

Local Self-Government in India has a long history. Although the form in which it exists today is much different from the system which prevailed in the ancient and medieval periods. Local Self-Government was more real and substantial in the past than in the days of the British rule. If every village had then a *self-governing body*, it meant that almost all people enjoyed the advantages of *Local Self-Government*. '*Panchayat*' has ancient flavour, it is a good word. It literally means an assembly of five elected by the villagers. It represents the system by which the innumerable village republics in India were governed.¹

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES – LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Thus, the conception of Local Self Government is not foreign to the genius of the people of India. Dynasties and empires have risen and fallen, but Local Self Governments have survived in the stability and continuity of Indian village life and organization is to be sought the secret of the good things achieved by India in the past.²

The village assemblies mentioned in the ancient classics like sangam literature dealt with common matters of the village. A plethora of literary

and epigraphically evidence is available to bear witness to the existence and working of the rural institutions of those days in South India.³ Units of Local Self-Government such as Sabhas, Nagarams and Mandalams existed under several ruling dynasties of Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

The Panchayats have been extolled as separate little states in themselves, which have contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India through all the revolutions and changes. Which they have suffered and also to their happiness and the enjoyment of freedom.⁴

The genesis of the Local Self Government in India can be traced to the Vedic Age. When people's assemblies called the 'Sabha' existed.⁵ Coming to historical times one can witness models of Local Self Government both in the rural and urban set up. The authority of the state was accepted only in certain spheres. While other spheres were left to be regulated by other organizations in society like guilds of merchants and other grasp. This principle was applied to village communities and they consequently enjoyed a large amount of autonomy.⁶

The largest number of villages in South India had an assembly called But the Brahmadeya Villages, namely those bestowed as royal gifts on Brahmins had their own assemblies known as Sabha or Mahasabha.⁷ The Uttara Merur inscriptions of a Brahmadeya village in the days of the Chola emperor, Parantaka-I. These inscriptions are in the form of regulations by the king.

In them we find details as to how members of a Sabha have to be elected in a democratic way. Although the method adopted for the purpose might not be democratic in the modern sense. The selection was through picking up by lot. Membership went by rotation so that the same persons or their relations might not continuously sit on the committees. The regulations also prescribed the qualifications and disqualifications in respect of the membership on the various committees.⁸ Although no such epigraphically evidence is available in such detail there are clear proofs to show that

Sabhas, and other commercial guilds existed in other parts of South India also.

The functions of and *Sabha* were of a wide and varied nature management of temple, its properties. The tanks, gardens and charitable in situations in the temple as well as the settlement of disputes among the people were some of their important duties.⁹ Preservation and maintenance of public health, protection against robberies, offering relief to the needy, maintenance of water supply, irrigation, public roads and also providing education to the young were other services performed by the assemblies. Certain rural industries like weaving also were taken care of by them.¹⁰

Strangely enough, there was little interference in the working of the village assemblies by the central government the members and officials of their functions. Sometimes their meetings were attended by even the officers of the central government. Their administration and constitutional arrangements were supervised by the central official.¹¹ The autonomy of the villages is seen in their right to exempt from local taxes, grant remissions and assignments of income from dues etc.¹²

It may be noted that towns and cities in Ancient India had institutions in the form of assemblies, committees and boards though the Chief and Minister appointed by the state the Nagarapala or the purapala - held vast powers. The Urban Organization were known as nagarams.¹³ Megas description of the government of Pataliputra by a committee of thirty members divided into six sub-committees comes close to a model of urban administration.¹⁴

Urban organizations seem to have had a much less uninterrupted history than that of the villages, which have survived the onslaughts of Muslims and Vijayanagara invasions in the South. The Muslim rulers in medieval India accepted the principle of local autonomy and village authorities continued to enjoy their traditional freedom.¹⁵

In evaluating the significance of this time honored rural institutions. Some enthusiastic writers had a tendency to present an over drawn picture

about them. More often, the background of the social and political conditions under which these institutions flourished has been ignored. The absence of efficient means of transport brought about the isolation of villages. Isolation compelled each village to become completely self-sufficient. It should be admitted, however, that the indigenous system had served the needs of the people in a rough and re-manner and had become thoroughly harmonized with their way of life.¹⁶

A few observations on the real nature and success of the local self-government as they existed in ancient and medieval India may not be out of place here. First of all, the local government of those days was not universal in nature. The Sabhas were mere communal organizations consisting of only Brahmins. Even though there were members of other communities living in the Brahmadeyavillages.¹⁷ Again, the Nagarams and similar terms occurring in the Tamil classics were only guilds whose membership was restricted. To describe these as democratic and territorial may be misleading.¹⁸

Villages continued to be self-governing till about the middle of the 18th century and they continued to maintain their vividly corporate existence. Several factors have directly and indirectly contributed to bring about their disintegration in due course. Under the British rule, a well-organized and administered strong provincial Government penetrated even the remotest villages.¹⁹ Various departments of administration hitherto carried on by the village assemblies were taken over by British officials. The new courts of justice struck a blow on one of the most important functions of village assemblies. Rapid development of communication spread of Western education, migration of village intelligentsia to the towns and the introduction of the ryotwari settlement also paved the way for the slow collapse of the village system.²⁰

BRITISH REGIME – LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Following the fall of the Mughal empire and the consolidation of the British Rule in India, the Local Self-Government underwent a sea change with the growth of new and quicker means of communications, villages

established closer contacts with the outside world.²¹ As customs and traditions broke down under the impact of these changes, individualism began to crush the elements of corporate life in the villages. British rule established a closer and more direct connection between the central and provincial governments on the one side and the individual inhabitants of the village on the other.

A psychological change over took the villagers in the wake of the new system of government and administration at all levels. People began to increasingly depend on the central and provincial governments for more help. Local Self-Government ceased to exist in the village and the villagers ceased to feel the need for it to the same extent as they did in the past. Time-honored institutions were swept away on the grand of "the good of the governed".²²

In tracing the development of Local Self-Government under the British Rule it is to be noticed that until about 1858. The government was mainly engaged in wars of conquest and taking measures for the consolidation of its authority in the conquered territories.²³ It was in the period following the establishment of the direct rule of the British Crown that attention was paid though in a smaller degree, to the organization of public services. The reforming zeal of the British administration did not ignore the rejuvenation of the Local Self-Government institutions in India.²⁴ Consequently, "Local Self-Government in India" as a representative organization, responsible to a body of electors, enjoying wide powers of administration and taxation, and functioning as a school for training in responsibility and a vital link in the chain of the organism that make up the government of the country is a British creation.²⁵

The first statutory enactment relating to Municipal administration in India is section 158 of the Charter Act of 1793 which established Municipal Corporations in the three presidency towns. Provision was made for the appointment of justices of peace and the levy and collection of taxes on houses and lands to augment sanitary services,²⁶ at the same time there

were voluntary associations in all the provinces including machos for the purpose of local improvement.²⁷

A small attempt was made regarding the introduction of statutory Municipal Boards Act 26 of 1850. This allowed the establishment of municipal institutions in any town of British India. If the inhabitants of a town were keen on having a municipal organization, the provincial governments were empowered to bring the statute into operation.²⁸ This Act permitted the levy of town duties, but it was left to the people themselves to decide the made of taxation.

