Chapter 4

STATE RESPONSE TO 1970-73 DROUGHT OF MAHARASHTRA

4.1 Development of state policies to counter scarcity and famine

As the history of droughts and famines have long drawn antiquity, efforts of mankind to adapt, to situation, to overcome the same and to mitigate it has same age-old antiquity and legacy.

Famine relief policy has a very long history in India. One of the very first treatises on governance written more than two thousand years ago commonly attribute to Kautilya pronounces that when famines threaten a good king should institute the building of forts or water-works with the grant of food or share provisions or entrust the country to another king. In early period as suggested in the works of Brahma(1972 drought in Maharashtra) by referring Etheridge, Sinha and Srivastva pointed that, “the storage of food grains by the cultivators when the harvest was good as a cushion against the years of dearth.” 2 Famines of ancient and medieval period of Indian history were local in character and less severe.3 The kings and nobles employed a number of villagers in different departments of the state, infantry, cavalry, elephant and other branches of services.4 As permanent measure, government undertook works of constructing irrigation canals and supplied loans for sinking wells.5 Providing food grains, drinking water, fodder, ban on export of food grains, these measures were adopted by kings in early period in India. Remission in land tax, opening of public works, starting of public works, recruitment of men in military services these were other measures adopted by early rulers. Even some rulers were exploiting their subjects and sought as this as an opportunity of profit making6 This is also testified from the Love day’s study stating from

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1 Dre'ze Jean, Famine Prevention in India, (London:The development Economic Research Programme DEF No.3 January 1988)
3 Srivastva H.S. The history of indian famines; Shri Ram Mehara and Co Agra (1975)p.27,28
6 Desai Datta The famines in Maharashtra (Marathi) Magao Publication Pune 1987 P. 12
the Rajtarngani that the ruler and his minister of Kashmir in 917-18 used the state granaries for profit making. The government did not hesitate to purchase grain from surplus areas for sale at cheaper rate in famine areas and even maintained transport at government expenses for the purpose. Shrivastava asserts that “in earlier periods adopted a much more human policy for famine relief than the East India Company, the latter being more interested in their own economic gains than in saving the life of the people”.

The east India company adopted a policy which is similar to early Indian ruler. But their measures lacked a sympathetic tone and were limited in scope. They lay too much and unnecessary emphasis on economic doctrines like free trade and laissez faire, during famines, considerably increased the sufferings of the people.”

The suffering caused by famines under East India Company was greatly intensified by systematic over-assessment of land revenue and economic exploitation. Whatever limited policy measures adopted by the East India Company towards famine relief, lacked sympathetic approach. Till the first decades of the nineteenth century the company did not formulate any general principle of relief. Each famine was regarded as an isolated unexpected phenomenon which was dealt with hesitatingly. Rack-renting and high assessment of land revenue during the second and third decades of the nineteenth century became the contributory factors for famine deaths. The Loveday cites the villainy of those engaged in relief operations during the last years of the company raj when “ heaps upon heaps died from eating “ adulterated food served as direct relief by the relief society.

The famine commission report of 1880 contains a vivid account of the nature of relief efforts prior to the famine codes “what often happens now is that they wander from their village crowd into towns, die about the roads, and otherwise attract the attention of...

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7 Loveday, A., The History and Economics of Indian Famines,(New Delhi Daryagaj Usha Publishing Company 1985 p.11
8 Dre`ze Jean, Famine prevention in India, revised version of paper presented at the world institute of development Economic Research (WIDER Helsinki) in July 1986  DEP No.3 (The development economic research programme Suntory-Toyota International centre for Economic and related discipline 10 Portugal Street London : 1988), quoted from Shrivatva p. 28

9 Srivastva H.S. The history of indian famines; Shri Ram Mehara and Co Agra (1975)p.28
10 Shrivatva, p. 28
11 Kulkarni S.N., Policy perspective for relief during droughts and scarcities A case study of Sinnar Taluka, Thesis submitted to University of Pune Aahmednagar College Ahmednagar p.44 quoted from Shrivatva p. 28
12 Loveday, Opp.Cit. p.2(p.2 of introduction loveday)
13 Report of Famine commission 1880(p.14,15)
the officials. Then a survey is made a relief work is started and then follows all the train of masses of wretched demoralized half-starved creatures to work and be paid after some sort of method. The work is generally started too late to save life …… The wage is a hopeless dilemma; if you give a low rate, the people desert and die if you give a high one, you drain the labor market and thing gets beyond control.”

“During the first quarter of the present century (19th century) the position of the British in the country was not such as either to create any sense of a general obligation to give relief or to supply the means of affording it. During the next 30 to 40 years as the country became settled and all branches of administration improved, the sense of this obligation was developed and more and more fully acted on, but there can be little doubt that on many occasions the wants of the people were very incompletely met and that much suffering and mortality must have ensured.” This testifies the approach of East India Company towards its subject during droughts and severe famines.

The literature on 19th century famines is replete with statements such as the following

“What does a drought mean? It is not a question of food; the scarcity of food in district affected by drought is the least of the evils with which the government of India have to deal. There is nearly always a sufficiency of food in India to feed all the people within its limits and owing to the development of the railway the British government was able no matter what part or the country may be affected to pour in sufficient food to maintain the people of the district.” This is the statement made by Jorge Hamilton (Feb 3, 1902) and quoted by in S.C. Ray.

Ancient and medieval rulers of India were very sympathetic towards their subject in reliving distress caused due to drought and famines. Knowledge of reliving distress and measures to be adopted during famine conditions were known to people from earliest period. Nineteenth century famines over India are result of colonial polices and in Indian context famines are not heavenly but due to lack of conviction on the part of state especially during colonial period to avert it. It is highlighted through above passages.

14 Draze, Opp.Cit. quoted from famine commission report pp.14-15(famine commission report 1880, appendix 1, P.113)
15 Brhame Opp.Cit. p.4(Brahme P. quoted from IFCR, vol, 1 1880 p. 27) (brhame)
16 Draze  Opp.Cit. pp9-10(1909 p.10) (p.9,10.)
4.2.1 Legacy of Famine Code

The first draft of famine code was submitted along with famine commission report of 1880. Each province was required to frame its own code by adopting the model contained in the draft code to its own circumstances. With the passage of time the state famine codes underwent occasional revisions, and in independent India received the name of scarcity manuals. In many part of the country the latter are no longer explicitly used today, but this is partly because the rules they embody have become a matter of routine response to threat of famine.\(^\text{17}\)

The Madras government was the first to act on suggestions and draw up a detailed code for the presidency. The government of India asked other provincial government in 1883 to follow the example of Madras. Such code for Bombay Presidency was prepared in 1885.\(^\text{18}\) They were told not to depart in any way from the principles laid therein.\(^\text{19}\)

The collection of facts relating to conditions of agricultural community and the agricultural produce of the country these responsibilities delegated to agricultural department of every province by model code. In subsequent development, this responsibility was not shouldered on agriculture department both in provincial code and in practice. This responsibility was to be carried by district and divisional officer.\(^\text{20}\)

In actual administration of famine relief strict conformity to the provisions of the codes not found possible. Departure from them was both frequent and substantial. The famine code complied in 1883 by provincial government of Bombay was guide book even after independence the same code was reprinted in 1951 this famine relief code of Bombay state was obtained from the Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationary Bombay or through the High Commissioner for India house, Aldwych London, W.C.2. The famine code of 1885 was replaced in 1954 by the draft scarcity manual, which defines ‘scarcity’ as marked deterioration of the agricultural season due to the failure of rains or floods or damage to crops from insects resulting in severe unemployment and consequent

\(^{17}\) Ibid p.23 see foot note
\(^{19}\) Bhatia p.184
\(^{20}\) Ibid 185
distress among agricultural labor and small cultivators.\textsuperscript{21} Three important changes made in the scarcity manual. First, the marked difference made between famine relief work and scarcity work. Scarcity works comprises of works funded by local funds, works of Municipal Corporation, and extension of government works. Second difference was the provision of test works. To decide the severity of condition it was essential to start the test work. Third difference was in the wages. The wage difference between scarcity work and famine relief work abolished.\textsuperscript{22} The famine relief works comprises of works on which more than 3000 laborers employed. The same draft manual modified and reprinted by Maharashtra government in 1966 named ‘The Bombay Scarcity Manual’ published by Revenue Department of Maharashtra State Government. This manual is elaborately worked out and all the past experiences are embedded in this draft. First time the word famine has been deleted from the manual.

4.2.2 Published Booklet of Scarcity Rules of 1972

In the wake of severe drought Maharashtra Government, further published another scarcity manual named “The rules of scarcity. “Aim of this publication was to know the government rules and efforts to common people of state. These rules are in abridged form; Published by the Revenue and Forest Department of Maharashtra Government on 14\textsuperscript{th} December 1972 from central Press of Maharashtra Government. The principles and Philosophy of famine code underwent tremendous change since 1880 to post independence era. However, the basic framework of famine code remains the same even in the 1972 rules of scarcity. As a famine connotes altogether different meanings, no democratic government anywhere in world will accept easily existence of famine and starvation death.\textsuperscript{23} Also as matter of fact after 1943 practically there is no incidence of famine anywhere in India. The United Nations Research Institute for social Development states in a document that a famine occurs when many people in the same place and at the same time lack resources that will provide them with command over food stuff, e.g. adequate income, interpersonal solidarity etc. and the institutional aid can no longer cope

\textsuperscript{21} SubramanianV., ‘Parched Earth’ The Mahararashtra drought 1970-73 Orient Longman 1975 p.31
\textsuperscript{22} Report of fact finding committee 1973 Sukhtankar and others Opp. Cit. pp. 101-102
\textsuperscript{23} Mohiuddin Alamgir, towards theory of famine seminar paper no. 103, Institute of international economic studies s-106 91 Stockholm Sweden May 1978 p.1 The term famine seems ot carry with it many overtones and undertones. Government and politicians do not like to use this term to describe a situation, unless they are forced to,
with the situation. The document continues “Famine is an economic and social phenomenon characterized by the widespread lack of food resources which, in the absence of outside aid, leads to the death of affected.”  

