CHAPTER -IV

THE CHIEF SECRETARY AS THE CHIEF CO-ORDINATOR

4.1 Overview

Co-ordination is one of the most important cardinal principles of administration. In contemporary governments where the administrative system is actively involved in multifarious activities, bringing about an effective administrative co-ordination has become a challenging task. Co-ordination is needed not only to secure teamwork and cooperation but also to mitigate the impact of conflicts that may arise in the administrative sub-systems operating at different levels. Only an orderly synchronization of efforts to provide the required resources, timing and executive direction can lead to harmonious and unified activities in pursuance of the defined objectives.1

Co-ordination may be internal (functional) or external (structural). Internal Co-ordination is concerned with co-coordinating the individual duties of persons working in an organization. External co-ordination, on the other hand is concerned with co-ordinating the activities of different organizational units. In the words of Appleby, “It (hierarchy) functions both perpendicularly and horizontally. The horizontal relationship is between units and between agencies commonly regarded as co-ordination in an effort to distinguish between co-ordination and administration. Co-ordination affected between units responsible to a single executive is co-ordination at the level of units, administration at the level of the executive to whom they are responsible, whereas he is in turn participates in co-ordination with other agencies at his level.”2

Means of co-ordination are many and varied. Planning, for instance, is a co-ordinating device par excellence. Planning involves the maximum utilization of all available resources in men, money and materials with a view to achieving the planned targets and goals within a limited period, and this is nothing but an exercise in co-ordination on a national scale. Secondly, there are organizational devices or institutionalization of co-ordination techniques. These may take the form of conferences, panels, committees, symposia, interdepartmental meetings, staff units, co-ordinating officers; etc.Hierarchy in
an organization is a co-ordinating agency in as much as its main purpose is to evolve a consensus with the agency. As a matter of fact, organization itself is a co-ordinating device. In India, there are numerous organizational devices to bring about co-ordination. The Union Government itself is above all a co-ordinating agency. The Central Secretariat, Cabinet Committees, Planning Commission, Zonal Councils, the National Development Council and the Prime Minister are all engaged in the same process. At the district level, the Deputy Commissioner/Collector is above all, a co-ordinator. This role will secure increasing emphasis with the introduction of democratic decentralization.

Then, there are Boards and Commissions helping in the same direction like the University Grants Commission, The Inter-University Boards, and the Indian Historical Records Commission. The Institution of Conferences is also freely used towards the same end. These conferences attempt co-ordination between the Centre and the States for expeditious disposal of schemes and for finding practical solutions of difficulties. They serve as forums for the exchange of ideas and the formulation of definite policy in the light of the discussions. They help in evolving common programmes and enable the review of the progress of implementation of such programmes. Such conferences are held at the political level, official, and professional levels. The Conferences of Governors, Chief Ministers and Ministers of different departments are example of conferences at the political level. At the official level are the conferences of the Secretaries of Government and Heads of the Departments.

Standardization of procedures and methods is the third medium of co-ordination. Procedures, which concern a large number of people and which are repetitive in nature, are generally standardized. Forms are a good example of standardization of procedures. Manuals, regulations and rules are other examples of such standardization.

Centralized house keeping is the fourth device to promote co-ordination. According to Pfiffner and Presthus, “In administration, house keeping problems usually include supply, warehousing, the cleaning and maintenance of buildings, printing and duplicating, equipment control, central mailing, transportation, and food and telephone service”

Fifthly, the Finance Ministry is itself a great co-ordinator. The annual budget itself is an essay in co-ordinating the resources, expenditures and programmes of the government
concerned, and it is the Finance Ministry that co-ordinates and reconciles the claims, demands and action, that is budget.

Lastly, co-ordination is largely dependent upon the effectiveness of verbal and written communications which channel information and ideas down, up and across the chain of command.

In addition to formal means, there are also informal media of co-ordination which are not less effective for being informal. Personal contacts are perhaps the most important of these. They help free exchange of ideas, frank discussion and agreement by compromise. Committees and conferences furnish opportunities for informal consultations. Dinners, lunches and cocktail parties have become recognizes media of informal communication. 

In India at the State level administration, there are two top level public functionaries who can bring about this desired synergism- the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary. The Chief Minister who is the political Head of the State can affect co-ordination mainly through the Cabinet which comprises Ministers in charge of different administrative departments. The second public official, i.e., the Chief Secretary, being the highest permanent civil servant of the State, is in a more effective position to co-ordinate the activities of the State agencies. This further becomes possible because of the Chief Secretary’s long standing in the administrative field and the knowledge and experience that he acquires during his administrative career. Besides, the Chief Secretary is the senior most civil servants and the leader of the administrators’ team in the State and therefore, he can exert his influence on the entire State administrative machinery. When both these functionaries, viz., the Chief Minister and the Chief Secretary, work in consonance with each other, the whole administrative machinery can be geared to bring about desired socio-economic change and administrative development in the State. In the present chapter, an attempt is being made to discuss and analyzed the role of the Chief Secretary as the Chief co-ordinator of State administrative activities.

4.2 The Chief Secretary as Chief Co-ordinator of Administration:

The State Secretariat is the principal executive instrument of the State government and is responsible for co-ordinating the vast network of State administrative machinery and
assisting the political executive in the formulation of public policy and its implementation. The Secretariat is divided into several departments, each administrating a specified set of subjects which, in turn, form the bases of portfolio of a Cabinet Minister or Minister of State. At the administrative level each department is headed by a Secretary who is to assists the Minister concerned in the formulation and execution of public policy. The Chief Secretary is the head of these permanent executives and, thus, is aptly called the king-pin of State administration. As the head of the State administrative machinery, the Chief Secretary is responsible for effecting co-ordination of the activities of different Secretariat departments. The is expected to minimize and resolve conflicts or the overlapping of work among various government departments and to bring about cooperation and teamwork among his colleagues and subordinates. He is expected to discourage excessive concentration of efforts and resources on a few sectors of government activity to the exclusion of others. He is also responsible for effecting integration of several sub-systems for facilitating effective implementation of government policies.

4.3 Level of Co-ordination

The Chief Secretary has to bring about co-ordination in the State government activities not only at the Intra-State level but also with the Centre and other State governments. At all these levels, co-ordination have to be both “internal” and “functional” which is concerned with co-ordinating the activities of different administrative units. Both these types of co-ordination are effected horizontally as well as perpendicularly. Horizontally, the process of co-ordination establishes inter-relations between one employee and other, between one section and other, between one division and another and between one department and another. Perpendicularly, co-ordination is established between one employee and one employee and his officer, between an officer and his superior and so on and likewise, between one section and a branch, between and a division and a division and between a division and a department.

For the purpose of effecting administrative co-ordination, the Chief Secretary has to employ a battery of techniques, both formally and informal, such as meetings, conferences, inter-departmental committees and setting up of centralized staff and
auxiliary agencies. Here an attempt has been made to discuss the contacts and associations of the Chief Secretary outside the State which enable him to bring about co-ordination between the State government and the Centre and other State governments and then discuss the co-ordinative role at the intra-State level.