The Town improvement Bill of 1864 contemplated compulsory taxation to defray the cost of police administration, while taxation for other services had to be voluntary. Other purposes for which the raising of funds was authorized were lighting, prevention of fire and water supply. The resolution of 1864 passed by the government of India related to the administration of police and incidentally to municipal government. Accordingly, the principle of Local Self-Government was easily applicable to the population resident in the towns than to those scattered over the rural side of the country.²⁹

Reforms in the field of local self-government in India in the two decades between 1850 and 1870 were rather slow. The main reason for this tardiness was the strong conviction held by many contemporary British administrators and politicians that Indians were unsuited for the working of democratic institutions. It was for this reason perhaps, that the elective element was introduced in local administration at a slow pace.³⁰

The low level of education the prevalence of superstitions, and the existence of numerous castes, creeds and religions all stood in the way of the successful working of responsible institutions in India. But there is also the other side of the picture, it was increasingly felt that the people of India should cease to be helplessly dependent upon the government for everything and they should learn by the example and aid of their English subjects to raise and spend their money on public utility services and promote every other object of local interest.³¹

LORD MAYO'S FAMOUS RESOLUTION

The year 1870 marks of further stage in the evolution of Local Self-Government in India. In that year Lord Mayo's famous resolution on decentralization, emphasizing the desirability of associating Indians in administration and indicating the Municipal government as the most promising field for that purpose, was issued.³² Mayo exhorted upon all the provincial authorities to enlist the active assistance of educated Indians in organizing and working the institutions of local government.³³ The progress achieved in the period following the Resolution of 1870 was not up to the expectation.

Be that as it may, a large income from local rates and cesses had been secured and in some provinces the management of such incomes had been entrusted to local bodies. The number of municipalities had increased. District Boards had been created to look after rural sanitation, communication and education. The principle of election had been extended to various provinces.³⁴

This period also witnessed the emergence of improvement Trusts, Port Trusts, district and taluk committees and the Local Fund Boards. But, the local government institutions were nominated by the British and thus most of the Indian population remained deprived of participation in their functioning. The dominant motive behind the institution of local government in India was to give relief to the imperial finances.³⁵ Lord Mayo's Resolution of 1870 laid the first step in Local Self-Government not only in Urban but also in rural areas. It is this which gave significance to the Resolution in the evolution of Local Self-Government in the country.³⁶

Lord Ripon's historic resolution of 1882 on Local Self-Government is a land mark in the emergence of Local Self-Government in India. Till now the local government had remained almost wholly Non-Indian. Hence, from the Indian point of view, it was to a great extent neither local, nor self-government; political consciousness among the Indians coupled with the growing sense of national awareness gave rise to new aspirations.³⁷

Largely due to his innate liberalism and partly due to his desire to satisfy public opinion, Ripon began a new era in the history of local self-government by his celebrated resolution of 1882. To make local government really self-growing, Ripon rightly called 'The Father of Local Self-Government India.' Considered the local self-government as an 'instrument of political and popular education'³⁸

Ripon's Resolution of 18th May, 1882 is the 'Magna Carta' of Municipal liberties in India. His sincerity to carry it through many difficulties is admirable. The Resolution recommended the extension of Municipal Committees wherever feasible. District Boards in each district consolidating all other bodies into a homogeneous unit was another recommendation. Ancillary subordinate committees in each sub-division of the district were to be created.³⁹

Ripon urged the preponderance of non-official members in all local bodies, both Urban and Rural. He strongly advocated the selection of non-officials by adopting the system of election. The provincial governments were requested to adopt the system according to local conditions.⁴⁰As an incentive to the influential Indians to take part in local government. He introduced the courtesy titles.⁴¹

The degree of official control to be exercised over the self-governing local institutions was clearly defined. Official domination and interference with the working of wise self-governing bodies was discouraged. Control was to be exercised from without rather than from within. The pivot of the entire resolution rested on the emphasis laid on political training. Ripon was convinced that the experiment of Local Self-Government had not been properly tried before.⁴²

Following the resolution of 1882 a series of acts were passed laying down the constitutions and functions of municipal and rural boards. Those acts embodied in a large measure the general principles of organization, directed by the previous resolution. The resolutions of 1896 and 1897 reviewed the progress achieved and outlined further ways of improvement.

These two resolutions give us an insight into the evolution of practice as distinguished from the evolution of policy.⁴³

The next important stage in the evolution of local self-government in India was the publication in 1909 of the Report of the Royal Commission on Decentralization set up in 1906. Though the village was the basic unit of local self-government in ancient and medieval India, its importance had suffered a setback in the days of the British Raj. The commission pleaded for the resuscitation of the village community. More powers to Taluk or Sub-District Boards and other Municipal bodies were recommended. The creation of village Panchayats for the administration of certain local affairs was the core of the commission's direction.⁴⁴

Progress in the functioning of the self-government was slow. The government of India's resolution dated 28th April, 1915 focused the attention on the factors preventing speedy success. The meagerness and rigid nature of local revenues restricted sources of taxation. Lack of enthusiasm of the local people to participate in public life and sectarian rivalries were identified as the main road blocks.⁴⁵ Changes in the constitution and functions of the Municipal Boards, Rural and Panchayat Boards were suggested. However, things still moved slowly till the passing of the Montford Report on Local Self-Government in 1918.⁴⁶

The First World War witnessed momentous changes in the political scenario of India. The government called for the cooperation of the Indian people to make the world safe for democracy. Indian leaders on their part expected substantial efforts by the government towards the establishment of democratic rule in the country. It was in response to this that Edwin Montague, secretary of state for India, made in the House of Commons, on 20th August 1917, the renowned declaration about the introduction of responsible government in India.⁴⁷

The August Declaration Covered the domain of local self-government. The village or rural board and the town or municipal council it was envisaged in the declaration that urban and rural self-government was a

great raining ground from which political progress and a sense of responsibility could begin. It was felt that the need of the hour was to quicken the advance, accelerate the rate of progress there by stimulating the sense of responsibility in the average citizen who could enlarge his experience.⁴⁸

The policy of the government of India relating to the progressive growth of Local Self-Government was embodied in a new resolution of 1918. This document insisted on making the local bodies as much representative as possible of the people whom they served. The need to devolve real power to the local bodies without an outside interference was urged.⁴⁹The said Resolution was corollary to the Montague Chelmsford report on constitutional reforms. Implementation of the new policy was not left to the discretion of the provincial government.⁵⁰

The new changes introduced were extension of franchise to the whole body of rate payers. The appointment of non-officials as Chairman for urban, councils and district boards and of separate executive officers in large towns and in district boards. More freedom in matters of taxation to local bodies was emphasized. Outside control was to be restricted. Widening the base of village Panchayats was urged so that they might become the natural expression of the corporate life of individual villages. This resolution assumed greater significance in the light of the proposed diarchy.⁵¹

The government of India Act of 1919 thus inaugurated an era of new interest and activity in the field of local government. This period witnessed the passing of a series of Amending Acts on Local Government in every province.⁵² The practice of having a civil servant as the president of all municipal bodies and of a few district or local boards was done away with franchise was further democratized. The local bodies were freed from many restrictions in respect of the budget. Above all, the executive direction passed in to the hands of the elected members from the public.⁵³ Local Government was thus set to move in the direction of democracy.