There is marked difference of attitude on the part of government that government has theoretically and practically accepted that henceforth there could not be starvation death by deleting word famine from famine code and renaming it as “The Bombay Scarcity Manual”.  

4.3.1 Organizational changes or innovations made in draft provisions during 1970-73 drought

The marked difference between draft provision of 1966 Maharashtra state government scarcity manual and the administrative innovations that government actually made during 1970-73 drought can be easily identified through government policies. Public Works Department and Irrigation Departments are now separated from previous Public Works Department hence there is no reference of irrigation department in draft manual.

The scarcity manual makes an attempt to formalize an administrative structure which could be operated into action during future emergency. Within basic administrative structure envisaged by manual new responsibilities and accountabilities are assigned to new offices and office bearer to expedite works. Above all the financial aspect and financial administration was aptly integrated with general administrative machinery and mechanism which helped state government to represent accounts and ground reality before central government.

First time during 1970-73 following changes were made in administrative structure or new set up of administrative mechanism emerged. The headquarters organization or the state level monitoring centre of the government there came up in the form of the cabinet sub-committee on scarcity consisting of the chief minister and the minister in charge of finance, revenue, agriculture, irrigation and building and communications. As step below, was the secretaries committee presided over by the chief secretary. The secretary revenue

24 "Famine Risk in the modern World" (mimeo) United Nations Research Institute for social Development , Geneva, 18th August 1975

25 The Bombay Scarcity Manual 1966 Government of Maharashtra, Revenue Department Paragraph 42 p.16 scarcity is a marked deterioration of the agricultural season due to the failure of rains or floods or damage to crops from insects resulting in severe unemployment and consequent distress among agricultural labor and small cultivators.
and forest department was secretary of this committee which brought about the needed co-ordination and co-operation among the relevant secretariat departments.\(^{26}\) There was no director of scarcity relief constituted in the scarcity manual,\(^{27}\) but this role was being played by the revenue secretary who provided the vital link between the field and secretariat in all matters relating to scarcity relief administration and kept the government informed about the operations at the ground level. The revenue and forests department became the focal department at the secretariat level keeping an overall view of scarcity administration. Beside secretaries committee two more committees namely Cabinet Sub-committee on scarcity and the Central Coordination committee at secretariat were discharging very important work of coordination during scarcities at Mumbai. The cabinet sub-committee on scarcity formed for the co-ordination between different departments of state of which the chief minister was the chairman, enabled government to keep in touch with the progress of the relief measures to identify bottlenecks either in co-ordination between different departments or in the implementation of relief measures and to remove them. It also served as clearing house for important matters that came to light during the field operations and which required further action.\(^{28}\) In order to coordination between different department ministries and department at the centre or even necessitating help from other state governments, such in the matter of supply of fodder, technical staff equipment for the supply of drinking water etc As per the recommendation of sixth central team a central co-ordination committee was constituted at the peak of distress. It consisting of the cabinet secretary of the government as chairman, secretaries of the ministries and departments concerned and important representatives of the state government were constituted. Problems pertaining central cabinet were addressed through this committee.\(^{29}\) This institution was an innovation. It signified that both the

\(^{26}\) Subramanian V., Opp. Cit. p.62  
\(^{27}\) The Bombay scarcity manual Government of Maharashtra Bombay 1966 p.16 paragraph 44  
\(^{28}\) Subramanian, V. p. 61  
\(^{29}\) ibid p.62 Many matters which would have taken years to settle were decided expeditiously by discussion in this committee. The important questions such as increase in supplies of food grains, increase in the daily wages of laborers in the relief works assistance for the programme of wages of laborers in the relief works, assistance for the programme of supplementary nutrition to laborers in the relief works, employment of children, purchase and import of rigs and other machinery through the purchasing procurement of rollers and other machinery through the purchasing organization or through the army, were discussed in detail with the assistance of the highest administrative officers of the departments concerned and decisions taken were communicated to the state government after obtaining the orders of the government of India where necessary, so the at the difficulties in the implementation of the relief measures could be overcome and the tempo of the relief operations maintained.
state government and the central government were thinking on the same line. The anxiety of the government to assist the state government to the maximum extent possible in implementing the relief schemes and enabling it to provide employment and succor to the million of persons who were affected by the drought was obvious from the attention given by this committee. It spoke very well for the co-ordination thinking and action between the central government and the state government in a federal polity particularly during an emergency of such vast dimensions.\textsuperscript{30}

Below headquarter organization there were further two more implementing coordinating government bodies mainly collectorate at district level and office of Tehasildar at Taluka level. Many sub-ordinate and complementary officers like engineers, medical officer, soil conservation officer, agricultural officers and Panchyat Raj officers were helping to Collector and Tahesildar in discharging and dispensing their duties.

The administrative structure and set up emerged during 1970-73 drought was not laid down anywhere in government rules previously. However, it was the emergency and need of fast expeditions of works that automatically led to evolve this type of administrative set up. Right from Chief Ministers to council of ministers and from chief secretary to village clerk everybody realized their responsibility during such a colossal distress. Never in the history of India more than scarcity relief works on such large scale initiated and completed. When the scope for opening of new works was bleak new innovative and productive works like community wells started over state. Never before this distress anywhere in India total Rs.222.52 Croer central assistance sought by any state government. Maharashtra government was able to pull such assistance from central government due to efficient follow up and excellent maintenance of accounts by executive of state government.

Manual envisaged the government operated program and the role of rural administration was minimum. However, emergence of Zillah Parishad had brought about a radical change in the structure of administration at the district level. These were entirely new arrangement envisaged during 1970-73 drought emerged out of extraordinary critical

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid Loc. Cit
situation developed due to distress. Panchyati Raj institute was assigned major role during 1970-73 drought.

4.3.2 Role of Divisional Commissioner during 1970-73 Scarcity

It is very important to note that the scarcity manual did not fix any specific responsibility for the commissioners. Foregoing description pertaining to divisional commissioner highlights his role during 1970-73 drought of Maharashtra. At the regional level, the divisional commissioner was made responsible for the supervision of relief programmers with the division. They were empowered to requisitions trucks from government departments within the divisions and place them wherever necessary and authorized to purchase tools required for scarcity relief works. For the distribution of tagai loan among the farmers funds were placed at disposal of the commissioners. They had to hold fortnightly meeting of offices at different levels to bring to the personal notice of the officers important orders issued by the government. The divisional commissioners were invited to supply data and information about field situation in secretaries committee.

The commissioners were to report periodically to government. His observation on overall relief administration was important. He was empowered to remove all the bottlenecks of relief administration within his division. The commissioners of division who played a very crucial role in the implementation and overseeing of the progress of relief works within their divisions, were also required to co-ordinate the activities of the various regional heads within their divisions on matters which were beyond the purview of the district administration. But the core organization was the district.

4.3.3 Relief advisory committee

The scarcity manual provides a district relief committee consists of all members of the legislature from the district, the president of the district local legislature from the district, the president of the district local authority, the district officers concerned and such other non official members as may be approved. Provisions of such relief advisory committees were laid in the manual at taluka and village level. These committees were assigned duty to advice in relief operations, to supervise it in some extent and to stimulate private

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31 Mathur and Bhattachrya pp. 29-32
32 Subramanian p.71
charity for relief operations.\textsuperscript{33} During the present drought however, the scope of these committees were considerably expanded. It was laid down that these committees should be consulted as often as possible in drawing up the relief plan for the district. The help of the members of these committees was to be taken in maintaining muster rolls, in supervising payment of wages. In acutely affected districts these committees used to meet frequently and made several suggestions with view to taking up works in the affected areas, assigned priority among works, making suggestions for proper measurement and prompt payment of wages and for provision of medical facilities and other amenities at the work sites. It is natural that since committees consisted of representatives of all parts of the district, several suggestions were made for improving the requirements of each area. It was impossible in many circumstances to accept all the suggestions because of the sheer limits of organizational inability or unavailability of funds. Discussions in these committees occasionally proved acrimonious and the chairmen of the committees namely collectors had often to do tight- rope-walking.\textsuperscript{34}

\subsection*{4.3.4 Vigilance Committee}

There was a provision of vigilance committee at sub-divisional level. These committees were constituted for supervision of relief works. Sub-divisional officer, Police officer and one non-official member were statutory members of these committees.\textsuperscript{35} Some of these vigilance committees functioned very effectively and brought to light several malpractices on which urgent action was taken. However, as the vigilance committees were constituted in the later part of the last year, they did not get adequate opportunity or time to make a proper impact. In many cases, as a result of the detection of malpractices on the spot immediate action was taken, such as dismissal of officers in some cases cancelling of licenses of fair price shops.

\subsection*{4.3.5 Other Statutory Committees}

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\textsuperscript{33} Mathur and Bhattacharya Opp. Cit p.28
\textsuperscript{34} Subramnian V., Opp. Cit.p. 69
\textsuperscript{35} “Scarcity” compendium of government rules Forest& Revenue department government of Maharashtra Vol.2: p.67 G.R.R. F.D.NO.( SCY) -1373/8867-J-3 27th April 73 vigilance committee be formed at sub-divisional level in the districts to detect the defects or mal practices in the execution of relief programme
\end{flushright}
There was district officers committee, district scarcity committee and district relief cell in collectorate to coordinate, implement, supervise and to monitor the scarcity works and other relief operations.