(1) Co-ordination at the Centre-State level: The Chief Secretary of a State is a major channel of communication between his State government and the Centre. The State government activities are closely linked with the activities of the Government of India. This is especially so in matters like planning, finance, and personnel management. For this purpose the Chief Secretary has to keep regular contacts with the Central Level functionaries such as the Cabinet Secretary, the Home Secretary, the Personnel Secretary and the Planning Secretary. These contacts are maintained both through formal and informal meetings with them. The Chief Secretary’s personal contacts with certain senior officers of the Government of India help him in settling matters of crucial importance of inter-State ramifications. Such contacts also enable him in getting the Centre’s favour in matters such as plan allocations, institutional finance, allocation of power, food, irrigation, water and the like.

So far the issue of co-ordination at the Central level is concern, it was pointed out by some of the ex-Chief Secretaries of Assam that a tenure at the Centre prior to his appointment as Chief Secretary helps an officer in effecting better co-ordination at Centre-State level, because the association that he develops during that period pay him well when circumstances demand so. Another factor which helps a Chief Secretary in this context is that his being an All India Service officer, a good number of his batch mates working at the Centre generally help him in getting due favour from the concerned departments of the Government of India. Chief Secretary (retd.) H.N.Das is of the opinion that how much can these associations really help depends upon the personnel attributes and influence of the incumbent holding the position of the Chief Secretary. This fact has been also been pointed out by other retired Chief Secretaries and other senior officers.

There is also a network of a conferences called and councils set up by the Central Government which are generally utilized for co-ordination purposes as well as for
exchange of views and sharing of experiences. Out of these, two of the most important conferences and councils with which the Chief Secretary is formally associated are the Chief Secretaries Conferences and the Zonal Council. But in the case of Assam and other North-Eastern States the forum for Inter-State co-ordination is the North Eastern Council (NEC). It would be pertinent to mention here that the NEC is now considered as the regional level ‘Planning body’.

(a) The Chief Secretaries Conferences: The Chief Secretaries Conferences is attended by the Chief Secretaries of States and is presided over by the Cabinet Secretary of the Government of India. It is now held annually at New Delhi. The First conference was held in 1965 to discuss the law and order situation in the country. The Chief Secretaries Conference which was held in New Delhi on 7 and 8 May 1976 was addressed by the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Union Minister of Home Affairs, O.M.Mehta and others. Following are the major steps that were recommended to tone up administration on the States and the Union:

1. Establishment of Civil Service Tribunal to deal with the grievances of the civil servants regarding the service matters,

2. Setting up of monitoring –cum- evaluation cell in the departmental projects for timely completion of various projects and programmes.

3. Institutional arrangements for redress of citizens’ grievances at the field level.

4. Setting up of task force in every state consisting of the Finance Secretary and the Secretary of the administrative Reforms to go into the question of delegation of financial and administrative powers to the departmental heads and field organization.

5. Ensuring that the District magistrate to be posted should be sufficiently senior officers with at least six to eight years of service. The splitting of up of district into manageable units in terms of area and population was also stressed.

6. Early constitution of All India Services in the field of Medicine and Health and Engineering.
The Conference also recommended delegation in the routine matters:

“The top executive and administrators should be relieved of the present heavy pre-occupation with the burden of routine, massive paper work, conferences and meetings, so that they have adequate time to devote to matters of higher policy, programme, supervision, employees’ problems and monitoring.”

The Conference of the Chief Secretaries which was held in February 4 and 5 of 1985, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi expressed his determination to stop politicization of administration and his future vision of a developed nation. The subsequent Conference which was held in June 1989 reviewed in depth the entire gamut of the communal situation in the country. On the communal front the Chief Secretaries concurred that there was need for meaningful gathering and purposeful exchange of information on intelligence gathering between the Centre and the States for a proper assessment of the communal scenario. Some of the Chief Secretaries said the setting of a Municipal Finance Commission would be useful in disbursement of funds.

Ist Annual Conference of Chief Secretaries:

The Conference of Chief Secretaries is now an annual event. The Conference institutionalizes the process of interaction, and serves as a standing forum for exchange of views between the Centre and the States. It also provides an occasion for discussion on global developments that have a bearing on the country as a whole and the broad contours of national policies in select areas of relevance.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressed the first Annual Conference of Chief Secretaries in New Delhi on February, 2010. Giving a pep talk to civil servants, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh asked them to be innovative and quick, saying people resent “apathy, sloth and corruption” at any level of government more than ever before. Doing some plain-speaking at the first annual conference of Chief Secretaries he said there was clamour for accountability from all quarters -- the legislature, the judiciary and the media.

The Action Points emerging from Chief Secretaries’ Conference consists of 76 items that has been referred to the Secretaries of Government of India, the Chief Secretaries of States and the Union Territories for immediate action from the Cabinet Secretariat.
The 2nd Chief Secretaries’ Conference was held on 4-5th February, 2011 at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi. The Conference was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The inauguration was graced by the presence of Hon’ble Shri V.Narayanasamy, Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions and PMO, Principal Secretary to PM and the Cabinet Secretary. During the meeting discussions were undertaken on the various agenda items like ‘Transparency and Ethics in Governance’, ‘Key issues in Internal Security’, ‘Introduction to RFD Initiative’ and ‘Science and Technology: Follow up of decisions taken at the First Annual Chief Secretaries Conference’. Besides these, following Flagship Programmes were also discussed: a) ‘Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana’ (RGGVY), ‘Renewable Energy Development in India’, ‘Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana’ (PMGSY), ‘Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme’ (AIBP), and ‘National Rural Drinking Water Programme’ (NRDWP).12

The subjects which comprise the agenda of a conference are sponsored both by the Central government and the State governments. It is an open ended conference and all the subjects concerning and affecting State administration can be discussed in it. In the Chief Secretaries Conference, a number of important decisions are taken which help in ensuring proper implementation of public policies. Such conferences are often addressed by the Prime Minister and other senior Cabinet Ministers of the Government of India.

The Chief Secretaries Conference helps the Chief Secretary of a State to exchange views and discuss issues which have a common importance for various States. It also serves as forum for co-ordination of such activities which are being undertaken by the Central government at the State Level. The decisions taken in such a conference have great importance because these are backed by the authority of the senior most civil servants working in State Governments who in the ultimate analysis are responsible for the implementation of these very decisions.

(b) **Zonal council:** The idea of creation of Zonal Councils was mooted by the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Lal Nehru in 1956 when during the course of debate
on the report of the States Re-organization Commission, he suggested that the States proposed to be reorganized may be grouped into four or five zones having an Advisory Council ‘to develop the habit of co-operative working” among these States. This suggestion was made by Pandit Nehru at a time when linguistic hostilities and bitterness as a result of re-organization of the States on linguistic pattern were threatening the very fabric of our nation. As an antidote to this situation, it was suggested that a high level advisory forum should be set up to minimize the impact of these hostilities and to create healthy inter-State and Centre-State environment with a view to solving inter-State problems and fostering balanced socio-economic development of the respective zones.