The National Movement for independence coincided with the process of the democratization of the local bodies. The great leaders of modern India such as a Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose, Purushottam Das Tandon, Rajaji, E.V. Subhash Chandra Bose, Purushottam Das Tandon, Rajaji, E.V. Rama SwamyNaicker, Kamaraj and a host of leaders all of them men of caliber, capability and dedication. Entered the Municipal Councils and inaugurated their training for political careers through their participation in the local administration.⁵⁴ subsequently, the government of India Act of 1935 did away with Diarchy and ushered in provincial autonomy. Local Self Government by now began to acquire a new and stable base. The Independence of India in 1947 heralded a new period.⁵⁵

A REVIEW OF THE CHANGING CONTOURS OF LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

The preceding survey of the principal stages in the genesis and growth of the Local Self Government in India from the ancient times up to the first half of the present century brings to focus some important trends in the development of the local self-government in our country. The Local Self Government as it exists today is vastly different from the Local Self Government of the ancient and medieval India. From times immemorial institutions of local self-government have flourished both in urban and rural areas.

Conditions in ancient and medieval India were conducive to fostering the assumption of greater number of functions by local self-government with a meager and inefficient means of communication. The villages became closely knit communities of producers and consumers dependent on each other. The village communities were largely democratic in their composition and functions. These units of local authority were self-reliant in financial resources. Tradition and custom strengthened the public spirit so much as to make these institutions work successfully and responsibly.⁵⁶

Despite the merits of our ancient local institutions it cannot be claimed that they were ideal or that they satisfied the accepted canons of real local

self-government. They were not wholly universal at any time. They functioned only in certain parts of India. They were not elective in the true sense of the term, nor were they territorial in character. However, scholars have adduced enough evidence to warrant the conclusion that local self-government in the past was more wide spread real and more of a success than in modern times.⁵⁷

The present structure and style of functioning of the local self-government owes its existence to the British Rule in India. A beginning of local self-government may be said to have originated with the foundation of the corporation of Madras in 1687. Thus, the history of modern local self-government is two centuries old.

Between 1687 and 1882 British authorities viewed the local self-government largely as a means to ease central and provincial financial constraints and thus sub serve the imperial needs. It acquired a statutory basis in the Charter Act of 1793 when municipal administration was inaugurated in the three presidential towns. In 1842 the Bengal Act. X enabled the inhabitants of Fort William to make be her provisions for Public Health. In 1850 Act, 26 was passed for the entire country which provided for direct taxation.⁵⁸

Till 1870 several acts were passed extending municipal administration to various parts of the country. Provincial governments were empowered to constitute Municipal committees to look after sanitation, lighting and water supply. Lord Mayo's Reforms of 1870 and Lord Ripon's Resolution of 1882 constitute two significant land marks in the history of Local Self Government in British India which was heard in a new era of decentralization and democratization.⁵⁹

During the period between 1992 and 1920 local self-government began to be viewed as self-government as a means by which the Indians can serve the government by serving themselves. Growing political awareness among the Indians was a powerful force facilitating this change. Rightly did Ripon

call local self-government as an instrument of political and popular education.⁶⁰

The Decentralization Commission of 1906 stood for the relaxation of government control on the local authorities in regard to the budgets and the delegation of functions to the committees. Development of post-world war I favored the granting of real self-government to the local bodies. The Resolution of 1918 gave effect to these policy directions. Legislation was enacted on these lines in 1919 in most of the provinces and with the constitutional changes brought by the Montague. Chelms Ford reforms introducing Diarchy in the provinces. Local self-government became a transferred subject under a responsible minister. The gaps left unfilled were filled in due course.⁶¹

Above we have briefly surveyed in relief. The various stages of the development of local self-government in India from ancient times up to the Post-World War-I period the British in India followed a cautious and pragmatic policy of making the local self-governments responsible gradually. An obvious lack of public sprit among enlightened Indians and the gross ignorance of the Indian populace made the progress inevitably slow. By the end of the period of our study local self-government became a reality in India.

EVOLUTION OF DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALISATION

Democratic decentralization is made up of two words i.e., democratic and decentralization. First of all let us have an outline of the term decentralization. Decentralization is a twin process of de-concentration and devolution. During de-concentration, a superior officer, in order to make his departments function efficiently, delegates to his subordinate field officials. The power to act in his name without transferring the authority is a process where in. Power is transferred from one organ of the government to another by means of legislation or constitution. A certain sphere of its activities either national or territorial or both is set apart for a locally constituted body

which administers its authority and enjoys some power of self-determination.

Decentralization has become necessary to ensure efficient and economical administration. Speedy and realistic decisions making which is a prerequisite for a big and complex organization like that of rural development. The number of decisions to be taken from time to time is so large and the points on which such decisions are mentioned are so many that it becomes a necessity to distribute decision making powers among a number of field organizations or field institutions rather than concentrate them at headquarters. This is expected to prevent the frequent emergence of bureaucratic bottlenecks which bedevil highly centralized power structures.

Decentralization can protect the individual against the threats from large, remote and impersonal bureaucracies. As well as provide a preparation and foundation for a healthy democratic society. Decentralization is said to counter bureaucracy by restoring autonomy and initiative to decision making procedures.

Decentralization could also allow better political and administrative "penetration" of national government policies into areas remote from the national capital. Where central government plans are often unknown or ignored by the rural people or are undermined by localities. Where support for national development plans is often weak.

Decentralization could lead to the development for greater administrative capability among local governments and private institutions in the region and provinces. Thus, expanding their capacities to take over functions, which are not usually performed well by central ministries such as the maintenance of roads and infrastructure investments in areas remote from the national capital. It could also give local officials the opportunity to develop their managerial and technical skills.

A decentralized governmental structure is needed to institutionalize participation of citizens in development planning and management. A decentralized government structure can facilitate the exchange of

information about local needs and channel political demands from the local community to national ministries.

Decentralization can lead to more flexible, innovative and creative administration. Regional, provincial or district administrative units may have greater opportunities to test innovations and to experiment with new policies and programs in selected areas without having to justify them for the whole country. If the experiments fail, their impacts are limited to small jurisdictions. If they succeed, they can be replicated in other areas of the country.⁶²

Decentralization is a primary means of combining the best elements in bureaucracy and enterprise. Then managerial responsibility becomes concentrated among a few executives. The result is to limit initiative, create delay, and increase expenses. Reduce efficiency, and retard development. A characteristic of bureaucracy is that most executives spend too much time worrying about details of administration and meeting the critical situation that arises daily. The solution is centralization of policy and decentralization of execution.

Strictly speaking, the term 'decentralization' does not necessarily contain any democratic connotation. Hence, the adjective 'democratic' is used to impart a special meaning to the term. It is democratic in the sense that the source from which power is decentralized has its democratic base and the body to which power flows is also democratically organized. Now let us have an outline of the term democratic. The rationale behind this is that the people are sovereign and the government does not have huge resources to get the work done through its machinery. In brief, democracy means the skill with which we can make use of the potential energy of the people and change it in to kinetic energy for raising the standard of living of the people and giving them due status and dignity.