4.4.1 Organization in Motion

Scarcity organization consists of Revenue officials Panchayat raj bodies, all government agencies and private and non-official organizations the relief and other scarcity work organizations. The main controlling and supervising agency was the collectorate and its all district officers. The collector in consultation with the district officers’ committee was allocating works to different agencies according to their specialization. The building and communication, irrigation, power departments were assigned work according to their expertise and capacity. Sometimes the implementing agencies showed resentment for allocation of more work beyond their capacity. Different tiers of the Panchyati Raj were assigned different tasks. As Panchayati Raj institute emerged as alternative agency to deal with scarcity situation the scale of scarcity organizations greatly helped the collector in choosing between alternative agencies. He could address the B.D.O. in addition to Tahsildar, lower down the organization, the wall between the Panchyat Raj set up and the revenue hierarchy had completely collapsed. The collector would be freely writing to the B.D.O and while on tour would speak to the Panchyat Raj staff in the same vein as they would be talking to his own staff.

From all evidence, there did not seem to be much maladjustment or occasions for conflict between the revenue organization and the Panchyat Raj bodies. On the contrary, the perception of government officers has generally been that the Zilla Parishad’s role in scarcity relief was commendable. One explanation for Zilla Parishad’s subservience could be that both the organizations-collectorate and Zilla Parishad were headed by officers belonging to same service cadre, viz. I.A.S. All the collectors’ who so ever are appointed as collector their just prior to this appointment happen to be the chief executive officer of Zilla Parishad.

The merger of these two administrative bodies was mutually advantageous. the collector received administrative support from the Zilla Parishad, and the latter in return got more

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36 Mathur & Bhattacharya Opp. Cit. pp.43-44
resources with which to accommodate anybody who wanted more resources anything, be it a percolation tank, a road or a well. It seems that both revenue and Panchayat raj officers were working together without any prejudices, any ego or hierarchical taboos etc.37

Normal bureaucratic ‘protocol’ was not followed during this mounting distress. The bureaucratic hierarchy was considerably modified. During mounting distress officers of revenue and Panchayti raj institute were easily approaching to collector without consulting hierarchy of intermediary officers setting aside protocol and hierarchy in designing implementing and financing scarcity relief works. However, it was higher authority—the collector who was really calling the tune. When flexibility was not needed the collector would slide back to the normal mode of working and the Tahsildar would be asked to submit proposals say for community wells through the proper channel. In a period of hectic activities when everyone however placed in the hierarchy, was concerned about quick relief measures, the hierarchical character of bureaucracy did undergo a substantial change. There were more face-to-face contacts among different role incumbents.

There were frequent field visits by all the officers and office bearers right from the chief-minister to Z.P. member and secretary to Tahsildars. Scarcity administration also evolved its own informal pattern hierarchy. For instance as mentioned earlier the Tahsildar became an important point of reference at the sub-district level. Many a time he had assumed the position of a transmitter and distributor of information and instructions to the Block Development Officer and the Deputy engineer of the Zilla Parishid. Tehsildar being in constant touch with the collector he had come to enjoy some kind of a authority

3Ibid p.45 president of the Zilla Parishad was as concerned about alleviating popular misery as the collector. Also the important members of the Zilla Parishad were taken on the district scarcity relief committee which was an important decision-making forum at that level. For those who were in operational charge like the engineers were not hamstrung in their jobs; even they seemed to have liked being called by a collector whose image in normal times has always been one of a natural superior. Last but not least, unification seems to have been compelled by the imperatives of field situation during scarcity. It was Tahsildar who would be approached by the affected villagers for relief. The Tahasildar would seek the help of the Sarpanchs, the Gramsevak, the B.D.O and deputy engineer of the Parishad for works to be undertaken. Since everybody had to serve the people, the organizational boundaries became superfluous when the emergent problem of saving life started looming large.
just like collector which was accepted by the B.D.O. and the deputy engineer. As per Mathur and Bhattacharya’s survey popular perception during drought was that the authority of the collector is congruent with the formal status assigned to him. The Tahsildar was placed second in the authority ladder followed by C.E.O. Zilla Parishad and the Executive Engineer, and then others.

In choosing the levels of administration from the performance point of view, most respondents have, however, placed the taluka as the level playing the key role in scarcity administration. The next most important level identified as the district.

The collector, as can be seen has been ranked as the most effective officer followed by the executive engineer during 1970-73 drought.\(^{38}\)

There was complete blending of bureaucracies of Panchyati Raj establishment and revenue investment without which it was highly impossible to run scarcity relief programme on such a enormous scale.

**4.4.2 Delegation of power and stray cases of irregularities therein**

Collector’s power to sanction the relief schemes during such distress was enhanced from Rs. 50000 to Rs. 1 lakh and at the height of drought up-to 10 lakh. Even collectors were empowered to sanction beyond his limit provided that the relief scheme was the part of district and taluka plan and due technical sanction had been issued. In order to fast disbursement of bills and advances to Zilla Parishad and village Panchyats collectors and chief executive engineers were made drawing and disbursing officers. During peak scarcity condition the Executive Engineer’s power to accord technical sanction in respect of original work was increased from Rs. 1 lakhs to 10 lakhs. It was however, provided that copies of plans and estimates for works amounting between Rs. 5 to 10 lakhs should be sent to superintending engineer for broad technical security.\(^{39}\)

In addition, officers lower down the line such as executive engineers of the Zilla Parishad, executive engineers of the Buildings and Communications Department and the Irrigation and Power Department, Divisional Soil conservation officers and the sub–Divisional Soil Conservation Officers of the Agricultural Department, were also similarly appointed.

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\(^{38}\) Mathur and Bhattacharya pp.47-48

drawing and disbursing officers. In fact even Deputy Engineers of the Zilla parishad in the drought-affected areas were given similar power in January 1973. This bold step on the part of the government to take the field officers into confidence and give them both the authority and the opportunity to use their initiative was more than any other step, responsible for saving the fair name of the state and preserving the image of an administration alive to its own responsibilities and succor. It was observed that there were instances in which action of the implementing officers resulted in financial commitments, which unfortunately came to notice only after these actions were taken. Some Zilla Parishad were allowed to incur expenditure from their own resources on account of shortage of funds from state government but it was assured on the part of collectors to get it reimbursed from government latter. Similarly some collectors authorized the implementing agencies to incur expenditure on relief schemes in excess of the allocations made by them to the implementing agencies. This was undoubtedly an irregularity. In some cases even without such authority, Zilla Parishads and other implementing agencies incurred expenditure on relief schemes. In a very few cases, it was noticed that the schemes had not even been formally sanctioned by the collector as required under the rules.

The irrigation and power department, the building and communications department etc, empowered filed officers in drought relief programme to draw cheques on nationalized banks this provision was for departmental schemes with budgetary provision and limit. In regard with drought relief programme there was no such budgetary limits and provisions still the field officers if aforesaid departments were delegated such powers. However, in most of these cases, the actions of technical officers were taken either with the prior concurrence or with the knowledge of the chief coordinator of the relief programme in the district, i.e. the collector. Collectors were empowered to appoint on temporary basis some technical and nontechnical staff to perform duties during peak scarcity period. Highly qualified engineer working in other organization rendered their help in planning and implementing relief plans and attempt to seek their help by state government made statutory arrangement by making government orders. To meet the requirement of further

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40 Subramanian V pp107-110
technical staff, fresh graduates and diploma holders of civil engineering and even other branches were appointed on temporary basis and collectors were empowered to do so. Even collectors were further empowered to appoint class 3 and class 4 employees on temporary basis. Collectors were empowered to attach and depute government employees of different state departments for scarcity works. Collectors were also empowered to attach vehicles of other department for scarcity works. As suggested by Mathur and Bhattacharya delegation of power was necessary because new tasks were entrusted to different role-incumbents their normal-time formal authority had to be enhanced to match the new responsibilities. Along with this compulsion it was essential to enhance organizational capacity without augmenting as far as possible the already available resource structure. Delegation facilitated substantial restriction in normal bureaucratic hierarchy.

Delegation of power cut down procedural requirements and administrative delay. During scarcity operations the delegation of power to different levels of administration revealed the potentialities of field organization for flexibility and

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41 “Scarcity” compendium of government rules; forest and revenue department government of Maharashtra Vol. 2 p.35 GCRFD collectors to create posts required for supporting staff of the Engineers on their own establishment and depute them to work for engineers. GCRFD: GRBCD p. 37 the powers of executive engineer to accord technical sanction to the original works enhanced to Rs. 10 lakhs when taken up as relief works subject to subsequent scrutiny of the plans and estimates by the superintending engineer in respect t of works amounting to Rs. 5 to 10 lakhs.P.73 GRRFD NOSCY 1373/46142-j Dated 7th May 73 the collector of Dhulia to exercise certain powers for creation of purely temporary posts till 31st July 73 Similar power to collectors of parbhani. P93 GRR & FD NO. EST-SFC 1373/11836:J-2 dated 24th May 73 there is no objection to highly technically qualified engineers and technical persons offered by the Front for rapid economic advancement of India being employed on a purely honorary basis for scarcity relief works. The collator Beed is authorized to create temporary supernumerary posts of overseers for these persons. GRRFD 20 March 1973 collectors of Chanda and Bhandara districts authorized to take up road works from 1961-81 Road development plan GRRFD p.43## Overseers on temporary establishment are empowered to record measurement GRRFD20March 73***p.88 powers of collector of Parbhani temporary posts p.108 GRRFD SWK when retired persons from revenue department are not available those from other department may be employed. P.110 GRRFD SCY (EST) 1373/46142/J-2 22nd June 73 Powers delegated to collector to create temporary posts up to 30th June 73 Cf. Subramanian The divisional commissioners, collectors ans other implementation officers were delegated adequate powers for recruiting and filling up vacancies of administrative and ministerial staff for implementing relief schemes, when it was noticed that the requirements were too large of overseers committee suggested that graduates in architecture other branches after a preliminary training of a few days with a view to orienting them for the work they would be required to perform. The services of retired engineers and othe private and governmental engineering department were sought by rendering their help. (tapped) In this manner the committee was able to obtain 1300 overseers and 100 scarcity assistant. The rising tempo of the relief works after September 1972 and the spiralling increase in the labor attendance at the relief works from 12:44 lakhs as at 1st October 1972 ot 20:17 lakhs as at 1st April 1973, 40:19 lakhs as at 1st May 1973 and to 49:47 lakhs as 1st June 1973, would have thrown the entire administrative machinery out of gear and literally produced chaos and confusion with unimaginable consequences but for the prompt and pragmatic steps taken by the committees with the full support of Government.