**Composition of Zonal Council:**

In the light of the vision of Pandit Nehru, five Zonal Councils were set up vide Part-III of the States Re-organization Act, 1956. The present composition of each of these Zonal Councils is as under:

- The Northern Zonal Council, comprising the States of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan, National Capital Territory of Delhi and Union Territory of Chandigarh;
- The Central Zonal Council, comprising the States of Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh;
- The Eastern Zonal Council, comprising the States of Bihar, Jharkhand, Orissa, Sikkim and West Bengal;
- The Western Zonal Council, comprising the States of Goa, Gujarat, Maharashtra and the Union Territories of Daman & Diu and Dadra & Nagar Haveli; and
- The Southern Zonal Council, comprising the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry.

The North Eastern States i.e. (i) Assam (ii) Arunachal Pradesh (iii) Manipur (iv) Tripura (v) Mizoram (vi) Meghalaya and (vii) Nagaland are not included in the Zonal Councils and their special problems are looked after by the North Eastern Council, set up under the North Eastern Council Act, 1972. The State of Sikkim has also been included in the
North Eastern Council vide North Eastern Council (Amendment) Act, 2002 notified on 23rd December, 2002. Consequently, action for exclusion of Sikkim as member of Eastern Zonal Council has been initiated by Ministry of Home Affairs.

These councils are sub-federal links between the Centre and the States. The objectives of these councils may be stated as under:

(i) to promote cooperation among States in the successful and speedy execution of major development projects;

(ii) to enable the Centre and the States, which are dealing increasingly with socio-economic matters, to cooperate and exchange ideas and experiences with each other with a view to facilitating the formulation of uniform policies for the common good of the community:

(iii) to secure some kind of political equilibrium between different region of the country:

(iv) to help in arresting the growth of acute State consciousness, regionalism and particularistic trends: and

(v) to solve problems concerning border disputes, linguistic minorities or inter-State transport.

2. Inter-State level Co-ordination: It may be mentioned that the Chief Secretary acts as the main coordinating instrument in a number of other inter-State matters. Inter-State disputes pertaining to boundaries, shares in power, water, irrigation and other facilities are first settled at the Chief Secretary’s level and only then are finalized at the political level. In Inter-State treaties also, it is the Chief Secretary who represents the State in such negotiations. The Chief Secretary of Assam, whenever need arises, enters into communication with the Chief Secretaries or other senior officials of other States with a view to discussing and negotiating settlements on inter-State problems. In matters requiring longer discussions, he may even visit the State concerned or arrange for a high level administrative meeting in Assam itself. This way the Chief Secretary of the State, with his personal initiative, can affect positive co-ordination with other State governments.
Boundary disputes with the neighbouring states: It would be pertinent to mention here that boundary disputed is a very sensitive issue in North East India. After independence particularly after the formation of States and Union Territories as a result of the dismemberment of the State of Assam boundary disputes arose. There were claims and counter claims by the parties concerned. Some of these disputes resulted in the killing of persons and displacement of the population. So far these disputes have not been resolves and uneasy peace prevails in these disputed border areas. Apart from the initiatives of the Political leaderships, the Chief Secretaries of these States being the administrative Head of the state have to play a very important role in maintaining peace in those areas where there is violence because of boundary disputes.

The Chief Secretary of Assam has to playing a very crucial role in maintaining peace and harmony with the neighbouring state of Arunachal, Nagaland and Meghalaya.

Assam-Arunachal: The boundary between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh formerly NEFA was not determined. On 19th January 1954, the Government of Assam defined the area forming the North Eastern Frontier Area. The Government of Assam said that the areas forming NEFA has been clearly defined and that no dispute had arisen at any time about its validity. But after the formation of Arunachal Pradesh the boundary dispute arose. To discuss and settle the boundary dispute between Assam and NEFA the Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam and the Advisor to the Governor of Assam for NEFA met. They agreed that the boundary should be surveyed by the Survey of India. The ground demarcation of Assam-Arunachal Pradesh boundary commenced in 1971-72. But there was no agreement between the two states and the dispute has not been finally settled since then\textsuperscript{14}.

Assam–Nagaland: The boundary dispute between Assam and Nagaland is hot. After the creation Nagaland on 1st December 1963 under the State of Nagaland Act, 1962. The Reserve Forest areas of Assam lying close to the Assam-Nagaland boundary have been the scene of great tension and violence. On 28th February 1967, the Chief Secretaries of Assam and Nagaland met to discuss the situation. The Chief Secretary, Nagaland suggested that the encroachment should be discouraged and prevented and that the existing cultivators should not be disturbed.
As a result of series of discussion held in 1972 between the two State Governments four interim agreements for the maintenance of peace and order in the disputed area pending recommendations thereon by K.V.Sundaram, Advisor to the Union Home Ministry, on the Nagaland-Assam boundary dispute were made.

In November 1978, the situation was critical. There were large scale encroachments from Nagaland side seem to have been encouraged by the Dimapur Sugar Mills and as a consequence large areas of the forest were brought under the sugarcane cultivation. To deal with the situation, the Chief Ministers of Assam and Nagaland met at Kohima on 2 January, 1979. They agreed to settle the border through bilateral discussion. They also to maintain the status quo and observe the spirit of the 1972 Agreement and maintain peace and order. In principles, the agreement stand even today, but in reality there is constant breach of these agreement. Violating the ground rules, the state governments of both Assam and Nagaland have been undertaking developmental works through their official agencies.

Thus, the dispute between Assam and Nagaland is currently the most prominent with a history of violent clashes between border communities. Both states have accused each other of illegally occupying each other's territories. The present flare up has compelled the Supreme Court to ask the Centre to institute a boundary Commission, although two such previous commissions have failed to settle the dispute. The Sundaram Commission (1971) submitted its report in 1979 which was accepted by Assam but rejected by Nagaland. The Shastri Commission (1985), too, could not settle the dispute. Further down in history, there is a battle between law and politics. Whereas Nagaland prefers a dialogue from a "political and historical perspective," Assam insists on a "constitutionally defined boundary" and hence on abiding by the decision of the Supreme Court.

The Chief Secretaries of the two states met on 18th of Spetember, 2010, albeit in keeping with the Supreme Court’s direction to resolve the over two decades old boundary dispute through mediation. The meeting that turned out to be a day-long affair was attended by the Chief Secretaries of both the states, representative of the home ministry, besides the two mediators. The delegation of Assam included Chief Secretary Naba Kumar
Das, Home commissioner Jishnu Barua, and security Advisor to the Chief Minister G.M. Srivastava, among others.

A division bench of the Supreme court comprising Justice Markandey Katju and Justice T.S. Thakur had on August 22, 2010 passed an interim order on an original suit filed by Assam in 1988 against Nagaland. The Apex Court had selected a two member team comprising senior advocates Sriram Panchu and Nirjan Bhat to examine the border dispute case between the two states, appointing them as mediators to examine the 22 years old border dispute.

The bench had asked the co-mediator to submit a preliminary report after three sittings, before reporting to the Court. The Apex Court had ruled that if it received a positive report, the tenure of the mediators may be extended.