Having described the meaning of democracy and decentralization, let us discuss the term democratic decentralization, on which the frame work of rural development has been designed. It gives the hope of cracking open the

blockages of an inert bureaucracy giving more direct access from the people to the government and the government to the people stimulating the whole nation to participate in national development plans. Existing scholarship however points out a major hiatus between precepts and practices. Experiments with local government have ended in chaos and bankruptcy 'decentralized' structures of administration only act as a more effective tool for centralizing the power. Regional and district committees in which government officials make decisions while the local representatives sit silent, village councils, where local people participate but have no resources to allocate.

Yet, a union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has contributed more than any other cause, to the preservation of the people of India through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered and is in a high degree, conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence.⁶³

GENESIS

The local self-government in India, in the sense of a representative organization responsible to a body of electors enjoying wide powers of administration and taxation and functioning both as a school for training in responsibility and a vital link in the chain of organisms that make up the government of the country, is a British Creation.⁶⁴ In his resolution in 1870, Lord Mayo said "Local interest, supervision and care are necessary for success in the management of funds devoted to education medical charity and local public works. The operation of this resolution in its full meaning and integrity will afford opportunities for the development of self-government for strengthening municipal institutions and for the association of natives and Europeans to a greater extent than before, in the administration of affairs." It is worth noting the comments of the Taxation Enquiry Commission, 1953-55, on Mayo's resolution. The commission observed that "There was, however, no comparable development of a local self-governing

institution in rural areas up to the year 1871 when Lord Mayo introduced his scheme for decentralization of administration. The scheme had a stimulating effect on the development of local self-governing institutions in the rural areas. Both types of committees Urban and Rural, it may be added, were largely nominated and official. It was implicit in decentralization, as then conceived that the emphasis was on the 'local' rather than on the 'self-government' aspects of the local self-government. In this way, the development of local government institutions was basically to provide relief to the imperial finances and serve the British interests. Moreover, the elective principle was confined to the [old] central provinces only and in 1881 four out of every five municipalities were wholly nominated bodies.

The next land mark in the development of local self-government was 'Lord Ripon's resolution of 1882. The historic resolution issued on May 18.1882 consisted of the following main recommendations.

- (i) That a network of local boards be spread throughout the country and the area of jurisdiction of every local board should be so small that both local knowledge and local interest on the part of the members of the board could be secured.
- (ii) The number of non-officials was to be very large. The official element was not to exceed one-third of the whole.
- (iii) As far as practicable, the local governments were to introduce elections for the members of the local boards.
- (iv) That boards should be entrusted not merely with expenditure of fixed allotment of funds but also with the management of local sources of revenue.
- (v) A non-official chairman, whose election should be subject to the approval to the provincial government, should be introduced.
- (vi) The affixation of courtesy titles to the names of non-officials should be fixed with a view to giving them pride in local service and attracting more men with a deep sense of responsibility.

- (vii) The District Engineer should help the local bodies in their work of supervision and maintenance of buildings. He should work as their servant and not as their master.
- (viii) The control should be exercised from within rather than from without. The government should 'revise and check the acts of the local bodies that dictate them. The control over local bodies was to be exercised in two ways.

The power of absolute suppression was to be exercised only with the consent of the government of India. A general principle of guidance was put in these words. "It should be the general functions of the executive officers of the government to watch, especially at the outset. The proceedings of the local boards to point out to them matters calling for their consideration to draw their attention to any neglect of duty on their part and to check by official remonstrance any attempt to exceed proper functions or to act illegally or in any arbitrary or unreasonable manner.

In the words of K.M. Pannikar, 'Lord Ripon's reform of local self-government laid the basis of local and municipal self-government which soon took firm roots in India and became the grand work of democratic institution in higher spheres. The resolution put forward the cases for the expansion of local self-government in a very convincing manner.

The Royal Commission on Decentralization (1909) after reviewing the working of the local and the district boards in the various provinces of the country came to the conclusion that chiefly due to their unrepresentative character and inadequate powers. These bodies had not been a success. "They want of success of the existing system" said that report, seems to us to be mainly due to two reasons. Firstly, that the boards have hitherto not possessed real powers. Secondly, that lack of due representation of minorities and genuine reluctance of large, land owners and other persons of high social position to submit themselves to the vote of an ordinary territorial constituency. To remove the defects of the boards constitution, the commission recommended the creation of a genuine electorate consisting

of the members of the village Panchayats. The provision for an elective majority on all boards, and a due representation to minorities through nomination they also recommended the formation of village Panchayat and reconstitution of the local boards where they had been abolished. So that 'local self-government' might build up from the bottom.

These recommendations received the attention of the government of India in its resolution on local self-government of 1915. Referring to the liberalization of the boards constitutions it said that the local governments in general are in sympathy with the commission's proposals. The principle of elected majority on the boards was accordingly accepted but the resolution gave no lead to the question of the reform of the board's electorates.

The progress of strengthening the local bodies was slow and the government of India passed another resolution in 1918.

The Resolution of 1918 states "The object of local self-government is to train the people in the management of their own local affairs and the political education of this sort must. In the main, take precedence on considerations of departmental efficiency. It follows from this that local bodies should be as representative as possible of the people whose affairs they are called upon to administer. That their authority in the matter entrusted should be real and not nominal and that they should not be subjected to unnecessary control should learn by making mistakes and profiting by them." The following aspects were enshrined in the resolution.

- (a) Revival of Panchayats in the village.
- (b) Larger elective majority for local government institutions.
- (c) For providing broad based local bodies requisite extension) of franchise.
- (d) Provision of an elected president of the local body by the public.
- (e) Powers to impose taxes and sanctioning of works as well as budgetary powers should be vested in the local government.

The constant growth of the local bodies suffered a set-back with the outbreak of the Second World War and the resignation submitted by the

congress ministries in the provinces. The entire powers of the provinces were vested in the governors and they exercised them till 1946.

An important conclusion that emerges from this survey of local bodies is that these were the creation of the government. They did not grow out of the ancient village communities. The new local bodies, created as an agency of the government for a variety of local purposes, were founded on the rule of law. It is entirely new basis of organization, where corporations was to be voluntary not through any compulsion imposed by religion, caste or local usage. The decentralization commission and the local bodies are invested with extended functions. But all these were to be statutory functions belonging to the state and exercisable by persons or institutions duly authorized in that behalf. The whole of the new trend of development in fact, involved an extension of the official apparatus of the government to the village.⁶⁵

DEVELOPMENT OF PANCHAYATI RAJ BALWANT RAI MEHTA COMMITTEE

The National Development Council appointed a committee on plan projects to look in to this problem. This committee appointed a study team in 1956 under the chairmanship of a senior legislator. Balwant Rai Mehta to review critically community development projects and national extension service and suggest measures needed for effecting economy and improving efficiency in their implementation. The team was also asked to examine, "the extent to which community development movement has succeeded in utilizing local initiatives and in creating institutions to ensure continuity in the process of improving economic and social condition in rural areas.