42 Mathur and Bhaatacharya p; 57-58
greater workload absorption. It facilitated manipulation of resource structure for emergency administration.\textsuperscript{43}

4.4.3 Collector’s authority in practice

His authority in practice was much less than what was formally envisaged. The ministers, the Revenue Secretary and others from the Secretariat were constantly visiting the field and passing instruction which in effect considerably modified the authority of collector. Instances were not rare when the collector would be invoking the authority of the chief minister to pursue the implementing agencies to do a work expeditiously. In the second place, his authority had to be exercised in the context of certain organizational imperatives. For instance, the selection of projects for scarcity works had to be done in consultation with projects for scarcity works had to be done in consultation with district relief committee and district officers’ committee. Again in some instances the commissioner was acting as an appellate authority. In the third place, the old vertical linkages between the district heads of departments and their regional heads secretariat departments had not been eliminated. There was evidence of complaints about interdepartmental disharmony flowing up into the secretaries’ committee from the district level. Instead of these limitations district collector and his office assume extremely important coordinating and executive statutory powers in handling relief operations during scarcity.

4.5.1 Dynamics of Relief Operations

The emergency administration during scarcity had evolve three layers of decision making namely the secretariat including the cabinet and the chief minister, the division including district and the taluka/village. It was given the authority to take immediate decisions in the matter of providing relief so that there was no delay whatsoever.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid Loc.cit

\textsuperscript{44} Ibid Loc.cit
A few significant features of the top level decision-making during the 1970-73 crisis would include Secretaries Committee, Cabinet sub-committee and Central Co-ordination Committee. Later two institutes evolve out of need of expeditious and quick action during peak scarcity period of 1970-73 droughts of Maharashtra. Cabinet sub-committee helped secretaries committee. As the matters of coordination between different state government department and policy framing which cannot came under the purview of the secretaries committee in such matters aforesaid functioned were performed by it. This saved precious time of secretaries committee.

During peak of distress State Government required the help from central ministries, corporate houses, and army and from different states of Indian Union. At such instance co-ordination, follow of action was required and same fulfilled by Central Coordinating Committee. This committee was framed on suggestions of sixth central team which visited Maharashtra during September 1972.

As authentic information of distress came in the secretariat all above mentioned three committees worked with zeal and expeditious decisions were taken disbursed to the field. The secretaries committee under the chairmanship of the chief secretary created an environment of harmony, which coupled with situational need, encouraged the departments to take decisions through consultations collaborations.’ Many a time decision on urgent issue would be taken on the spot at field level when the ministers and

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44 Subramanian V. pp. 54-55 During its early stage, the committee used to meet often and take decisions which were implemented immediately without the tortuous bureaucratic procedure of tons of noting scores of signatures, all leading to the issue of government resolution. Follow up actions on the decisions taken in these meetings were reported to the committee from time to time. A salutary feature of these meetings was that excepting matters of fundamental policy which required the approval of the state cabinet, all other decisions of the committee had the imprimatur of government and immediate orders on the basis of the decisions taken at the meetings of the committee were issued by the Member-Secretary of the committee, namely the secretary of the revenue department which was responsible for coordinating the work of drought relief. The proposals before committee were previously discussed and prepared by various ministries with promptness. Priorities of the work decided on the merit of its productivity. Advances were made to collectors by this committee. Delegated power of purchase and appointment to collector and field engineers. Inter departmental disputes were resolved.

45 V. Subramanian p.57 During scarcity administration, more realistic decisions were made with full knowledge of field situation from the secretariat; as information and authoritative field data were being poured into the secretariat from all directions through the commissioner collectorate field visits of ministers and secretariat officials. Committee of secretariats directed that all district officers of all departments should give the fullest co-operation to the collectors in the execution of schemes pertaining to relief employment guarantee and drought-prone area programs.
secretariat officials including chief minister and chief secretary would be visiting the
districts. This is a kind of shifting secretariat directly to field.
The secretariat committee takes input in the form of information from all corners of the
state this input get converted into output via revenue department to implementing
agencies via revenue department. As suggested in public administration theories by
Simon both routine and innovative decisions were taken during peak of scarcity. In the
meetings of secretariat committee general discussion on situation, relief measures, review
of agricultural condition, and supply of tools, food grains, tools, and resources were being
discussed.
The divisional commissioners were invited to supply data and information about field
situation, and sometimes more information would be sought form specific departments.
Apart from seeking to iron out interdepartmental issues, it would very often suggest
measures for promoting cooperation among the different executing agencies at the district
level. The committee lent considerable support to collector’s coordinating role, and was
always considerable proposals for helping to solve field problems such as lack of
technical staff or equipments, resources mobilization delegation of power and so on. One
gets the information that too many items concerning details of administration had come
up before the committee.

4.5.2 Meetings of Chief Minister and Ministers
During the drought many meetings of officers and ministers were held. Each one of these
enabled speedier implementation and also removal of hurdles to action. Meetings of
revenue minister in various districts enabled to take review of progress of relief work,
solve the difficulties and even to suggest changes in policy.
Chief Minister held several district meetings in which all problems relating to relief
administration were discussed in the presence of all member consisting of all level
people’s representatives from district of relief advisory committees and important state

46 Mathur and Bhatthacharya pp.35-40
47 Ibid Loc. Cit A sample of these items would include: (1) giving priority to candidates appointed in temporary,
vacancies in filling future vacancies (2) absorption of temporary candidates in regular posts (3) payment of 10% supervision charge to Zilla Parishads (4) proposal of a collector for entrusting scarcity work to a municipality, (5) admission to cattle in the cattle camps and transport of fodder from other areas (6)proposals of a collector to have checks on candidates resigning from scarcity works, (6) deepening of private wells and (7) delegation of powers to deputy engineers.
48 Subramanian P. 63
government officials. In such circumstances solutions were provided instantly for immediate implementation. At the peak of distress in order to save time and to know the situation of all the regions meetings at headquarters of divisions were conducted for respective regions with all public representatives and officials. The meetings became extremely productive of results because the decision making authorities were not only present at one particular forum but were anxious to see that the main objectives of relief administration, namely the provision of work and supply of food, water fodder and medicines were fulfilled without any impediments. Members of meetings with Chief Minister were visiting to relief works and were discussing with laborers on works. Therefore decisions regarding conduct of relief works and problems concerned with laborers were immediately resolved or otherwise appropriate steps in right directions were initiated. 49

4.5.3 Communications and implementation of decisions

It was electrically charged environment as far as communications of the government orders, government resolutions, and decisions of the Chief Minister or ministers meetings concerned the meetings decisions were communicated immediately after the meetings from the venue of meetings in the form of orders. The general decisions of the meetings were communicated to press in the form of press notes. After that formal orders were issued. 50

In a large number of cases, the divisional commissioners and the district collectors were informed of the orders on telephone to implement the same with immediate effect so that there could not be any discrepancies to such a wide spread, colossal relief operations which was indispensible part of common people and administration of that time.

4.5.4 Communications to the field and off the field

Unique system of communication evolved during distress. Secretariat committee at headquarter equipped with all information from the every coroner of the state. It reflected the unity of state administration and uniformity of administration all over the state. The divisional commissioner was not timely involved in operational intricacies, yet

49 Subramanian V Loc. Cit.
50 Subramanian v, P.65
he was well placed to watch the operations in their broad outlines and detect major handicaps or distil important policy implications.

At one end, he was sending up his version of the field situation in broad policy terms to the secretariat at another he was holding meetings of the key functionaries in the field touring the division a frequently as possible and bringing to the notice of the collector any aberrations from principles or bottlenecks in the course operations. He was coordinating operations in the whole division, giving encouragement and suggestions and bringing to the field a subtle touch of the secretariat. From the perceptions of field level administration about the commissioner it appears that they had been using him as an intermediary between themselves and the secretariat. The district demands for food grains staff medicine vehicles, tagai funds tools and plant could best be put forward to the government through him. As some field administration put it “All problems requiring urgent government attention were handled by the commissioner he was the link man between the collector and the government since he could present the problems of the district more effectively at the secretariat level and the chief minister’s level.  

At the level of the collectorate, the ‘scarcity cell’ within it was the repository of all field data coming in from the different operating agencies. The collectorate was on the one hand acting as the distributor of decisions flowing down from the secretariat, and on the other hand it was taking certain decisions itself on what projects should be started in which place and who should undertake what kind of works. Certain types of decisions

51 Mathur And Bhhattacharya pp. 40-41 .
52 During scarcity increasing interactions were evident between lower level officers also such as Tahsildar and Block Development Officer, the Talathi and Gram Sevak. Regarding field visits the district level officers have been making far more visits to the villages and work sites than what they are used to doing in normal times. Fifty percent of respondents have reported visits numbering eight times and above and one of them thought he was visiting more than 20 times. Frequent visits were not necessary in normal situation. Enhanced interpersonal contacts and better knowledge of the field situation have been direct outcome of the communication network evolved during scarcity.