The Bench had further ordered that the two co-mediators could select the experts in the mediation, besides directing the Union Home Ministry to depute a representative and the Chief Secretaries of Assam and Nagaland to be associated with the process of mediation. Thus Chief Secretaries of Assam have been involved at administrative level with their counterparts of the neighbouring states for maintenance of peace and tranquility in the inter-state border areas where there is possibility of violence and disputes frequently occurs without any warning. 18

Apart from Arunachal and Nagaland, the State of Assam is having boundary dispute with Meghalaya because of which Chief Secretaries of both the States have to keep in regular touch so that there is no further escalation of tension and loss of human life.

(3) Intra-State Co-ordination: Within the State there are various levels of administrative functionaries who are supposed to function for facilitating the overall effectiveness of the State machinery. It is necessary that each of them work in fuller co-operation and co-ordination with each other. The Chief Secretary, thus, has an even more effective role to perform as co-ordinator of activities in the various Secretariat departments, executive departments and those performed at the district level. How he does this is the subject of the discussion that follows.

4.4 Chief Secretary as Head of Secretariat: The Chief Secretary as head of State administrative machinery is responsible for the effective co-ordination of work of different Secretariat department. For the convenient transaction of official business there
are 56 departments in the Assam Secretariat which are further divided into divisions. The subjects dealt with in each department are clearly prescribed in the Rules of Executive Business of Government of Assam. The lists of subjects allotted to departments and groups are exhaustively complied. Still, in certain cases there can be differences of opinion as to whether a particular reference is meant for one department/group or another. In case differences of opinion arises between groups of the same department, the matter is decided by the concerned Secretary. In other cases, the matter is referred to the General Administration Department where, if necessary, it is referred to the Chief Secretary for orders. There are several subjects which have to be dealt with in more than one department or group. In such cases, each department/group deals with any the specific aspect with which it is concerned and general questions are dealt with by the department or groups that framed the general rules or orders.

Each Secretariat department is placed under the charge of a Minister. This is done by the Governor on the advice of the Chief Minister. At times more than one department may be brought under the charge of a Minister. At the administrative level, a Secretariat department is generally headed by a Secretary who is the official head of the department. Sometimes more than one department may be placed in charge of the same Secretary or the work of department may be divided between two or more Secretaries. In this sphere, however, there is no common practice and the portfolio of officials goes on changing according to political necessities. Below the Secretary, there are various levels of officers such as Special Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Under Secretary and Section officers. The office staff comprises Assistants, Stenographers, Upper Division Clerks, Lower Division Clerks, Typists and the like. At the bottom is the class IV staff such as peons, sweepers and chowkidars.19.

The position of the Chief Secretary vis-à-vis other Secretaries is not of primus –inter – pares but in fact, the Chief Secretary is the de facto leader of the team. At the administrative level, he has the overall authority in governmental decision making. He has the control over the whole Secretariat administration and is empowered to take all necessary steps for the efficient degree of uniformity and consistency in the policies adopted by the State government with respect to different departments. Keeping the importance of this uniformity in view, the Assam Administrative Reforms Commission
(2005) has recommended that all important cases involving new principles or new schemes and proposals, suggesting deviations from existing rules and practices, should be routed to the Minister or the Chief Minister only through the Chief Secretary.

Notably, the Chief Secretary is empowered to call for any file relating to any case in any department, and any such request by him is to be complied with by the Secretary of the concerned department. The Chief Secretary, after the examination of a case, may be submit it for the orders of the Minister in charge or may send it directly to the Chief Minister with his own remarks. This power enables him to keep a check and control over the activities of the departments, which is essential for an effective co-ordination of administrative operations.

Earlier, the Administrative Reform Commission’s study Team Report on State Administration had also suggested that there is a need to strengthen the position of the Chief Secretary who is expected to function as the Chief co-ordinator of the administrative system under the control of the Chief Minister.

4.5 Instruments of Co-ordination at the Intra-State level:

The Chief Secretary can effect co-ordination at the intra-State level through a variety of instruments which are conveniently used for bringing about co-ordination at the intra-State level in the following manner:

(1) **Position as Secretary to the Council of Ministers**: The Chief Secretary’s position as Secretary to the Council of Ministers makes him stronger as compared to other Secretaries. In Council Meetings he represents the entire administration. When occasions so arise, he even acts as spokesman of those departments. All papers of different departments reaching the council are routed through him and hence he is in a position to keep track of the administrative activities being undertaken in these departments. His power of calling for any paper from any department makes him still more powerful. His role as informal adviser to the Ministers and more so the Chief Minister brings him even closer to the politicians on one hand and to administrative officials on the other. The Chief Secretary works as the link between the Chief Minister and other Secretaries and hence the Secretaries look to him for support for the acceptance of proposals sent by them for Cabinet approval.
It may be mentioned that the importance of the position of the Chief Secretary as Secretary to the Council has been recognized since long and the Administrative Enquiry Committee of Bombay had observed as early as in 1948: “It would be desirable for the Chief Secretary to become Secretary to the Cabinet in a really effective sense and take charge of all its business: in that case he would automatically function as coordinator of departmental activities.”

(2) **Active involvement in certain important Departments:** The Chief Secretary’s involvement of certain Secretariat departments of crucial importance such Planning, Personnel and Administrative Reform and Training helps him in his role of Chief Co-ordinator of State administration.

More over his association with the General Administration Department (GAD) and Secretariat Administration Department (SAD) facilitates him in effecting co-ordination in certain general establishment matters such as providing office, residential and telephone facilities. He also acts as a link between the senior officials of the State and those of the Centre and the other governments who come to visit the State, in certain respects, this department has jurisdiction over the whole range of governmental activities and thus it operates as a clearing house for other Secretariat departments.

Being the overall in charge of the Department of personnel and Administrative Reforms and Training, the Chief Secretary is responsible for the choice and replacement of officers to ensure proper functioning of the administrative system and to remove any frictions which may crop up in its process. He acts as the friends and councilor to the civil servants who look upon him for guidance and advice as well as for protection of their rights. The Chief Secretary being in-charge of the entire public personnel management of the State can bring about in effective manner co-ordination between the personnel of various departments. His position as head of personnel gives him certain powers and authority by which he can influence almost all government units. The broader powers and responsibilities for effecting administrative reforms provide the Chief Secretary with tremendous influence to facilitate co-ordination through a process of administrative redesigning.
The Planning Department which works under the overall supervision of the Chief Secretary also enables him to bring about co-ordination in plan and developmental efforts of various departments. The system of setting up of State-Level Evaluation and Monitoring Committees has been designed to assist the Chief Secretary in effecting co-ordination among various departments. As Chairman of these Committees, he is in a position to thrash out differences existing among the various departments and thereby ensuring the efficient functioning of the State administration. The Chief Secretary’s powers as the head of the Planning Department enable him to settle conflicting viewpoints of various departments and thus facilitate an effective co-ordination in the administrative system.\textsuperscript{23}