To sum up, the basic principles emphasized by the committee were:

1. There should be a three-tier structure of local self-governing bodies from the village to the district, with organic linkage among them well defined and practical.
2. Adequate administrative powers may be entrusted to these bodies to avoid excessive state control.

3. There should be real transfer of power and responsibilities to them so that they can discharge their duties.
4. Adequate resources should be transferred to the new bodies to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
5. All developmental programmes should be excluded through these bodies.
6. The system evolved should aim at further devolution and dispersal of responsibilities in the future in the real sense.
7. State government should not duplicate their functioning.

The study team also recommended that such a body. If created has to be statutory, elective, comprehensive in its duty and functions, equipped with the necessary executive machinery and in possession of adequate resources. It must not be cramped by too much control by the government or by government agencies. Further, it emphatically stated this body can develop programmes which are of exclusive interest for the areas. In such matters the state government will cease to operate within the area and in special circumstances when it has to do through the agency of this local body.⁶⁶

The committee approach was "Development cannot progress without responsibility and power. The community development can be real only when the community understands its problems, realizes its responsibility, exercises the necessary powers through its chosen representatives and maintains a constant and intelligent vigilance on local administration. With this objective, we recommend an early establishment of the statutory local bodies and devolution to them of the necessary resources, power and authority." Legislatures passed legislations to create these bodies in their states. Different states created different types of structures keeping in view the existing structure as well as the requirements of the states. These legislations provided for development of districts as their main unit. Simultaneously, these bodies were given enough powers not only to raise resources but also to requisition the machinery at the district and lower

levels to implement development plans of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs). The idea of decentralization was again reiterated in the Third Five Year Plan and it was proposed that the states should formulate their annual plans, at least in the following activities on the basis of district and block level plans.

1. Agriculture, including minor irrigation, soil conservation village forests, animal husbandry, dairying etc.
2. Development of co-operatives.
3. Village industries.
4. Elementary education, especially provision of school buildings for local communities.
5. Rural water supply programme of minimum rural amenities including construction of approach roads linking each village to the nearest road or rail head and
6. Works/programmes for fuller utilization of man power resources in rural areas.

THE CHANGE IN APPROACH TO PLANNING

The Eight Five-year Plan (1992-97) was launched from 1st April 1992 against the background of two years of poor economic performance. It offered a package of structural adjustments in the form of economic liberalization privatization and fiscal disciplinary reforms. The government recognized that under the evolved system. People have become mere passive observers and receivers of doles. Hence, the emphasis was on creating a decentralized system with the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as the focal point for organizing and implementing rural development programmes. This approach was consistent with the views of Mahatma Gandhi and the recommendations of Ashok Mehta Committee on PRIs. The socio-economic activities like education and literacy, health and family planning, land improvement, minor irrigation, recovery and development of waste-land and a forestation were treated as 'core activities' in which people's participation could be maximum and more fruitful. It would also result in lowering financial out lays on these activities.⁶⁷ Government envisaged a happy

marriage between integrated area development approach and democratic decentralization of rural development.

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) provides that the PRIs should prepare plans for economic development and social justice for an integrated development of the district. Certain broad principles are laid down for assigning a role to each of the three tiers. The actual devolution could be based on the rule that what can be done at a lower level should be done at that level and not at a higher level. Initially, the Gram Sabha would list out developmental priorities and assist in the fair selection of beneficiaries under various programmes and schemes. Thereafter, the planning process would begin from below with the preparation of village plans. Which would be incorporated into the intermediate level block plans and finally merged into a District Plan.⁶⁸ Union Government has set a part 41 per cent of plan resources for decentralized planning including 'un-tied funds and incentive grants' to match the contributions raised by PRIs. Thereafter sectorial allocations at the state level should be on the basis of demands made from below by the districts and in keeping with the national priorities. In this way, it would be possible to bring about both a vertical and a horizontal integration of resources and services. The Ninth plan also lays emphasis on a comprehensive time band training policy for the functionaries. In order to equip them with updated information and modern technologies. Which in turn have to be disseminated amongst the rural people.⁶⁹

The 29 subjects to be assigned under the eleventh schedule to the PRIs are as follows:

1. Agriculture including agriculture extension.
2. Land improvements, land reforms, soil conservation.
3. Minor irrigation and watershed development.
4. Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry.
5. Fisheries.
6. Social forest and farm forestry.
7. Minor forest produce.

8. Small scale industries including food processing industries.
9. Khadi, village and cottage industries.
10. Rural hazing
11. Drinking water
12. Fuel and fodder
13. Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries and water ways.
14. Rural electrification including distribution of electricity.
15. Non-conventional energy sources.
16. Poverty alleviation programmes - IRDP, JRY
17. Education including primary and secondary schools.
18. Technical training and vocational education.
19. Adult and non-formal education.
20. Libraries
21. Cultural activities
22. Markets and fairs
23. Health and sanitation including primary health centres and dispensaries.
24. Family welfare
25. Women and child development.
26. Social welfare including welfare of handicapped and mentally retarded.
27. Welfare of weaker sections and in particular SCs and STs.
28. Public distribution system.
29. Maintenance of Community Assets.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have examined in this chapter the process of democratic decentralization in historical context. We examine here some of the problems and issues and suggest remedies.

Look of Genuine will to Decentralize

There are half-hearted attempts made at the centre. State level to part with their own powers in real earnest in order to ensure maximum

delegation of powers and resources to the Panchayat Raj Institutions.⁷⁰ The statutes by the state government should be so framed as to facilitate the transfer of full powers and that these are actually observed in practice.

Absence of Pressure Groups

The exploitation of natural resources, investment in infrastructural development for income generation, technological extension, accessibility and adoptability of delivery systems could benefit the rural poor only if various interest groups get organized as pressure groups overcoming their inherent cultural and historical weaknesses.

Genesis Growth and Diversification of PRI System

1. Highly developed and successful in Vedic period
2. Downfall and non-entity in Medieval period
3. Revival during British Rule - Lord Ripon and other Acts only structures but no Real Local Government.
4. Independent India - PRIs created as per Balwant Rai, Ashok Mehta Committees.
5. 73rd constitutional Amendment Act 1992
6. Birth of a True Local Self Government
7. Limited impact
8. Needs will to promote Rural Local Self Government by States.

Role of Vested Interests

One of the criticisms against Panchayat Raj is that although the structure of Panchayat Raj had been ostensibly designed for community involvement but in practice it has provided protection to vested interest. The rests thereby accentuating the socio-economic disparities and discontent in the rural areas.⁷¹ Empowerment of weaker sections could act as a check against monopolizing of PRIs by a privileged few.

Weak Base at Gram Sabha Level

Any authority or power needs a countervailing force to ensure that it is not misused and that it is accountable. Such a force lends credibility to power. A political process and a system which loses credibility, cannot

exercise power for long time. The bureaucracy as well as elected members could be made accountable to the people only if there is a participatory spirit in the beneficiaries who are not merely the receivers of the programme implemented by others.