53 Ibid Loc.Cit. The general pattern of the decision-making system at the field level. The list of projects would come initially from the taluka level where the sub-Divisional officer in consultation with the Taluka relief committee and taluka level officials were preparing an inventory of suitable works that could be undertaken at different village centers. The lists of projects obtained from the different taluka would be consolidated at the collectorate level and the collector in consultation with the district relief committee would be finalizing the projects in inventory for the district as whole. At the next stage, the collector with the advice and suggestions of the district officers’ committee was to select appropriate projects for actual commissioning. He was then to decide about the implementing agencies who would actually take up the works. The inputs for decisions were often flowing in by way of demands expressed by the local
were pushed down to the lowest level where the works were on. This was necessary, as those who were living closest to the actual field situation had far better knowledge with which to take those kinds of decisions. Also such system of decentralized decision-making relieved the collector of his administrative load. It provided for a filtration process which enabled the collector to avoid the local pulls and pressures in the raw. This can best be illustrated by the decision-making process in selecting sites for community wells.54

4.6 Early response to emergency

The famines before independence in 1947 were either under the period of colonial British rule or under the autocratic rules of the Indian states and they disappeared within the first two decades of free and democratic India. Economists, like Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen have put forth the hypothesis that democratic administration would not allow famine conditions to grow. His hypothesis states that serious hunger and famines do not occur in independent democratic countries with free press may be substantially correct.55 Famine, scarcity and drought are the important terms have different shade of meanings. Scarcities after independence never resulted into famine after severe droughts. It was the 1970-73, which would have, resulted into severe famine but averted by prompt response and actions by state.

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village leaders either directly or through the local officials such as the Tahsildar and the block development officer. Other data gathering devices were the field visits of the collector, the sub-divisional officer and other’s regular reporting system between the collectorate and the implementing agencies and field officials.

54 Ibid p.42 The sites were initially selected by the members of village panchayat samiti. Next the block development officer and the deputy engineer were to verify the sites as regard their suitability in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the government. The block development officer in consultation with deputy engineer was authorized to reject a site and suggest an alternative one. This process provided for initiative by the village leaders, reference to higher-tier authority and final selection on the basis of technical soundness. Also the officers felt that they had been conceded some a administrative direction. Responsibility for safe custody of tools and their distribution to the scarcity laborers was entrusted to the village Panchyat. The Sarpanch of the village was to decide about who should be given the tools as the scarcity labor of the village is much known to the village Sarpanch than anybody else.

55 Sikka D.R. - Kulshrestha., Joint COLA/CARE technical Report No.6 Indian Drought in the context of history and climate Centre for Ocean-Land-Atmospheric Studies and Centre for the application of research on the environment Calverton October 2002.P.3
Prior to 1972-73, there were two years of drought over one or other parts of Maharashtra. Relief operations were in progress. 1972-73 was the third year of consequent drought it was severe drought which occurred almost every part of state. The deficiency of rainfall was ranging between 29.7 to 56 percent in different districts of Maharashtra.\textsuperscript{56} Within first two years of droughts government machinery was on its toes and implementing various scarcities works in drought affected areas of Maharashtra. Monsoon failure further alarmed government machinery and government; it is reflected through the various government orders and government resolutions. As the severity of the distress went on mounting, urgency of relief works planning its implementation and execution and expectations reflected through government resolutions and orders as time and years progressed. Though there was famine relief code and draft scarcity manual before the government and bureaucrats, they did not follow the same with orthodox textual method, which lay down in manual. There was need of prompt and urgent execution of relief works. Bureaucracy and government rose to occasion they modified the rules of scarcities as per the need of time.\textsuperscript{57} On the background of successful launch of green revolution program on nationwide scale and end of PL 480 program of American aid of food grains, performance of Maharashtra agriculture was very poor. There was no further significant growth in agriculture sector of Maharashtra. Season 1970-71 showed negative growth of food grains. There was need of creation of employment opportunities to large-scale population of the state. Government of Maharashtra quickly realized it.\textsuperscript{58} This further testified from the number of works in progress, number of workers working on the relief works and expenses incurred.\textsuperscript{59} Urgency, speed, expeditious and prompt action, was contemplated by state government from each department and officer. Higher authority performed supervision of work assigned promptly and keenly. Instructions pertaining to

\textsuperscript{56} Brahame Sulbha, 1972 Drought in Maharashtra Gokhale Institute of Politics and economics (Orient Longman, 1983) the Table 4.1 p. 52

\textsuperscript{57} Hari Govind Vartak, minister of revenue and forest department government of Maharashtra Preface to the booklet of scarcity rules. p.1 dated 14\textsuperscript{th} December, 1972.

\textsuperscript{58} 2\textsuperscript{nd} January 1971 instruction to all superintending engineers only administrative approved schemes be executed. P.20

Immediately after 19 days government realized the gravity of situation and ordered to all superintending engineers Nothing should be done by the building and communication department officers that will have effect of slowing down the progress and delaying the commencement of works. G.C.M. B & C.D. No FAM-1071/130844-D, dated 21 January, 1971. p.24

\textsuperscript{59} On 30\textsuperscript{th} June, 1971 total labor attendance on the work was 4lakh 96 thousand and expenditure incurred 7 crores 35 lakhs rupees and 4779 works were in progress. V. Subramanian appendices table II-(vii) p. 567
preparation of plans, reporting, proper accounting, purchasing of equipment’s, delegation of power pertaining to preparation of plans, delegation of power to officer regarding temporary and permanent recruitment of employees. Broadly, there were five types of government orders or instructions issued from secretariat to lower rungs of officers and collectorate. Demi official letter, Government circular, Government circular memorandum, Government endorsement, Government letter, Government memorandum, Government notification, Government resolution were the different types of official decisions, orders and other means of communications are embodied in the compendium compiled and published by ministry of revenue and forest of state government.  

During the year 1970-71 from 21 districts 230061 villages among total 32006 villages declared scarcity affected villages. Among scarcity declared villages 16151 villages were Kharif and 6910 were Rabi villages.  

Revenue minister claims that government was vigilant enough and government immediately took appropriate steps to alleviate the distress caused by drought of affected region. Revenue minister and chief minister visited drought affected districts and guided officers to deal with situation. It was directed to declare *anna* assessment of crops by end of November 1971 or before 15\(^{th}\) of December 1971. Collectors of respective districts ordered to remit the land tax and suspension of taxes and revenue payment from peasants. It also ordered to officials of co-operative establishment not to take repayment of loan or other dues forcefully from farmer. Further, it was suggested that of all officials and representative of local self-government to formulate and plan schemes for relief works. 

Red tapeism put to an end. To take action expeditiously, all the famine relief works sanctioned at once in the secretariat committee headed by chief secretary of state. Power to put administrative sanction up-to 1 lakh delegated to collectors. The heads of other department delegated appropriate order to take immediate action. 

From the very beginning of the distress, bureaucracy of state government was aware of the draft provisions of scarcity manual as well as changes accommodated therein regarding relief operations. Bureaucracy of state government was

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60 Revenue & Forest Department Government of Maharashtra, Scarcity and other calamities, A compendium of Government orders Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 1974  
61 Varatak Bhausaheb, Lokarajya 1\(^{st}\) October 1971 p.16  
62 Loc.cit  
63 Ibid pp.116-117
very keen on getting maximum central assistance. Number of directions and instructions issued from state secretariat asking to furnish detailed information in prescribed Performa by every fortnight, further to keep the appropriate account of expenses incurred which are chargeable for central assistance under the head of “64-A famine relief.” Team of central government and even team of planning commission also praised bureaucracy for its efforts maintained the accounts with details. A complete dovetailing between the plan works and the relief works achieved at considerable extent during scarcity relief operations.  

It is clear from the compendium of government orders of 1973 that as the distress went on mounting government orders became more flexible and seeking more urgency and promptness from officials working at grassroots level and involved in planning and execution.

4.7 System of Rules

One important feature of scarcity relief administration has been the issuing of rules on large numbers and instructions from the secretariat to regulate the operations at the field level. Between July 1972 and July 1973 there was a great outpouring of rules. Out of about 350 instructions issued during 1970-73, more than 250 were sent down between July 1972 and July 1973. It was the peak scarcity period in terms of total labor force

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64 Subramnian V p. 156 cf Government issued order in August 1971 to the effect that the plan allocation and works should be opened as far as possible at scarcity affected areas. Again in February 1972, directions were issued to the effect that the implementing officers/ agencies should certify that provision for plan works in the drought affected areas have been deployed to the fullest extent possible for relief schemes in those areas. Unless such a clear certificate was issued, it would not be possible for government to reimburse the excess of expenditure from the relief grants placed at the disposal of the collector. (p.157)

Dovetailing was effectively implemented in soil conservation work and in irrigation works. The average daily worker attendance on major and minor irrigation project was 24400 during the year 1972-73. (p. 158)

65 Government of Maharashtra ‘Scarcity’ Compendium of government of Maharashtra, revenue and agriculture department of Maharashtra following date wise orders will substantiate the conclusion: (1) Scarcity relief plan G.L.,B& C.D. No. FAM-1070/130844-D dated 2nd January 1971. Addressed to all superintending Engineers of the Building & communication circle ; only administratively approved schemes, priority to only productive work,p.2 (2) Nothing should be done by the building and communication department officers that will have effect of slowing down the progress and delaying the commencement of the works. Executive engineers Buildings & communication department should help Zilla Parishad in preparation of plans and estimates promptly when approached Zilla Parishad in preparation of plans and estimates promptly when approached. G.C.M.B.&C.D.No FAM-1071/130844-D, dated January 1971,p.24