(3) **Secretaries Meetings:** The Chief Secretary further acts as a co-ordinating authority by presiding over the meetings of the Secretaries and by resolving inter-departmental differences and other broader issues pertaining to State administration in a decisive manner. In the case of Assam the inter-departmental coordination is a big challenge before the Chief Secretary as the Assam Secretariat is having 56 departments. In order to highlight the role of the Chief Secretary in case of inter-departmental co-ordination it would be appropriate to mention the Minutes of a meeting which was held on 23.12.2004 under the Chairmanship of the then Chief Secretary S.Kabilan to decide a vital issue regarding the actions taken for the revival & closure of the State Public Sector Undertakings where the coordination role of the Chief Secretary is well reflected:

**Minutes of the meeting under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary S.Kabilan:**

The meeting was convened by the Commissioner & Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary S.Kabilan on 23-12-2004 at 11.00 AM in the Janata Bhawan Auditorium to discuss about the actions taken for revival & closure of the State Public Sector Undertakings (SPSUs) wherein the Addl. Chief Secretary, Principal Secretaries, Commissioners & Secretaries of the administrative Departments of SPSUs; Principal Secretary, Planning & Development (P&D) Department; Financial Commissioner and Chief Executives of the Enterprises were invited.
The Chief Secretary advised that the administrative departments should identify the Enterprises to be closed/revived through in-depth studies, taking the various factors like techno-economic viability, market demand, liabilities, potential, recommendations of various authorities etc. into consideration, since it would not be logical to use good public money in bad investments. The Addl. Chief Secretary, Industries etc. Department stated that ten Enterprises under the administrative control of Industries Department were identified for closure already, of which closure of four were already agreed to under the Medium Term Fiscal Reform Programme (MTFRP) and proposals for closure were submitted to the Finance Department for making the required fund available. The Principal Secretary, Mines & Minerals, Agriculture etc. Departments expressed his view that the programme for revival of the Enterprises involved long-term financial commitments for shedding-off surplus employees, squaring-up of liabilities, making working capital available etc. and therefore could be decided only in consultation with the nodal departments. The Chief Secretary however stressed that the exercise to determine the viability of revival should be the priority and the issue of availability of fund should follow thereafter. The Financial Commissioner stated that in order to streamline the process, the Cabinet decided to make the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) a nodal department and to strengthen it with Legal experts, Chartered Accountants, Company Secretary etc. and a full time Secretary competent for State Public Sector Reforms, with reasonable tenure. He added that as per the Cabinet decision, the administrative departments would be required to submit proposals for closure/revival of SPSUs with details of requirement of fund to meet the cost of closure, implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), technical up-gradation, squaring-up of liabilities etc. to the DPE, which in turn would place the same before the Public Investment Board (PIB) for necessary recommendation for consideration of the Cabinet and the release of fund would follow thereafter. He mentioned that without this kind of exercise, it would not be possible to determine the total requirement of fund for necessary allocations from different probable sources like Asian Development Bank (ADB), Planning Commission (PC) etc. He also clarified that the Assam Governance & Public Resource Management Programme (AGPRMP) provided for an amount of $30 million towards settlement of outstanding liabilities of closed SPSUs and another amount of $5 million towards One
Time Settlement (OTS) – closed SPSUs institutional loan up to 2006-07 under Sub-Programme-1, which was likely to be followed by Sub-Programme-2 through which another amount of $ 80 million may flow to the State during 2007-08 & 2008-09 for settlement of outstanding liabilities of closed SPSUs. Individual SPSU wise allocation was proposed to be made by the State Govt. on receipt of concrete proposals from concerned administrative departments and DPE. He also clarified that the provisions were meant for closure and around Rs.22 Crore would be available for meeting cost of closure/OTS etc. & another Rs.22 Crore for implementation of VRS in 2005-06. In 2006-07 & 2007-08 fund flow of around Rs.110 Crore & Rs.130 Crore were likely. He however mentioned that the ADB could be moved for fund for revival of viable SPSUs too subsequently, but in order to convince the ADB, the Govt. would be required to demonstrate satisfactory implementation of the programme. The Chief Secretary expressed doubt about the capability of DPE to take-up the massive task with its existing set-up.

In this connection, the hindrances caused in State Public Sector Reform by huge arrear in finalization of accounts in most of the SPSUs were discussed. The Principal Secretary Urban Development Department (UDD) spoke about the need of creation of a corpus fund for meeting salary requirements of accounting staff only, in order to assist the SPSUs particularly those not in operation and not having been able to pay salaries, for updating the accounts. The arrears in finalization of accounts ranged for 16-20 years in 3 SPSUs (Assam Govt. Marketing Corpn; Cachar Sugar Mills, Assam Livestock & Poultry Corpn.) 11-15 years in 9 SPSUs (Assam Plantation Crop Dev. Corpn.; Assam Plains Tribes Dev. Corpn; Assam Hills Small Ind. Dev. Corpn; Assam State Dev. Corpn. for OBC; Assam State Minor Irrig. Dev. Corpn; Assam State Textbook Prod. & Publ. Corpn; Assam State Film (Fin & Dev) Corpn; Assam Spun Silk Mills; Assam Small Ind. Dev. Corpn), 6-10 years in 19 SPSUs (Assam Conductors & Tubes; Assam State Dev. Corpn; Assam Powerloom Dev. Corpn; Assam Govt. Construction Corpn; Assam Police Housing Corpn; Assam Seeds Corpn; STATFED; Assam Electronics Dev. Corpn; Assam Tourism Dev. Corpn; FERTICHEM; Assam Fisheries Dev. Corpn; Assam State Weaving & Mfg. Company; Assam State Textile Corpn; Assam Urban Water Supply & Sewerage Board; ARTFED; Assam Minorities Dev. & Fin Corpn; Assam Mineral Dev. Corpn;
Assam State Transport Corpn; Assam Syntex), 2-5 years in 7 SPSUs (Assam State Warehousing Corpn; Assam Tea Corpn; Assam State Housing Board; Assam Polyester Co-op Society; Nagaon Co-op Society ; Assam Co-op Sugar Mills; Assam State Fert. & Chem). It was suggested that the process of finalization of accounts of Companies being too lengthy requiring adoption of previous year’s accounts in Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the Statutory Auditor to submit audit report for the subsequent year, provisional accounts, internally audited through Chartered Accountant could be taken into consideration, as otherwise, it would take around 10 years to clear the backlog of 19 years. The Financial Commissioner opined that in view of the situation, legal closure of the unviable SPSUs would take considerable time and therefore pending legal closure, all other steps for closure need to be taken viz. release of the employees other than core staff for processing arrear accounts; vacating rented premises etc. so that the revenue expenditures are minimized to the lowest possible level etc.