Lack of Faith in Decentralization

The union and state governments are passing a number of laws for delegating power to the local level which the rural masses do not understand. It seems that they are not really convinced. There is a need for educating the masses in various provisions affecting their lives and encourage them to develop self-reliance. People have respect for institutions of the government if norms and values which sustain the democratic spirit, inspire those who govern.

Inadequacy of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment

In two crucial areas of local government empowerment viz., local autonomy and local functions and taxation the provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act are most unsatisfactory. Hence, there is a scope for further constitutional empowerment of local governments. Through creation of a separate local list in the seventh schedule of the Indian Constitution so that these institutions become viable and self-reliant rather than mere implementation agencies.

Need for Strengthening the Evaluation of Democratic Decentralization

The state government should arrange for periodic concurrent and independent evaluation of the working of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) by competent institutions particularly the universities. Such evaluation will provide the basis for remedying the operational defects and suggesting modifications from time to time

Lock of Fixed Contours of Democratic Decentralization

Decentralization, looked at from a wider angle, acquires a political, constitutional, institutional and psychological significance. At macro-level, a need for uniformity is desirable whereas at micro-levels random variations

for ensuring adaptability on to local environment is indispensable, to achieve desired goals, e.g., if the objective is to provide a minimum standard of drinking water supply to all the villages in India. A centralized planning and administration for equity is called for however, if the target is to encourage each village to meet its own perceptions of drinking water needs through local arrangements. A decentralized system alone is suitable. Unless decentralization as an attitude of mind and approach pervades the system the centralizing tendencies will gather strength.

Adhocism in Development Planning

The process of planning for rural development has suffered from lack of continuity and stability. The goals of planning were not spelt out in terms of enrichment of human life. It was rather broken up into material targets. Which when achieved was not evaluated in the light of Human Development index. The planning was macro and centralized while the implementation was done through local agencies which have not participated in planning. This gap resulted in non-realization of goals and objectives.

As our democratic objectives is growth with equity. We have to have truly decentralized socio-economic planning machinery at the Panchayat level. A spirit of co-operative federalism should govern the relationship among the district, state and national level. Uniformity should be insisted only in those cases where the unity and integrity of the nation is at stake e.g., defense, foreign exchange technological research and development and policy guidance. The issues of human development should be of a local concern, being handled through the people's institution in the most cost effective and result-oriented manner.

The increasing integration of India in the global economy, the budget constraints faced by both central and state governments and inefficiencies in the administrative structure led to the development of a consensus to devolve powers to local institutions to enable people's participation in administration. The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments that conferred statutory status on PRIs and urban local bodies did not have only

democratic decentralization as their objective. These institutions were also seen as a process for harnessing and channelizing the people's innate abilities to bring about rural transformation in a way that every individual acquired his/her rightful place in the social, economic and political arena.

The Ninth plan had called for the devolution of functional responsibilities. Administrative control on government functionaries dealing with subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the constitution and financial resources for taking up developmental programmes to the front. Political devolution has taken place. Elections have been held and women, SC/STs and other marginalized groups have got political representation in the rural areas. Problems encountered in the process of evolution of Panchayats has been taken care of with the intervention of courts, civil society organizations and increased public awareness. The strengthening of forces that facilitate political empowerment of rural communities would be an important area of action in the tenth plan period. Issues of transparency, accountability and development would require greater attention. States which have lagged behind in devolving functions and finances to Panchayats would have to be encouraged to empower the Panchayats.

The gram Sabhas in most states have been entrusted with only ceremonial functions. The power and functions of gram Sabhas need to be enlarged by giving them effective powers of implementation and monitoring of developmental plans. Social audit of all development programmes by the gram Sabhas would be made mandatory. The committee system adopted in many states to facilitate a more participative decision-making process in the Panchayats should be incorporated in the state Panchayat acts. The powers entrusted to a gram Sabhas in non-scheduled areas as well.

Administrative and financial devolution by the states to the PRIs remains an area of major concern. The constitution has placed onerous responsibilities on PRIs. They require financial resources to discharge the tasks assigned to them and emerge as viable institutions of self-government. Financial devolution is also desirable as the control of investment decisions

by local communities' leads to better utilization of scarce resources. Panchayats would need greater powers of taxation and avenues for non-tax revenue. States could provide matching grants to Panchayats to take up specific projects. Apart from the funds that flow to Panchayats for centrally sponsored and state sector schemes. Unties grants could also be provided to the PRIs. The PRIs need to raise resources from the local community and end their dependence on government funds. The functional domain of the PRIs can be enlarged only if they pay adequate attention to their resource-base.

The onus for devolving functions. Functionaries and financial resources to the PRIs rest with the state governments though the states have slowly transferred functions and finances to the PRIs. These institutions are hampered by lack of administrative support. PRIs have to be adequately staffed and the functionaries must be trained in planning. Budgeting and accounting tasks. An elaborate system for auditing of Panchayat finances has to be put in place. At present, adequate safeguards against the misuse of resources by elected functionaries do not exist in many states. These issues need to be tackled on a priority basis.

INTRODUCTION

Local Self-Government in India has a long history. Although the form in which it exists today is much different from the system which prevailed in the ancient and medieval periods. Local Self-Government was more real and substantial in the past than in the days of the British rule. If every village had then a *self-governing body*, it meant that almost all people enjoyed the advantages of *Local Self-Government*. 'Panchayat' has ancient flavour, it is a good word. It literally means an assembly of five elected by the villagers. It represents the system by which the innumerable village republics in India were governed.

Thus, the conception of Local Self Government is not foreign to the genius of the people of India. Dynasties and empires have risen and fallen, but Local Self Governments have survived in the stability and continuity of

Indian village life and organization is to be sought the secret of the good things achieved by India in the past. The village assemblies mentioned in the ancient classics like sangam literature dealt with common matters of the village. A plethora of literary and epigraphically evidence is available to bear witness to the existence and working of the rural institutions of those days in South India Units of Local Self- Government such as Sabhas. Urs, Nagarams, nads and Mandalams existed under several ruling dynasties of Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Democratic decentralization is made up of two words i.e., democratic and decentralization. First of all let us have an outline of the term decentralization. Decentralization is a twin process of de-concentration and devolution. During de-concentration, a superior officer, in order to make his departments function efficiently, delegates to his subordinate field officials. The power to act in his name without transferring the authority is a process where in. Power is transferred from one organ of the government to another by means of legislation or constitution. A certain sphere of its activities either national or territorial or both is set apart for a locally constituted body which administers its authority and enjoys some power of self-determination.

Decentralization has become necessary to ensure efficient and economical administration. Speedy and realistic decisions making which is a prerequisite for big and complex organizations like that of rural development. The number of decisions to be taken from time to time is so large and the points on which such decisions are to be mentioned are so many that it becomes a necessity to distribute decision making powers among a number of field organizations or field institutions rather than concentrate them at headquarters. This is expected to prevent the frequent emergence of bureaucratic bottlenecks. Which bed evil highly centralized power structures. Decentralization can protect the individual against the threats from large, remote and impersonal bureaucracies. As well as provide a

preparation and foundation for a healthy democratic society. Decentralization is said to counter bureaucracy by restoring autonomy and initiative to decision making procedures.