66 Government of Maharashtra “Scarcity” Government of Maharashtra Department of forest and revenue compendium of government orders Vol. 1&2 precisely there were 247 rules published in that among the government orders 118 were Government resolutions. There were 97 government circular resolutions in both volumes of government compendium.
engaged in different kinds of works. Governments’ resolutions are generally published in
government gazettes and are binding on government as well as invariably enforceable. 
Government resolutions have thus higher statutory effect. Government circular 
resolutions are addressed to concern government officials and are binding on the 
government officials. This suggests seriousness, urgency and promptness on the part of 
state government while dealing with relief operations during scarcity. Demi official 
letters are also important government orders which are written by higher government 
officials to their respective subordinates asking immediate and prompt actions. Among 
these D.O. letters most of the letters are from secretary of revenue and forest department 
who himself was chief coordinating officer at centre. It shows the efficiency and 
dedications of chief of coordinating relief operations of state government in dealing with 
such a colossal task. Government endorsement government letters, government circular 
memorandum, government notification, are other type of government orders complied in 
the government compendium. A number of rules issued explaining what work or portion 
of it would entitle to draw from the expenditure head ’64-A’ famine. 
A careful analysis of the government orders issued during 1970-73 reveals the objectives 
and in turn functions of these rules. Some of the rules serve authorization function 
authorizing persons to undertake particular jobs and to increase by delegation the 
competence of particular officers. Some of the rules satisfied objective to bring 
uniformity in scarcity administration, helps in impersonalizing administration by which 
malpractices and expenses can be checked and controlled. Instructions were often issued, 
to modify earlier orders expanding their scope or providing ‘correct’ interpretation. A 
number of orders were promulgated on new road works, construction of percolation tank 
and with regard to compensation for land acquisition. Some orders were issued with 
purpose of de-politicization. In this respect some orders were issued to aware lower 
authorities from pressure of local pressure group. It can be understood from following 
example. In order to ensure that the selection of the site for the community well is not 
made in such a manner as to unduly favor the bigger landowners or is otherwise on an
unsuitable land, the information about the site selected by the village Panchayat should be given by it to the Panchayat Samiti.  

In conflict situation the secretariat was acting as an arbitrator and sending down instructions to remove misunderstanding between the parties involved. The cumulative effects of number of rules seems to have been and abject dependence of the field officers on the secretariat. Every bit of operational norm was being set by the secretariat and the administrators down below were to follow the rules like automatons. As the rules were coming like an avalanche at peak of scarcity, one could appreciate the anxiety of the secretariat to reach out the problem situations. The rules were steadily spanning the normal psychological distance between the secretariat and the field.

### 4.8 Some Observations on Administrative Structure and Establishment

The interaction between different functionaries produced inter-organizational integration and new interpersonal structure congruent with the task of emergency administration. Constant and elaborate rules issued from secretariat ensured conformance to standard procedures and accountability of the field level officers to state government. Close approximation to a management by objective model within which controls were more purposive and specific task oriented was sought during this distress. Delegation of power led to dispersion of great deal of controlling authority among lower level functionaries. Controls within scarcity organization increased more than in normal administration. The integration of diverse organizations of governments’ different administrative limb produced new normative structure with realignment of roles and relationships. Hierarchical rigidity was modified to some extent. It is proved by the fact, that, when under a government order, the authority to make payments to scarcity labor was taken away from the engineering staff and given to the revenue staff instead, this was not liked.

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67 The Block Development Officer and the Deputy Engineer of the Panchyat Samiti should verify that in selecting the site the conditions laid down by government in this regard and in particular the selection of the landowners to be benefited by well had been adhered to. In case they find that there is any deviation from the direction given by government, the Block Development Officer in consultation with the Deputy Engineer shall have power to reject the site or to suggest an alternate site. Similarly, instructions were issued to accommodate the interests of the economically depressed classes by authorizing construction of some community wells specifically for the scheduled castes and schedule tribes.

68 Mathur and Bhattacharya pp.50-54
the former. The increased emphasis on formal and informal meetings visits and face-to-face interactions among individuals taking part in scarcity operations produced a new interpersonal structure commensurate with the needs of emergency. In traditional bureaucratic frame and organization some changes took place hierarchical rigidity was modified and certain levels were eliminated. Division of labor and specialization of tasks were adhered to yet there were more intra-organizational interactions and across-the boundary communication. Rules were sedulously issued and scrupulously followed. But, in emergency the tremendous rate of multiplication of rules provided for needed flexibility. There was sense of personal involvement in alleviating misery which has often been alleged to be lacking in normal times.

4.9 Some observations on financial administration

1970-73 drought operations were unique in many respect financial management and account keeping was one of such aspect. Policies of Center-State financial relation went on changing over the years in many respects including central assistance to state during natural calamities. People of Maharashtra and government of Maharashtra were very much fortunate during this calamity that during distress governments at centre and state belonged to same political party i.e. Congress. Annasaheb Shinde and Yeshwantrao Chavan were the ministers from Maharashtra in center. These both ministers were holding important portfolios Honorable Annasaheb Shinde was the minister of state for agriculture and food. Honorable Yeshwantrao Chavan was holding portfolio of finance. This helped in pooling central assistance to state. Even prime-minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi visited Maharashtra during peak period of distress. A government of India was very keen and prompts in assessing the situation through central assessment team and releasing the central assistance. It made state government and people of Maharashtra relieved. The pattern of central assistance for expenditure on relief envisages that the state government should bore 25% of cost of relief operations. The amount receivable for scarcity relief from centre amounted 75% of total expenditure incurred on relief operations. The amount thus receivable from centre was further bifurcated as two third in the form of grants in aid and one third as loans. Fourth finance commission laid down this procedure in 1966. For release of central assistance to state during calamity on the
spot assessment of situation by central team and it ceiling of amount made essential precondition.\textsuperscript{69}

It was the promptness, efficiency, pragmatism and understanding of procedure of financial management on the part of bureaucracy of Maharashtra state that made them very prompt in record-keeping and account keeping. In order to enable the timely submission of information about the figures of expenditure from the districts and the timely reconciliation of these figures with the audit office, the state government appointed separate and special account staff for obtaining information from the districts, and verifying/reconciling this with figures in the audit.\textsuperscript{70} Reimbursement from central government for the expenditure incurred by state government is depending on the submission of audited accounts and verifying entrees from the treasuries.\textsuperscript{71} Ways and means advances and ad hoc grants loans sanctioned by government of India from time to time to the state government are the other forms through which government of India assist the state government for the carrying the relief operations.\textsuperscript{72} The work done by the accounts staff was in the nature of concurrent verification rather than a post facto one. This was a very wise step, because the expenditure incurred by the various implementing agencies during the three years of the drought was so heavy that if concurrent verification had not been undertaken, perhaps supporting records may not have been available after some time and it would have been difficult for the state government to send authentic figures of expenditure and for government of India to release assistance or close the relief accounts.

Year 1970-71 was the first year of distress in early days of distress there were plan works in progress at various levels in various villages. Budgets and financial arrangements to these works were already made and on the eve of such occasion scarcity conditions emerged due to underperformance of monsoon. Consequently scarcity works also progressed at such instance bureaucracy of Maharashtra devised new strategies in order to utilize plan expenditure that has been already arranged and scarcity expenses that has

\textsuperscript{69} Subramanian V., pp..85-86
\textsuperscript{70} Subramanian V. Parched Earth Oriental Longman 1976 p.119
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid p.118
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid p.119
to be utilized from the drought and scarcity financial arrangement. It was decided that the plan works should started and implemented at fullest swing and the excess amount spent therein on scarcity works which was more than the allocated amount of plan expenditure should be spent on such works was to be reimbursed from financial provisions made for scarcity works. This type of arrangement is known as dovetailing between scarcity works and plan works and was effectively implemented during this calamity by state government. Central government was suspicious about Maharashtra state that government was might be using scarcity funds for plan works. However, the accounts were reproduced by state government on demand of central government and it was amply clear that there was no saving in expenditure of the plan provisions and was fully utilized.73 Government issued order in August 1971 to the effect that the plan allocation and works should be opened as far as possible at scarcity affected areas. Again in February 1972, directions were issued to the effect that the implementing officers/agencies should certify that provision for plan works in the drought affected areas have been deployed to the fullest extent possible for relief schemes in those areas. Unless such a clear certificate was issued, it would not be possible for government to reimburse the excess of expenditure from the relief grants placed at the disposal of the collector.74 Dovetailing was effectively implemented in soil conservation work and in irrigation works. The average daily worker attendance on major and minor irrigation project was 24400 during the year 1972-73.

4.9.1 Release of Central Assistance

The statistics related with central assistance is appended in table in table No. AT-43 and T.No. AT-44 appended in Appendix-A. See also detail information appended in appendix-D.