Another point stressed by the Financial Commissioner was the need of a uniform policy on VRS. He mentioned that while the DPE circulated a guideline on VRS on 20-09-2004 with the approval of the Cabinet, the P&D Department adopted another policy. The Principal Secretary P&D Department informed that the P&D Department was following the Assam Agro-Industries Development Corporation Ltd (AAIDC) model providing for incentive of 30 days salary per year of service or the salary for the left over period, whichever less, but no payment of arrear salary. He stated that this model was followed in respect of proposals for fund for implementation of VRS from the VRS pool fund at the disposal of the P&D Department. He viewed that in consideration of demand and scarcity of fund, the model circulated by the DPE could not be afforded. He further added that in the current year, there was a provision of Rs.39 Crore, of which around Rs.9 Crore had to be released for payment of two months arrear salary to the employees of SPSUs as per order of the Hon’ble High Court. From the remaining amount, Rs.10 Crore & Rs.4 Crore were released in favour of STATEFED & AAIDC respectively for implementation of VRS and similarly, the balance was in consideration of release to Assam Govt. Construction Corpn/ Assam Govt. Marketing Corpn/ Assam Small Ind. Dev. Corpn/ Assam Plantation Crop Dev. Corpn/ Assam State Housing Board/ Publication Board. He informed that there were more proposals with the P&D Department from other SPSUs
and therefore the P&D Department would entertain proposals opting the AAIDC Model only. In this connection, he mentioned that earlier also, the P&D Department provided fund similarly for implementation of VRS in Assam State Transport Corpn, Assam Livestock & Poultry Corpn & AAIDC. The Chief Secretary viewed that since the Govt. should not have two policies, the P&D Department need to re-examine the policies and also consider giving priority to closure of unviable SPSUs. He mentioned that till the policy already approved by the Cabinet was not modified by another Cabinet decision, the existing policy circulated by DPE would continue. In this connection, the Managing Director, STATFED informed that with the amount of Rs.10 Crore being received through the Registrar of Co-operative Societies, around 400 of the surplus employees would be released and this would be one of the steps of revival of STAFED. Incidentally, he requested early clearing of the long pending dues amounting to about Rs.8 Crore of the Govt. to STATFED on account of goods supplied, as the Enterprise was facing severe crisis of working capital in continuing with the business activities. The Chief Secretary desired to know as to what means would be taken to arrest recruitment against vacancies created on account of implementation of VRS. While the Commissioner & Secretary, DPE informed that in the guideline issued by the DPE on 20-09-2004, a condition that no recruitment against such vacancies would be made was already incorporated, the Principal Secretary, P&D Department stated that the P&D Department took an undertaking to this effect. As regards Govt. dues to STATEFED, the Chief Secretary wanted the Managing Director to quantify the liability of STAFED to the Govt. including against guarantees provided by the Govt.

The Commissioner & Secretary, WPT & BC Department apprised that as per recommendation of the DPE, the possibility of merger of the three Corporations under the WPT&BC Department set-up for welfare of Plains Tribes, Scheduled Castes & Other Backward Classes was examined. He mentioned that though such merger would reduce some amount of revenue expenditure, the merged Organization was not likely to be economically viable with the existing level of activities. The matter would therefore be re-examined, he stated.

The Chief Secretary desired to know the status of closure of Assam Co-operative Sugar Mills Ltd under Co-operation Department already agreed for closure under the MTFRP.
The Secretary, Co-operation could not state details on the matter and therefore the Chief Secretary directed the Secretary to take-up the matter with the Commissioner & Secretary, Co-operation immediately. As regards Assam State Minor Irrigation Dev. Corpn. Ltd (ASMIDC) under Irrigation Department, which was also decided to be closed under the MTFRP, the Commissioner & Secretary DPE informed that this was the only proposal, which was received from the Irrigation Department and the same was referred to the Finance Department. He also stated that the Finance Department advised awaiting fund under AGPRMP. The Secretary, Irrigation reported that clearing of arrear salary to the employees alone would require around Rs.19 Crore, which too was mounting day by day, in addition to other liabilities. The Chief Secretary observed that almost entire of the Rs.22 Crore likely to be available for meeting cost of closure/OTS etc. under the AGPRMP in 2005-06 would be required to deal with arrear salary liability in case of ASMIDC and therefore advised the Financial Commissioner to take steps for finding more fund for the purpose. In this connection, the matter on protection of available fixed assets of the SPSUs to be closed e.g. land & building in prime location; plant & machinery etc. came-up for discussions. It was felt that as the owner, the assets will be of the Govt. and measures to protect/utilize such assets would have to be taken by the Govt.

**Before concluding, the Chief Secretary summarized the discussions and decisions as below:**

- All administrative departments of the State Public Sector Undertakings (SPSUs) will identify & decide the SPSUs to be closed or revived in State Public Sector including through merger/improvement or to be revived in the private sector through disinvestments/lease, taking all relevant factors into consideration and submit proposals for closure/revival with all details separately for each SPSU to the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), for placing the same before the Public Investment Board (PIB).
- Priority will be assigned to cases of closure of unviable SPSUs and the employees excepting the core staff required for processing arrear accounts will be released first, so that such liabilities do not continue to accrue on account of no services availed, to be followed by settlement of admitted liabilities.
• The next priority will be to deal with cases of revival of potential SPSUs.
• The SPSUs decided to be closed will vacate all rented premises immediately to stop unproductive revenue expenditure and similar expenses.
• Pending finalization of accounts of SPSUs through audit by Statutory Auditors & Accountant General (AG) as required, serious efforts for expediting which will be made by the SPSUs & administrative departments concerned, provisional assets & liabilities will be determined from the Provisional Accounts approved by the Board of Directors/Members after internal audit by registered Chartered Accountants in case of Companies & Statutory Undertakings requiring final audit by the AG. In cases of Co-operative & Statutory SPSUs where State Govt. machinery like Registrar of Co-operative Societies/Directorate of Local Fund were the final authorities to audit, only such audited accounts will be taken into consideration for the purpose.
• The Finance Department will make efforts to enhance the availability of fund for closure of unviable SPSUs to meet liabilities on account of arrear salary, dues to Financial Institutions, Statutory liabilities etc.
• Finance Department will put efforts to enlarge the scope of State Public Sector Reforms under the Assam Governance & Public Resource Management Programme (AGPRMP) for availability of fund for revival of potential SPSUs also, required for settlement of liabilities, implementation of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS), injection as working capital, capacity building etc.
• Since the Govt. should not have two policies on the same matter and the guideline issued by the DPE on 20-09-2004 on VRS with approval of the Cabinet remained in force till it get amended by another Cabinet decision, the Planning & Development (P&D) Department will re-examine the two policies and advise DPE to move the Cabinet, if so required, so that a uniform policy can be followed in all cases.
• P&D Department will examine the strategy of utilizing VRS pool fund for assigning priority to cases of closure of unviable SPSUs, to be followed by cases of revival of potential SPSUs.
• The nine SPSUs which have submitted proposals seeking financial assistance for compilation of arrear accounts against initiation of DPE, will resubmit the proposals to the DPE through respective Administrative Departments, after making necessary
corrections as advised by the DPE already, so that the DPE can move the Finance Department for provision of fund.

• The remaining thirty five SPSUs which have been reminded by the DPE to move Administrative Departments concerned for settlement of Govt. dues on account of goods & services supplied to enable the Administrative Departments to move P&D and Finance Departments for Plan allocation/budget provision will submit the proposals to the Administrative Departments concerned with adequate justifications on legitimate claims, with intimation of details to DPE or submit Nil report as already requested by DPE. The six SPSUs which have already submitted the details to the DPE will move the Administrative Departments concerned similarly as already advised by DPE.

