]}\) So often these caste system and its peripheral caste affinities and loyalties often give rise to bitter boundary disputes and get proliferated as law and order problems. Collector plays a key role here not only by preventing adverse situations but also by ensuring rule of law and flow of social justice. "To rural India the Collector has always meant predominantly an officer who would solve their difficulties, an officer to whom they would always go for action and help and an officer who would always come to their help and rescue in many troubles to which rural India is exposed."\(^{[42]}\)

In all its essential features, the revenue administration revolves round the village administration and effective control of field level revenue functionaries. The revenue village, which is normally a group of ordinary
hamlets, is the basic unit of a revenue administration and it has two prime functionaries managing revenue accounts, collection of cess & tax and general administration. The position of 'Lumbardar (numberdar), the name given to the headman in states like UP, Haryana, Punjab, J&K have been abolished. The Revenue Officer of the village is known as 'Patwari' in all Hindi speaking states. The power of appointing and dismissing field revenue officials belongs to the Collector though these powers have been usually delegated to the Sub-Collectors and Tehsildars. But the appellate authority still lies with the Collector. The Collector appoints large number of revenue officials connected to Tehsils, Sub-Divisions and District and he reserves the prerogative over promotion, transfer or disciplinary action related to these employees. The Collector possesses disciplinary control over Sub-Collectors and Tehsildar and writes their CCRs. Along with his own office, he inspects every Tehsils and Sub-Divisional office. The Collector not only performs the statutory administrative duties but also ensures the effective running of the huge revenue administration in the district.

The Bombay State Report on 'Land Revenue and General Administration and managed estates-1947' focuses on the overall significance of Collector in Revenue Administration. "In spite of all that has been recently said to the contrary, the Collector is still the interpreter to the people of his district of a system of government designed to be paternal and benevolent. He has wide opportunities of doing lasting good to the people. It is not only in times..."
of famine and epidemics that he does a great deal and grants relief and help to those who need it. Both at headquarters and in the course of his tour, he is ready to listen to all complaints and grievances and does his best to remove them.\textsuperscript{43}

**Objectives of the Study**

The objective of this study is not exclusively understanding the organizational structure appropriate for the entire gamut of activity as performed at the district level but also furthering analytical exposition of issues and constraints that emanate from the purview of district administration both as a branch of public administration and as an edifice of government's unique organizational culture, also a symbolic embodiment of the administrative artifacts. The study functionally aims at speculating and suggesting some viable alternatives of organizational design and structure keeping in view the versatility of Collector's office.

Very specifically the aims of this study are:

a) to identify and categorize the range of activities undertaken by the office of the Collector, both at office and field level.

b) to study various line and staff functioning that enhances the omnipresence of Collector in almost all spheres of public affairs and private endeavors also.

\textsuperscript{35}
c to point out the dysfunctional ties prevailing in the system those endanger the process of smooth achievement of goals of administration

d above all to establish prominently the attitudinal transformation happening both at public and private forums on the changing face of Collector as an institution and suggesting some viable alternative to make this office more vibrant and usable

The focus of the exploratory process can be structurally broken into a number of cardinal questions the study attempts to answer

1 Whether the structure of Collector's office and functions appropriate the task, mission and vision of this fundamental institution of public administration?

2 What is the core nature of relationship prevailing between district administration and the larger entities the state and country's governance?

3 How the most significant activities of district administration have been segmented into routine, administrative, developmental and progressive aspects?

4 How integration achieved within various tasks has empowered the Collector to be an agent of social change?
Scope of the Study

As per the incumbency chart of Collectors of Cuttack, this office started in 1803 and the district itself traces its origin to historically amazing 989 AD. But the scope of this study is limited to the analysis of functioning of Collector since the reorganization of the district in 1993, with the erstwhile Cuttack divided into four newly constituted districts namely Cuttack, Kendra Para, Jajpur and Jagatsinghpur. The reorganization of the district was undertaken on a war footing following the report of the Justice N K Dash Commission on the subject to regulate and restrict the burdening official pressures on the Collector. The requirement for change in district administration’s form and spirit that necessitated establishment of such Commission forms the scope of the study. Considering the historical prominence of the subject although we have stressed the evolutionary aspects but the core functioning of Collector after reorganization of the district and especially the two decadal development analyses from 1988-2007