Genesis and Growth of Local Self Government

The local self-government in India, in the sense of a representative organization, is responsible to a body of electors. Enjoying wide powers of administration and taxation and functioning both as a school for training in responsibility and a vital link in the chain of organisms that make up the government of the country, is a British Creation. In his resolution in 1870, Lord Mayo said "Local interest, supervision and care are necessary for success in the management of funds devoted to education, medical charity and local public works. The operation of this resolution in its full meaning and integrity will afford opportunities for the development of self-government for strengthening municipal institutions and for the association of natives and Europeans to a greater extent than before, in the administration of affairs". It is worth noting the comments of the taxation enquiry commission, 1953-55, on Mayo's resolution. The commission observed "There was, however, no comparable development of a local self-governing institution in rural areas up to the year 1871 when Lord Mayo introduced his scheme for decentralization of administration. The scheme had a stimulating effect on the development of local self-governing institutions in the rural areas. Both types of committees Urban and Rural, it may be added, were largely nominated and official. It was implicit in decentralization, as then conceived that the emphasis was on the 'local' rather than on the 'self-government' aspects of the local self-government. In this way, the rural areas, the development of local government institutions was basically to provide relief to the imperial finances and serve the British interests. Moreover, the elective principle was confined to the [old] central provinces only and in 1881 four out of every five municipalities were wholly nominated bodies.

In India, Village Panchayats have been traditional institutions of local governance and community level dispute resolution based on social consensus. Their decline and super imposition of costly formal carts led to realization of their important role and therefore efforts were started for their formal, statutory revival in colonial period itself in independent India. The directive principles of state policy in Article 40 of the constitution exhorted the states to take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. The three decades of nineteen fifties to nineteen eighties saw phases of revival and neglect of these vital grass roots institutions of local governance with heavy social and political costs for the rural areas.

The patchy progress of development initiatives, lack of people's participation and support led to realization of the need to deepen democracy and development initiatives. Lack of people's participation and support led to realization of the need to deepen democracy and develop inclusive and capable institutions of local governance.

BALWANT RAI MEHTA COMMITTEE

The National Development Council appointed a committee on plan projects to look in to this problem. This committee appointed a study team in 1956 under the chairmanship of a senior legislator. Balwant Rai Mehta to review critically community development projects and national extension service and suggest measures needed for effecting economy and improving efficiency in their implementation. The team was also asked to examine, "the extent to which community development movement has succeeded in utilizing local initiatives and in creating institutions to ensure continuity in the process of improving economic and social condition in rural areas.

The Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads function largely through standing committees in whom the decision-making power is vested and the executive authority is exercised, through government officials functioning as secretaries of these bodies. On unique feature of the system in Andhra

Pradesh is the role allotted to the district collector who is not merely the only official member of the Zilla Parishad but is also the chairman of the all standing committees. While there have been some criticisms on the score that an official cannot head a purely elective body. The method has worked well in practice and the Zilla Parishad has gained greatly through the active involvement of a key functionary such as the district collector in its deliberations. At the block level, the president of the Panchayat samities is the chairman of all the standing committees.

SUPERVISION OF PANCHAYATI RAJ IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Decentralization of Administration may be secured in two ways. Devolution of authority and responsibility to local authorities on de-concentration of central/state authority and responsibility to regional, district and local officials representing the central/state departments. If one gives birth to a set of new governments at lower level with a legal deposit of powers to discharge specified functions. The other involves mere delegation of authority and responsibility to field officials through executive orders without abdicating or ceasing the ultimate responsibility of the parent departments. Since, devolution of authority results in the emergence of a new set or governments. The arrangement is not only administrative but also political in character. Unlike the other arrangement which is purely administrative. In other words devolution of authority of central/state government reduces its position to that of tutelage in relation to the emerging governments, while de-concentration of central/state authority results in the hierarchical supervision of rural administration by the central/state government retaining a power to reverse decisions arrived at lower level.

Normally in countries with centralized system of administration decentralization has worked from de-concentration of administration to the devolution of government, relieving the central/state administration and building and strengthening communities outside the great cities. And the local authorities have emerged in all such countries as viable and effective

instruments of local areas where they have functioned under what Henry Maddick would call the system of graduated responsibility of the central/state governments. This system involves four phases of development of local authorities and the part to be played by the central/state government varying according to the stage of development that the country is passing through. The first phase envisages a community (of any size) whose members are illiterate, primitive and in consequence ignorant of possibilities and quite in phase might be where the community is being led and guided to emancipation, the third where it is running its own affairs with some guidance and control of extremes of action, and later states would be steps towards complete maturity.

The committee's report (1978) is a seminal document which seeks to make Panchayats an organic integral part of our democratic process. The Panchayati Raj Institutions which came into being in certain states after the Asoka Mehta Committee's recommendations could be considered the second generation Panchayats.

The second generation of Panchayati Raj Institutions can be said to have started when the West Bengal government took the initiative in 1978 to give a new life to its Panchayats on the lines of the Asoka Mehta Committee's recommendations. West Bengal, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir either revised their existing Panchayat Acts or passed new acts, in theory accepting the Asoka Mehta Committee report. These states adapted the recommendations to suit their conditions and learnt from each other's experience in bringing forth new legislations or amendments to the prevailing acts.

THE ANDHRA PRADESH PANCHAYAT RAJ ACT, 1994

At present there is a three-tier Panchayat Raj set up in the state of Andhra Pradesh at the mandal level, the Mandal Parishad and at the District level in Zilla Parishad. The Gram Panchayats are governed by the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act, 1964 and the Mandala Parishads, by the Andhra Pradesh Mandala Parishads, Zilla Parishads and Zilla Pranalika and

Abhivrudhi Sameksha Mandals Act 1989 is also in force governing elections to the Panchayat Raj institutions. While so, the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act 1992 (Hereinafter referred to as the Constitution Amendment Act) has been passed by the Parliament with a view mainly to strengthening and revitalizing the Panchayat Raj bodies so that they can sub-serve the needs of the teeming millions that live in the rural areas.) Prior to the Constitution Amendment the government have appointed an expert committee on Panchayat Raj bodies headed by Sri B.P.R. Vittal, I.A.S. (Retd) to examine and submit a report on the reorganization of the Panchayat Raj set up and also on the re-organization of revenue set up below the district level. The expert committee has submitted two separate reports to the government. The government have their upon appointed a cabinet sub-committee with Sri D.K. Samarasimha Reddy Minister for Panchayat Raj as Chairperson to examine and make suitable recommendations on the expert committee part on P.R. Institutions. The cabinet sub-committee has considered the report of expert committee as also the provisions of the constitution amendment and submitted its report to the government.

Area oriented programmes, will usually take within their sweep a number of gram panchayats and panchayat samitis and therefore have to be planned at the district level. They may have to be implemented by more than one tier. The beneficiary oriented programmes can be better planned at the village panchayat level and got complemented by panchayat samiti. It has to be borne in mind that it is difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between the nature and types of activity and their levels, that is to say tier of planning and implementation.