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73 Subramanian V. Government issued order in August 1971 to the effect that the plan allocation and works should be opened as far as possible at scarcity affected areas. Again in February 1972, directions were issued to the effect that the implementing officers/agencies should certify that provision for plan works in the drought affected areas have been deployed to the fullest extent possible for relief schemes in those areas. Unless such a clear certificate was issued, it would not be possible for government to reimburse the excess of expenditure from the relief grants placed at the disposal of the collector. (p.157)

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74 Subramanian V, p.157
Government of Maharashtra incurred total 268.39 Croer on scarcity relief program out of that 222.52 corers were received from union government in the form of loans and grants in aid. Out of that 102.25 croers were in the form of grants in aid and remaining 117.27 crores in the form of loans. Substantial financing of the scarcity relief works came from union government. Same party government at centre and state, better follow up and records by state officials and representation of Maharashtra by able ministers Yeshwantrao Chavan and Annasaheb Shinde helped in pulling this much assistance from centre. As far as release of central assistance concerned up to the end of financial year 1972-73 it was smooth procedure. However, there was marked change of central team towards Maharashtra in expeditious visits and then releasing assistance to Maharashtra. The installments of assistance not only delayed but curtailed to large extent. The anxiety of drought and food condition all over nation was looming large and approach of members of planning commission towards of Maharashtra became suspicious and rigid in assessing releasing assistance. Financial constraints on union government due to prevailing drought condition over other states and sort of jealousy of planning commission of members the amount state government was pulling some of probable reasons quoted by Subramanin for centre’s apathy. The follow up actions by executives in Delhi, repeated appeals of state council of ministers to Prime Minister and Maharashtra’s efforts in drought alleviations by Maharashtra bore fruit and officials of union government and union government itself finally rose to occasion and helped Maharashtra government in fighting against such a colossal distress. The vivid description of release of central assistance is narrated separately in Appendix. From October 1972 onwards food situation worsened over state and for more quotas for state government had to make repeated appeals to union government for increase in grain quota. However, the situation on food grain front did not improved much.

4.10 State Performance in Relief Operations during drought of 1970-73

Of the 35800 (approx) villages in Maharashtra State, 23062 villages in 1970-71, 11828 villages in 1971-72 and 25488 villages in 1972-73 were declared to have been affected by scarcity. A population of nearly 2.5 to 3 croers in the rural areas was caught in the vortex of drought. Production of food grains was less than normal by about 18% in 1970-71,
29% in 1971-72, and 54% in 1972-73. The loss or damage to crops, if an attempt is made to quantify it, amounted to several crores of rupees. During the year 1971-72 at the peak of distress the labor attendance on the relief work was 14.60 lakhs in September 1971; at the height of the drought in 1972-73 the labor attendance on the relief works was mounted to 49.47 lakhs at the end of May 1973 when the intensity of the distress and the need for relief were at their highest. During 1971-72 a total expenditure of Rs. 40.33 crores were incurred on relief works in 1972-73 an expenditure of Rs. 75.71 crores were incurred and during 1973-74 up to 31 December 1973 a sum of Rs. 136.83 crores were incurred on scarcity relief operations. This valuable statistics is provided us by V.Subramanian. He further provided information about works completed during scarcity as scarcity relief program. 21.68 lakh hectares were bunded, the construction of 4801 minor irrigation and percolation tanks was commenced and of these 1479 were completed during the drought period itself, 586 canal excavation works were completed, the total length of the canals excavated being 1859.5 km. 56686 community wells were commenced and 17468 of these water had been struck and steps were being taken to complete the wells so that they resulted in permanent accentuation of water resources mainly for irrigation. 78184 km of earthwork of roads were completed and 58798 km were brought to safe stage in large number of these completed roads State Transport services commenced operating thus adding appreciably to the infrastructural facilities of the several thousands of villages whose means of communication to the nearby markets and towns were either poor or unsatisfactory. Besides there were a number of villages tanks constructed, canals and wells de-silted and forestation works taken up. Wherever possible, drinking water sources were either created or improved and arrangements were made to supply drinking water by means of tankers, bullock-carts and jeeps to over 700 villages. About 40000 tones of fodder were procured from all sources including forest plantations, Army sources other states, etc and distributed either for cash or against tagai to the need agriculturist. Over Rs. 1 croere was spent as subsidy for transporting fodder from various sources to the ultimate destinations, 43 lakhs of laborers in the relief works were

75 Subramanian V.p.515
provided with Sukhadi a highly nutritious supplementary food prepared and distributed by one of the most dedicated philanthropic organizations of this country Viz., the Shri Sadguru Seva Trust. Throughout the period of the drought there was not a single case of epidemic or death by water poisoning. Above all, in spite of the grimness of the tragedy and meager availability of food grains, not a single man, women or child died of starvation during the entire period of drought and this brings out again the response of the people and Government of Maharashtra to the challenge.\(^\text{76}\)

Bureaucracy and executives of state tried hard to relieve the distress and scarcity of essential needs of society. Ensuring sufficient food, fodder and drinking water to scarcity affected people is major aspect of scarcity relief programme. Statistics and figures appended in through Table No. to Table No. appended in appendix A testifies stupendous task that fulfilled by government. Following attempts and measures were taken during scarcity to fulfill the scarcity relieve operations.

**Food**

Government took several steps to ensure food supply to every household. But the year 1972-73 proved all India food grain deficient year. It was also global drought year and therefore food grain deficient year. It was too difficult to pull food grains from other Indian states and from abroad. But still attempts on the part of state government were appreciable. There were three consequent years of rainfall deficiency. State government and people of Maharashtra were aware of the situation. It was acknowledged by government in August 1972 that the coming years may pose serious threat to food security. Therefore government posed certain restrictions like not to issue food grains to big and medium land holders. \(^\text{77}\)Special concessions were granted to raise the food grains and fodder at river bed in fertile soil from 10\(^{\text{th}}\) August 1972 onwards when it was cleared

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\(^{76}\) Ibid pp. 515-56

\(^{77}\) Scarcity Compendium of government rules G.R. Vol.2 (p.13) Those cultivators who hold wet lands and produce sufficient foodgrains should not be supplied foodgrains through fair price shops till such date as the foodgrains produced by them last for their bona fide personal consumption. (p.18) Those cultivators who hold wet lands and produce sufficient foodgrains should not be supplied foodgrains through Fair Price Shops till such date as the foodgrains produced by them last for their bona fide personal consumption. G.C., F & C.S.D., No. FGS-1072/23443-A, Dated 17\(^{\text{th}}\) February 1973: GCF p.24 foodgrains to cultivators though having more than 5 acres of land where annewari is less than 6 annas.
that the Kharif prospects were looming. In same effect Nala and River bed were thrown open to same purpose. In order to strengthen the public distribution system number of fair price grain shops increased during 1972-73. To grow more wheat during Rabi season it was decided to provide more water on priority basis. Collectors were ordered to sanction loan not exceeding Rs. 2000 to village Panchyat if necessary, for opening fair price shop. In case of monetary difficulty concessions to cooperative society and Panchyats were granted. It includes supply of food grain to village Panchyat shops on credit for one month. This concession was extendable where shops allotted to village Panchyat because no cooperative or other agency is ready to run the shop. It was also directed to collector that when received quota of food grain from state and central government not sufficient, then allot the stock of food grains equitably to all parts of his jurisdiction. Collectors were also assigned job of ensuring effective functioning of supply of food grains to acutely affected scarcity area on priority basis than the irrigated area. The statutory provision of appointing vigilance committee was worked out to restrict the malpractices.

**Fodder**

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80 Scarcity compendium of government rules vol.1 p. 145. There should be at least one fair price shops within a radius of 5 miles. More shops can also be open if necessary G.L. F. & C.S. D., No. FPS- 1072/ 17187-N, dated 18th August 1972, addressed to collector of Poona and copy to all other concerned officers.

81 Ibid vol.1 GR. &F.D. No. Ind 1072/38863 14/9/72GR., P.165
83 Ibid G.R. Vol.2 p.59GFCSD if the supplies of food grains made are insufficient to meet the full requirements of the fair price shops collectors should distribute the stock amongst the shops on an equitable basis proportionate to the units attached to them. Distribution to the cardholders especially in the scarcity areas should also be on an equitable basis the collectors should ensure effective functioning of the distribution system by constant personal supervision.
84 Scarcity Compendium of government rules G.R. Vol.2 p.82 G.C.F.C.D. No FPS-073/15703-N, dated 19th May 73 collectors to check malpractices in distribution of food grains and to set up vigilance committees at various levels to keep a close watch on the working of the fair price shops p.83GCF&CSD., No QNT-1071/21032-A dated 19th May 1973 The collectors should arrange for distribution of the available stock of food grains in such a manner that scarcity affected areas with less availability of food grains get preference over the irrigated areas or areas where crop conditions have been better. The collectors should also ensure that there is no delay in moving and distributing food grains to and in the
As agriculture was backbone of Maharashtra’s economy. Mechanization of agriculture was far from common farmers of Maharashtra. Agriculturists were depending upon the bullocks for almost all agricultural operations. Dairy was important significant side business for agriculturist. These factors contributed to swell the livestock population of Maharashtra to 1.8 croers. Out of which 75 lakh cattle population faced the problem of acute scarcity of fodder. State government in its endeavor to fight against want did everything to save the cattle wealth of poor agriculturists. Age old legacy of famine code practices forest land and pastures opened to cattle to tap all forest sources. As a result of these facilities 661 closed areas in eight forest divisions in eleven districts occupying an area of 39549 hectares were thrown open for cutting grass and foliage. Transpiration of fodder from surplus area to deficient area and from surplus state to Maharashtra state, opening of cattle camps, to seek assistance from sugar factories for fodder in the form of cane top, growing of fodder crop wherever possible with help of government and chief minister’s fund and nongovernmental agencies, were other measures followed. Manufacturing of nutritious cattle feed, from viable alternative and opening of cattle camps were measures adopted by state government. These measures were innovative and ensuring optimum utilization of scarce resources available. The measures adopted were economical implemented and sought which were not even contemplated by predecessors involved in framing famine codes.