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study

1) With changes of time the role of the Collector has become complex and cumbersome despite of advancement in the systems of public governance
ii) With the paradigm shift the traditional roles of the Collector as regards to collection of revenue, maintenance of law & order and quasi judicial functions have given way to emerging roles as protagonist of social justice by protecting the most common man from the wrath of discrimination and atrocities by groups of vested interest

iii) The growth of public participation in governance has facilitated the changing role of Collector as a pioneer of development and societal progress instead of an agent of the government

iv) Considering the transformed roles and changing priorities related to the functioning of this office the age old designation ‘Collector’ has lost significance and needs to be revamped

Review of Literature

This goes without saying that any research work on Collector is incomplete without a proper review of the landmark creation ‘District Administration in India by S S Khera. Mr Khera depicts in this masterpiece, the nuts and bolts of administration in the district, which is the basic unit of administration in the Indian context. His vast grasp on the subject is substantiated by his longstanding experience as district magistrate and Collector in many districts as Revenue Divisional Commissioner, overseeing groups of districts and as head of various departments such as industry, cooperation, land reforms and development. This pioneering
The author has succeeded in presenting a continuous and comprehensive picture of district administration ranging from the concluding decades of the British empire and the beginning years of Independent India.44 In this book 'law and order' is postulated as central purpose of district administration. Through basic principles and precepts the author appropriates the analysis of fundamental principles involved in law and order. Along with basic postulates of the concepts certain degree of emphasis is laid on the methodology of law and order. As former President Zakir Hussain observes "that law and order are inseparable terms, that the maintenance of law and order must command absolute priority, that the rule of law must prevail, that law and order must comprehend the safety of all without any distinction or exception whatsoever, that the maintenance of law and order rests upon the sanction of force, and that the civil authority is supreme."45

The revenue administration receives prominence in Khera's deliberation. After thorough reading of all the chapters pertaining to revenue administration a meticulous reader and researcher finds the treatment as summary of all aspects of revenue generation and management regulation, land record and surveys, revenue assessment and collection. "Land revenue, and the collection of revenue, provides the function which gives the head of the district the designation by which he is more commonly known by any other, the Collector. Although there are revenue and other collectors of all kinds, the term in its application to this particular functionary..."
carries overtones of something rather prestigious and powerful. Essentially however, the district collector is exactly what the name says, a collector of revenue.

Land reforms have been treated with critical appreciation in Khera's analysis of revenue administration. The analysis basically moves around two major aims of land reform. The prime most purpose of land reform concerns achievement of economic and social justice keeping in view the fulfillment of directive principles of state policy as laid in Indian constitution. The second principal purpose of land reform is to enhance the productivity of land. As agriculture absorbs a lion share of national resources available for investment, increasing productivity of land definitely demands significant attention. Khera ascribes greater importance to Collector's undivided attention for land reform to boost agricultural investment having widespread impact on the wellbeing of the people.

But the section that concerns the pivot on which the present study revolves and the focus from which the researchers draw maximum inspiration for advanced action research projects, deals with economic and social welfare aspects of district administration keeping Collector as the prime catalyst. Khera recollects in the section devoted to economic and social administration, "With the advent of independence, the phase change in our political circumstance provided the people as a whole with the opportunity..."
and the challenge to define and to prescribe the economic and social policies and objectives of the nation. To such policies and objectives, set out by the people for themselves, must then be harnessed the whole new apparatus, the legislatures, the executive government, the judiciary and the rest which all go to make up the total governance of the country.

The IIPA Silver Jubilee Series publication entitled 'District Administration' serves as a pertinent literature connecting various linkages of the core subject area. This becomes evident from the initial note by volume editor R. B. Jain on the subject: "District Administration has been one of the important institutional legacies bequeathed by the British to India. According to some writers, the British only built up from the elements of the system as had been prevailing in the country then. As a unit of the administrative system, it has been a pivotal point of contact between the citizen and administration. Despite the changed ecology of the administrative system, the importance of this unit has not in any way diminished today."

The book contains ten articles, primarily on the changing face of district administration. The first essay again by Mr. S. S. Khera provides a general overview of the administrative system and attempts to analyse the continuity factors prevailing throughout the British rule in India. The article furnishes a close view of administration by saying: "The district
administration provides the principal points of contact between the citizen and the process of government. And is truly the cutting edge of the tool of public administration. It must maintain one essentially continuous feature, namely, a rigorous adherence to the principles of sound government and of sound administration.  