KADAPA ZILLA PARISHAD ADMINISTRATION

Zilla Parishads have been functioning in the State from 01.11.1959. Earlier to 1959 there used to be district boards constituted under AP Andhra Area District Boards Act 1920 and A.P Telangana Area District Boards Act, 1955. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee have recommended constitution of

three tier levels i.e. village, mandal (or block) and district level. Before the present enactment, the Zilla Parishads and Mandal Parishads were constituted under the AP Mandal Parishads and Zilla Parishads and Zilla Abhivridi Sameeksha Mandals Act, 1986. The present act i.e. A.P. Panchayat Raj Act No. 13 of 1994 which came into force w.e.f. 30.05.1994 replacing the AP Gram Panchayat Act, 1964 and A.P. Mandal Parishads, Zilla Parishads, Zilla Abhivridi Sameeksha Mandals Act, 1986. It is an integrated act covering the provisions of gram panchayats. Mandal Parishads and Zilla Parishads bringing out some uniformity in matters like disqualifications, elections, no confidence motion taking of oath. Convening and conduct of meetings relationships between each tier administrative reports, budgets etc.

FUNCTIONS OF THE ZILLA PARISHAD

1. Examine and approve the budgets of mandal parishads in the district.
2. Distribute the funds allotted to the district by the central of state government among the mandal parishads.
3. Co-ordinate and consolidate the plans prepared in respect of the mandals in the district and prepare plans in respect of the entire district.
4. Supervise generally the activities of the mandal parishad.
5. Collect such data as it deems necessary.
6. Lay down the duties of all officers and servants of or holding office under Zilla Parishad provisions of APPR Act vest in the Chief Executive Officer

Zilla Parishad is constituted by the government for a district. Zilla Parishad is composed of following members.

1. Zilla Parishad territorial constituency members.
2. Members of the legislative assembly having jurisdiction in the district.
3. Members of the house of people having jurisdiction in the district.

4. Members of the council of states who are registered voters in the district.
5. Two persons belonging to minorities who are to be co-opted. Elections to Zilla Parishad territorial constituency (ZPTC) members are conducted directly, whereas, the chairperson is elected from among the members of ZPTC. The members are elected for a term of five years on political party basis. The Mandal Parishad presidents are invitees to the Zilla Parishad meetings. To assist commissioner, Panchayat Raj and rural employment. As also the district collectors there are departmental officers viz. district.

Panchayat Officer at district level. Divisional Panchayat officer at divisional level and the Extension Officer (PR & RD) at the mandal level. The said officers assist commissioner, Panchayat Raj only with regard to the administration of gram Panchayats. Whereas, for the other two tiers, i.e., mandal Parishads and Zilla Parishads, officers of Panchayat Raj department function as executive authorities viz. Mandal Parishad development officers and chief executive officers. At the village level, there will be gram Panchayats. They are administered by the executive authorities. There will be a Panchayat secretary per each village to look after the developmental works. Which is now changed to cluster system and Panchayat secretaries will be responsible cluster wise.

During British regime efforts were made to revive the local self-government institutions in India with a view to train the people in administration and to regain the confidence of people in the government. At present there is a three tier Panchayat Raj set up in the state of Andhra Pradesh at the mandal level the Mandal Praja Parishad and at the District level in Zilla Parishad. The Gram Panchayats are governed by the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act, 1964 and the Mandala Praja Parishads, by the Andhra Pradesh Mandala Praja Parishads, Zilla Parishads and Zilla Pranalika and Abhivrudhi Sameksha Mandals Act, 1989 is also in force governing elections to

the Panchayat Raj Institutions. The Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads function largely through standing committees in whom the decision-making power is vested and the executive authority is exercised, through government officials functioning as secretaries of these bodies. The Property of *Zilla Parishad* is another *important* source of its income. Administration plays a pivotal role and hence the researcher intends to pursue her research under the title “**ZILLA PARISHAD ADMINISTRATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH: A STUDY OF KADAPA DISTRICT**”.

REVIEW OF LITETRATURE

Lot of literature available on Panchayati Raj Administration in general but very few studies have contributed their attention on rural administrative system. The present study focus on Zilla Parishad administration and its of the performance towards working conditions of rural administration.

The review of literature shows that there are few studies which were conducted in various states of the country on the topic, so there are various forms of related literature i.e. books, articles in journals and research paper, Prof. G. Palanithurai has been written some articles on Decentralization in Local Government, quarterly Journal, and myself has written one article on Zilla Parishad administration in international journal of Multi Disciplinary Educational Research, in March 2017.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Hence, there is a need to study impartially and in-depth Zilla Parishad administration to ascertain certain problems and suggestions for smooth running the administration.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To explain the genesis and growth of the Local Self-Government.
2. To study the A.P. State Panchayat Raj administration and it's of the organizational structure.
3. To elucidate district profile of Kadapa pertaining to Panchayat Raj institution.

4. To analysis the working conditions of Zilla Parishad administration.
5. To examine finance and elections of the Zilla Parishad.
6. To trace of the problem encounter by the Zilla Parishad administration.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study confines its self to the administrative practices of Zilla Parishad at state level in general and district level in particular. The purpose of the study to examine performance of Zilla Parishad management at administration to find out certain challenges and able solution to strengthening and stimulating Zilla Parishad administration is special focus of the study was on Zilla Parishad administration to Kadapa district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for the present study collected from various sources. The data collected through both primary and secondary sources of data. The secondary data were collected from published books, journals, articles and newspapers and government reports. Secondary data is also gathered reports of various commissions and committees of India, Census reports and web sites. For the collection of necessary secondary data the researcher visited libraries such as Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Indian Council of Social Science Research Regional centre, Osmania University, Hyderabad.

The primary data collected directly from the respondents by administering a pre-designed questionnaire, through observation, interviews and checking files, reports, records and also unprinted material related to the practices of recruitment of employees. The researcher also instituted observation methods to assess the interactions and the behaviour of the authorities concerned towards ministerial staff related to implementation of various programmes.

SAMPLING DESIGN

In this connection the researcher has taken entire administration of Zilla Parishad for random study in the first stage. In the second stage the

concerned employees were selected based on random sampling each section of the administration,

CHAPTER DESIGN

Chapter I: INTRODUCTION. It explains the genesis and growth of Local Self-Government and its of the policies or programmes as well as various committees and commission and the role of Five Year Plans.

Chapter II: PANCHAYATI RAJ ADMINISTRATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH. It shows conception of Local Self Government responsible to a body of electors, Democratic decentralization, The Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishads functions etc.

Chapter III: THE PROFILE OF KADAPA DISTRICT. It brings out in and around of various tier of Panchayati Raj.

Chapter IV: ADMINISTRATION OF KADAPA ZILLA PARISHAD. It brings out working style of personnel from recruitment onwards and powers and functions of personnel administration.

Chapter V: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL OF ZILLA PARISHAD. It mentions working of Zilla Parishad administration as relating to various departments.

Chapter VI: ELECTION AND FINANCE. This chapter presents regarding election of Zilla Parishad and financial conditions.

Chapter VII: PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

It finds out the challenges, issues and problems encountered by the administration of Panchayat Raj Institutions and also recommends myriad solutions for removal of problems for providing good governance. Moreover, summarizes the entire thesis to give conclusion based as findings merged from the study.

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