• The remaining twenty-seven SPSUs which have been reminded by the DPE to submit information regarding liabilities to Financial Institutions/Statutory liabilities etc. which may have to settle through negotiations/One Time Settlement (OTS) will move the Administrative Departments concerned with intimation of required details to DPE or submit nil reports.

• All the Administrative Departments concerned and the SPSUs will ensure that no recruitments on account of vacancies created through implementation of VRS are made at any level, barring exceptional cases for which however the Administrative Departments concerned will seek recommendation of the Empowered Committee for State Level Public Enterprises set-up under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary/Addl. Chief Secretary, as per instructions issued on 13-05-2003.

• The DPE will process the only proposal received from the Irrigation Department for closure of Assam State Minor Irrigation Development Corporation Ltd. for consideration of the PIB along-with any other proposal received meanwhile, so that the process can be started in April 2005 with the fund expected for State Public Sector Reforms under AGPRMP.

All the forty-three SPSUs excluding the five performing well, viz. Assam Gas Company Ltd & Assam Petrochemicals Ltd under Industries Department; ARTFED under Handloom, Textile & Sericulture Department; Assam Co-operative Jute Mills Ltd. Under Co-operation Department and Assam State Textbook Production & Publication
Corporation Ltd. Under Education Department will submit the Action Plans for Revival/Closure as per formats circulated by DPE in five copies, duly approved & recommended by respective Administrative Departments to DPE. Any SPSU that has not received the formats will collect the same from DPE immediately.\textsuperscript{24}

In such meetings, issues that concern the State government as a whole are discussed. These meetings serve as forums or the exchange of ideas and for the formulation of definite policies and programmes in the light of the discussions held. They help in evolving common programmes and enable the review of the progress of such programmes.

(4) **District Level Co-ordination**: In order to provide effective co-ordination at the district level, Senior Officers Conferences are held annually at Dispur which are attended by the Deputy Commissioners, Heads of the Departments and Superintendents of police. These conferences are presided over by the Chief Secretary, enable him to acquaint himself with the problems and progress of development activities being undertaken in various districts (besides, of course, at the State level). The Deputy Commissioners and Police officials discuss the administrative problems pertaining to their respective districts and solutions are sought to these problems in these conference.

The Assam Tribune reported:

Inaugurating a Two Day (24 and 25 May, 1976) conference of the Deputy Commissioners and the Sub-divisional Officers of the State held at the Conference Room of the Janata Bhawan, the Chief Minister (Sarat Ch, Sinha) said that the change of the attitude in the administration was necessary, so that administration could take up the great challenge of implementing the 20 point economic programme. He said that people were supreme in democratic set-up and therefore to meet the aspiration of the people, the administration should be reoriented and dynamised.

While appreciating the dual role played by the administrative officers as administrative heads and social workers, Sinha advised them to solve problem of the people with all politeness and humility but with firmness. He also advised them that within the legal and administrative frame-work they should exercise their discretion in favour of the poor.

The Chief Secretary Rana K D N Singh asked the DCs and SDOs to ensure visible result of the implementation of the 20 point programme in the filed in the next two or three month. For that purpose, he advised them to raise the administrative and operational efficiency in their respective jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{25}
Another tool of coordination in the hand of the Chief Secretary is the report on the implementation of public policies which the Deputy Commissioners are expected to send quarterly to the Planning Department. Such reports are referred to the Chief Secretary for his consideration and comments. The Deputy Commissioners have to work under the direct control of the Chief Secretary. Notably, a Deputy Commissioner is the only administrative officer who has no direct links with any political head; thus, it is only the Chief Secretary who can evaluate whether the DC is discharging his functions properly or not.

The Deputy Commissioners seem to regard the Chief Secretary as their guide and adviser, and all the Chief Secretaries so far have with enthusiasm accepted this role. Narrating how a Deputy Commissioner dealing with difficult situation of Plane Crash talked to the Chief Secretary and got a good piece of advice, K. Shreedhar Rao wrote in his memoir:

“...I spoke to the Chief Secretary N K Rustomji, informing him of the improvement in the situation to near normalcy and how relieved I was. He gave me an invaluable piece of advice namely to ensure that I and SP participate in the last rites. He told me such a gesture would go down very well with the local population. This indeed happened and our presence was very well received.”

At the district level, the Collector is the only functionary who keeps the Chief Secretary abreast of the activities and the progress of the developmental programmes in his area. Whenever a DC visits Dispur for any official purpose, he may informally like to meet the Chief Secretary to discuss any issue of importance to district administration and the Chief Secretary, in turn, always receive a DC with pleasure. Even otherwise, there is a continuous interaction between the DCs and the Chief Secretary, particularly when the law and order problems become manifest. Besides, urgent matters are communicated to the Chief Secretary on telephone or wireless and his advice is sought on action to be taken by the district authorities.

Rana K. D. N. Singh took special interest in matter of coordination. Apart from the Conferences of the DCs and SDOs, he also interacted with the Information Officers of the State. While inaugurating the Conference of the Information Officers’ Conference he asked the Information and Public Relation Officers to focus on the development activities
in the state to the in the right perspective. He stressed the need of co-ordinated effort with all the development department in the field for wider and successful publicity coverage. The Chief Secretary may occasionally visit certain districts, but his otherwise enormous administrative responsibilities compel him to be present mostly in Dispur, the capital city, and consequently, he is not in a position to visit all the districts even occasionally. It is only on special occasions like visits of the Prime Minister or a Central Minister, State Chief Minister or VVIPs from the other countries that the Chief Secretary may find some time to visit the district or block headquarters. But here it is important to note that much depends on the interest of the individual holding the office of the Chief Secretary. In an interview with H.N.Das, he had opined that field visits by the senior officers help raise the morale of field level functionaries. He observed that the Chief Secretary of a State should find time out of his busy schedule to visit districts, if he wants to as an effective co-ordinator. Other Chief Secretaries interviewed also agreed that field visit do have a positive impact on district level functionaries, but nonetheless, that it was not possible for a Chief Secretary to find sufficient time always for such visits.

In brief, at the State level, the Chief Secretary is the most effective functionaries who can facilitate co-ordination among the activities of various Secretariat departments, field departments and the district level agencies. How much effective he is in bringing about these co-ordination influences the entire working of the State administrative Machinery.

4.6 Difficulties on Co-ordination: There are many hindrances to interdepartmental co-ordination. Before mentioning those difficulties, it would be appropriate to mention the recommendation of the Assam Administrative Reforms Commission, 2005:

**Rationalization of Government Departments.** The Assam Administrative Reforms Commission 2005 after reviewing the existing formation of different Government departments in Assam and studying the consolidation patterns of different state governments, particularly the one implemented by the Government of Chattisgarh, recommends that the allied departments in the Government of Assam should be grouped together in the following manner so as to make the departments streamlined, cohesive and performance-oriented. Such rationalization and consolidation will also reduce the
overlapping of functions across different departments and will contribute in a big way in bringing co-ordination among the departments.