The third article in this compilation provides a first-hand account on the changing role of the district officer in a historical perspective from inception to present days. The fourth article on difficulties in ensuring the transformation of the authoritarian image of the district officer and fulfilling his role as a development administrator.

The book on District Administration: A Survey for Reorganization, by Iswar Dayal, Kuldeep Mathur & Mohit Bhattacharya not only examines the gamut of activities but also identifies the problem and suggests viable alternatives.

The District Officer in India (1930—1947) by Roland Hunt and John Harrison is an extraordinary document depicting the events, anecdotes and issues of significance that throws much insight to the topic of research.
Methodology of the Study

This research is based on the case study method as the researcher has attempted to analyze the facts and test the validity of hypotheses by collecting information from the office of the Collector & District Magistrate, Cuttack.

a) Sources of Data

The data for the present study were collected both from primary and secondary sources.

i) Secondary Source

Data regarding the evolution of this office, the size and structure, policies and guidelines, authority and delegation, coordination and convergence were collected from the secondary sources. These were collected from the official records, publications and reports, proceedings of coordination and review meetings, souvenirs, information handouts and from various line departments associated with the office of the Collector.

ii) Primary Source

For collecting the first-hand information regarding the views of the incumbents, their comments and suggestions, 120 schedules were administered. 10 questionnaires were administered among the present Collector, the previous incumbents of this chair, and Collectors of the districts which were erstwhile sub-divisions of Cuttack District reviewing.
officers like RDC, Member, Board of Revenue etc 20 questionnaires were administered to staff functionaries related to Collector's office. 50 questionnaires were administered to line department officials closely related to the office of the Collector and rest 40 questionnaires were administered to Senior Govt functionaries and public figures associated with the issue of sound governance.

-Schedules for the present Collector and the previous incumbents were designed to get their views on the administrative structure and the policies of the government regulating the functioning of this office of public importance.

-Schedules for the staff and line department officials were designed to obtain information regarding the issues of inter departmental coordination, hierarchy, unity of command, span of control and line of authority.

-Schedules for the senior govt functionaries and public figures related to governance were designed to obtain their views regarding the changing role of collector keeping in the backdrop, the whole nexus of administrative priorities and purpose.

Although these three categories of questionnaires were structurally different, the core purpose attached to all the questions were nearly the
The purpose was to identify the multiplied and wholly diversified roles of the Collector & DM in the changing scenario and suggest viable alternatives in view of the administrative alterations.

Two kinds of data are required to address the research problems raised during this study. First, the data related to the structure that provides the basic framework of operations. In this respect, the study was confined to division of work, hierarchical levels, span of control, spatial dispersion, communication, control and co-ordination. Second, and most important data was related to find out the internal and behavioral linkages between Collector's office and the rest facets of administration to find out the linkages existing between the systems and their sub-systems along with the degree of independence and interdependence.

The data regarding structure and functions of Collector were collected through the aforesaid precise questionnaire followed by an in-depth interview. Officials across the govt departments were extensively interviewed to elicit information on the provisions and practices related to district administration. The Researcher also attended many district level coordination meetings to have a thorough observation of the process of inter-sectoral coordination and the Collector's role as a facilitator, catalyst and change agent.

b) The Sample
While selecting the sample, due care was taken to cover different cadres of administrative structure of the government. For this, stratified purposive random sampling method was used in selecting the respondents from various line departments of government. Under this method, the universe comprising of all line and staff functionaries has been first divided into a number of strata or groups. Then from each group, some persons are taken on a random basis. Necessary precaution was taken to include all groups for proper representation of available categories of functionaries.

c) Methods of Data Collection

For obtaining the secondary data, the published works, booklets, files, records, monographs, and handouts from the office of the Collector and various line departments were examined. The researcher visited many libraries of significance like the Board of Revenue library, the Orissa Secretariat library, libraries of advanced national institutes like NIRD, MANAGE, NIPCCID etc.

For primary data, the Collector, previous incumbents, and concerned govt functionaries were interviewed in different offices with the help of structured interview schedules. Besides, a certain proportion of relevant information from the primary data segment was collected through observation, focused group discussion, field diary method.

d) Data Analysis
The data collected were consolidated and presented in tabular forms. The primary data were ascertained by Likert scale (five-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). They were examined by the help of different statistical methods like percentage analysis, ranking, and correlation of coefficient, etc. The results and conclusions were presented at the end of each aspect of study.
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