**Table 4.1**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended Departments</th>
<th>Departments/ subjects to be included</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Administrative Reforms &amp; Training</td>
<td>1. A. R. &amp; Training</td>
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<td>2. E-Governance</td>
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<td>3. Public Grievance (from PPG)</td>
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<td>2. Agriculture</td>
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<td>2. Fishery</td>
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<td>3. Veterinary &amp; Animal Husbandry</td>
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<td>3. C. M.’s Secretariat</td>
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<td>2. Parliamentary Affairs</td>
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<td>3. 20-point programme (from P&amp;D)</td>
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<td>4. Monitoring Cell</td>
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<td>4. Environment &amp; Forests</td>
<td>1. Environment &amp; Forests (including Pollution Control)</td>
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<td>2. Soil Conservation</td>
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<td>5. Education</td>
<td>1. Higher and Technical Education</td>
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<td>2. Secondary Education</td>
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<td>3. Elementary Education</td>
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<td>(Museum, Archaeology and Library Services may be transferred to Cultural Affairs)</td>
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<td>6. Food, Civil Supplies &amp;</td>
<td>1. Food and Civil Supplies</td>
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<td>Ministry/Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>2. Cooperation</td>
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<td>2. Public Health Engineering</td>
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<td>8. Home</td>
<td>1. Home</td>
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<td>3. Border</td>
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<td>4. Passport</td>
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<td>5. Transport (regulatory/enforcement part)</td>
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<td>6. Implementation of Assam Accord</td>
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<td>9. Industries &amp; Commerce</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Public Enterprises</td>
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<td>3. Handloom, Textiles &amp; Sericulture</td>
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<td>4. Mines and Minerals</td>
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<td>10. Law</td>
<td>1. Legislative</td>
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<td>2. Judicial (L.R should be an independent entity not under any department, but administrative assistance may be provided through the Law Department)</td>
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<td>11. Personnel</td>
<td>1. Personnel</td>
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<td>2. Secretariat Administration</td>
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<td>3. General Administration</td>
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<td>4. Printing &amp; Stationery</td>
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| 12. Finance                                      | 1. Economic Affairs including Budget  
2. Expenditure  
3. Revenue, including Commercial Taxes, Excise, Land revenue, Stamp & Registration and Motor Vehicle taxes  
4. Pension |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 13. Planning & Development                      | 1. Plan Finance  
2. State Plan (including additional resource mobilization)  
3. Economics and Statistics  
4. Monitoring & Evaluation |
| 14. Power                                       | 1. Electricity  
2. Non-conventional Energy Sources |
| 15. Land and Disaster Management                | 1. Land management excluding land revenue  
2. Disaster Management  
3. Relief & Rehabilitation |
2. Tourism  
3. Information & Public Relations  
4. Museum and Archaeology (from Education)  
5. Library Services |
| 17. Information Technology | 1. Information Technology  
2. Science & Technology  
excluding Pollution Control and  
Non–conventional Energy Sources |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 18. Urban Development     | 1. Urban Development  
2. Guwahati Development |
| 19. Social Justice & Empowerment | 1. WPT&BC including SC  
2. Labour & Employment  
3. Minorities Development  
4. Char Areas Development  
5. Social Welfare |
| 20. Water Resources       | 1. Flood Management  
2. Irrigation |


Rationalization of these departments is expected to bring about effective inter-departmental co-ordination. As mentioned earlier that there are difficulties in inter-departmental co-ordination which accordingly to Gullick, some of these difficulties arise from (i) the uncertainty of the future regarding human behaviour as an individual and as a group, (ii) the lack of knowledge, experience, conflicting ideas and objectives, (iii) lack of administrative skill and technique, (iv) the vast number of variables involved and the
incomplete human knowledge, particularly, about men and life, and (v) the lack of orderly methods regarding developing, considering, perfecting and adopting new ideas and programmes

Seckler Hudson has added four more factors, namely, “size and complexity, personalities and political factors, the lack of leaders with wisdom and knowledge pertaining to public administration and the accelerated expansion of public administration of international dimensions”.

There are, however, thinkers who do not deplore the lack of co-ordination. They, in fact, welcome it. Thus, Harlan Cleveland of University of Syracuse (USA), has challenged the desirability of structuring an organization for full co-ordinated smoothness in function. His ‘Tension Theory’ suggests that there should be deliberate planning so that conflicts in jurisdiction and programme will arise among various bureaus and agencies, served better by having these conflicts within the administration to focus the issue clearly. A smooth organization may override the public interest too early.

4.7 MacFarland suggests four ways of achieving effective co-ordination. These are:

1. Clarifying authority and responsibility: This will reduce overlapping and duplication of work.

2. Checking and observation: It is also a control procedure whereby the executive can compare between actual activity and desired activity. Records and reports help the executive to detect the spots where interrelations of the units are lacking.

3. Facilitating effective communication: Effective communication processes help in clarifying authority and observing the co-ordination which exists. The effective co-ordinating devices here are the use of committees and group decision-making techniques.

4. Co-ordination through leadership: Top administration must assert its leadership role and without this nothing of co-ordinative value will occur.
4.8 Conclusion

If the Chief Secretary is capable of ensuring the development of these traits in the administrative officials, he can certainly do much of the State Secretariat and, therefore, that of the State administrative machinery as a whole.

The above analysis highlights the Chief Secretary’s role as the prime co-ordinator of governmental activities at the State Level but his success depends upon his own capabilities and qualities of leadership as well as upon the co-operation and support of his senior and junior colleagues. In the words of E.N. Mangat Rai, “The Chief Secretary is a co-ordinator of other men’s work, the grain destined for palatable or unendible movement, between the upper milestone of the politician and the more substantial milestone of the civil society”.

In order to successfully perform his responsibilities, the Chief Secretary should keep contact with the people, especially the heads of different public and private organizations, as well as with the leaders of different public and private organizations, as well as with the leaders of different political parties. This would enable him to receive first hand knowledge of the problems of the State and acquaint him with the people’s attitudes and actions towards administrative policies. The Chief Secretary should generally refrain from involving himself in minor issues and thus should concern himself mainly with matters carrying significance. This will not only rationalize is burden of work but also help him in securing more confidence of his colleagues. He should inspire and guide his subordinate for effective performance of their duties and should present such leadership so as to inspire the entire administrative machinery to work harmoniously and enthusiastically for the political, economic and social upliftment of the State.
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K Shreedhar Rao belonged to the Assam cadre of the Indian Administrative services, held various
responsibilities in the state of Assam and Sikkim, in the ministries of Government of India, and in the
mission of Australia. He rose to the rank of Secretary in the Government of India and retired as the Chief
Secretary, Sikkim. He was also the additional Chief Secretary to the Govt.of Assam when H.N.Das was the
Chief Secretary. Many a time he was entrusted with responsibility of acting Chief Secretary whenever CS
H.N.Das was busy with foreign tour.