A vigorous program of collection of grass was also undertaken by the forest department for supply to the acutely affected areas. Till the first week of July 1973, a quantity of 16266 tones of green grass was collected from Chanda, Amravati, Nagpur, Thana, Nasik and Poona and Aurangabad forest circles. The total net quantity of dry grass collected was 15033 tones. An amount of Rs, 26.50 lakhs was sanctioned to the forest department.
for the work of collecting grass, out of which Rs. 27.11 lakhs have been spent. Assistance from charitable trusts and volunteer agencies was sought in collecting and distributing fodder with paying them appropriate management and transport charges. If there were no any other charitable institute to carry such works collectorate of respective districts were assigned the job. Fodder was distributed to agriculturists as Tagai loan. Attempts were made to sale the fodder to agriculturist at reasonable price in lieu of Tgai loans. Charitable institutes who were involving in transporting and distributing fodder were also replenish with amount which they spent for the same.

With the help of central government attempts were made to procure fodder from other states. However, only Gujarat state responded positively. The military authorities had also helped by dispatching 2436.5 tones of fodder. These were assigned to the four acutely affected districts of Nasik, Aurangabad, Ahemdnagar and Osmanabad.

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89 Ibid p. 45 G.C. R. & F.D. No. SFD-1373/57422-J dated 21st March 1973. Collectors authorised to give advances to agencies undertaking distribution of fodder upto Rs. 10000 in each case recoverable in full immediately after the fodder operations are over. p. 255 G.C. R., & F.D., No. SFD-1372/243514-J dated 3rd December 1972. Institutions bringing fodder from places within the district for supply to the affected areas are eligible for subsidy on those bringing from out-side.


92 Ibid p. 255 G.C. R., & F.D., No. SFD-1272/243514-J dated 3rd December 1972. Institutions bringing fodder from places within the district for supply to the affected areas are eligible for subsidy on those bringing from out-side. P. 231 Subramanian Central relief fund purchased fodder from Dadara and Nagar Haveli and distributed the same to affected farmers Rs. 18 laks for tagai loans sanctioned to sell the fodder to agriculturist which they have purchased from above mentioned area. 25000 bales of 100 kilos were purchased and sell to agriculturist against cash payment or tagai loans. The farmer were charged RS. 12.50 per bale or Rs. 125 per tonnes. the institution or social worker responsible for the distribution of the fodder paid Rs. 1.50 per bale as donations to the central relief fund. The price of the gras was RS. 12.50 per bale or Rs. 125 per tonne. The institution or social worker responsible for the distribution of the fodder paid Rs. 1.50 per bale as donations to the central relief fund. In regard to supply to Panjarpols, cattle camps or other institutions the price of grass was Rs. 12.50 per bale, and in addition a donations of Rs. 3.50 per bale was given to the central relief fund. All the doantions and the sale proceeds were to be credited at the central relief fund was affected from these proceeds.

93 Subramanian pp. 230-231 As a result of discussions between the chief minister of Gujarat and Maharashtra it was agreed that Gujarat should supply 1000 wagons of grass to the affected areas of Maharashtra. The government decided that 760 wagons might be earmarked for the needs of the acutely affected area and 240 wagons for the requirement of the government milk colony at Aarey. As a fist installment the Gujarat government released 500 wagons out of which 240 and 260 wagons loads respectively were dispatched Aarey milk colony and affected areas respectively. Out of the balance the Gujarat Government were able to supply only 120 wagons of grass and 350 wagon of paddy straw. The former was assigned to the collectors of six acutely affected districts proportionately and since the latter was not accepted by the affected areas it was transferred to Aarey milk colony. The arrangement for transport were made by the central relief fund which had previous experience in the field, and which was itself implementing a similar scheme for collecting grass from Gujarat and sending it to the affected areas in Maharashtra.
proportionately. Nearly 415000 sheaves of kadba and 5620 tonnes of kadbad-kutti were received by the affected districts from the better of districts.  

The total camps sanctioned were 376 with an intake capacity of 466910 cattle. Out of these only 156 camps were opened and the maximum number of cattle admitted were 40809. Comparatively well-off districts were assigned duty to open cattle camps for severely affected districts. Such as Buldahana for Aurangabad Parbhani and Jalagaon district assigned duty to organize and host such camps. Cattle camps were not successful scheme on account of number of reasons mainly wide spread distress and people were not ready to shift their cattle far from their homes.

For transportation of fodder across the state borders appropriate instructions and certificates were issued to transporting agencies and charitable trust whosoever involved in these exercise. Railway department provided the transportation at concessional rates. A total expenditure of Rs. 1.13 crores was incurred on the payment of subsidy on transport and in other incidental measures from relieving scarcity of fodder during the period from 1st April 1972 to 31st December 1973. Tagai loans for purchase of fodder were sanctioned. Till 31st March 1973, an amount of RS 39572173 was disbursed on this account. During the year 1973-74, an allotment of Rs. 2.98 crores was placed at the disposal of the commissioners and collectors for the advancing fodder loans. Till 31st December 1973, an amount of Rs. 2.07 crores was disbursed. Fodder loans were made payable in 5 years, instead of 3 years. For purchase of bullocks 1000 Rs loan per

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Subramanian pp. 230-231 The situation was extremely acute in the ten districts of Aurangabad, Beed, Osmanabad, Ahmednagar, Solapur, Satara, Sangli, Poona and Nasik and Dhulia. Some of the districts of the Bombay division and the eight districts of Vidharbha division were comparatively in a better position limited supplies of kadba were available after meeting the local requirements. The collectors of the acutely affected districts were therefore directed to persuade the co-operative and registered institutions and individual merchants with good reputation to obtain supplies from the better off districts and distribute them to the agriculturists in the affected areas at reasonable price to determined by the collector. It is a matter of gratification that in some of these better off districts, several generous-minded farmers came forward voluntarily to donate substantial quantities of fodder to the agriculturists in the affected areas and even to look after their cattle for the sometime.

Subramanian p.233, But one of the magnificent feature of the relief administration during the drought in 1972-73 was the eager readiness with which several philanthropically minded individuals and non-governmental institutions came forward to help government in an almost adventurous endeavor of fighting a famine of unprecedented proportions. The cattle camps were generally opened in areas where facilities of drinking water and fodder were easily available. Similarly, accommodations was also required to be arranged for the cattle owners or the cattle attendants who came along with the cattle.

Government of Maharashtra revenue and forest ministry ‘Scarcity’ Opp.Cit. p. 247 D.O. R. & F.D., No. SFD-1372-J dated 30th November 1972 from shri V. Subramanian secretary to all collectors of Vidharbha region. In Vidharbha whree fodder position is much better useful cattle from neighbouring districts should be allowed to graze and cattle camps opned.
agriculturist were made available with interest rate of 5.5% per annum. The loan was made repayable in 7 years instead of 4 to 5 years as usual. In purchase of bullocks collectors formed the committees and through this committee purchase were made tactfully.

The state government did make heroic, almost Herculean efforts to tide over the situation by taking several steps. But these steps had their limitations and only the onset of a good monsoon during the year 1973-74, can be said to have saved the situation from terrible disaster.

Tagai

During the year 1973-74, an allotment of Rs. 2.98 crores was placed at the disposal of the commissioners and collectors for the advancing fodder loans. Till 31st December 1973, an amount of Rs. 2.07 crores was disbursed. Fodder loans were made payable in 5 years, instead of 3 years. For purchase of bullocks 1000 Rs. loan per agriculturist were made available with interest rate of 5.5% per annum. The loan was made repayable in 7 years instead of 4 to 5 years as usual. In purchase of bullocks collectors formed the committees and through this committee purchase were made tactfully.

The state government did make heroic, almost Herculean efforts to tide over the situation by taking several steps. But these steps had their limitations and only the onset of a good monsoon during the year 1973-74, can be said to have saved the situation from terrible disaster. Measures taken by forest departments

Drinking water

There were about 28000 villages in Maharashtra in which the attempts were made to solve the problem of water supply.\(^97\) Every possible way to tap the all available source of

\(^97\) Government of Maharashtra p. 158 G.R., R.D.D. No. VWS. 3872/25762-F dated 7/9/72 the scheme of providing drinking water in rural areas should be accelerated and given high priority so as to ensure that every village stands covered by as adequate potable water supply facility before the close of the fifth year plan. While existing works may be continued and completed by zilla Parishad the new works should be entrusted to the ground water survey and development agency. In difficult villages, which are certified by the groundwater survey and development agency as not having undergone water resources, the public health engineering organization of the state or the Zilla Parishad as the case may be should undertake normal water supply scheme. In villages with population less than 1000 the piped water supply scheme should be with bore as source one hand pump one power pump with storage cistern and stand posts near cistern. In villages having population more besides the facilities mentioned above normal distribution system on stand post basis should be provided. Individual hose connections should be provided only where the village Panchyat and village are willing to bear the entire capital of the scheme. The financial pattern for piped water supply schemes with bore as source should be 90 per cent government grant and 10% popular contributions.
potable water had been tackled by bureaucracy. With the help of 242 truck-mounted air-compressor blasting units obtained from the department of agriculture the agency carried out blasting operation in 5565 villages covering about 6 thousand drinking water villages were from the acutely affected districts of Nasik Dhilia Ahmednagar Poona Sangali Satara Solapur Aurangabad Beed and Osmanabad.

Under the programme of revitalisation 58 mm diameter bore holes were drilled to depths of 50 to 60 feet from the bottom of existing wells to tap the deeper aquifers. The units could be operated by the same air compressors which were attached to the blasting units. Such drilling can only be done from the bottom of the existing wells, which are generally about 35 to 40 feet below ground level in depth so as to obtain the maximum benefit. Similarly 125 calex type of rotary-cum-drills were also deployed for drilling 4 to 8 inches diameter bore holes at a depth of 60 to 80 feet. The total programme encompassed 2617 villages and 87445 holes were drilled. It may be mentioned that of the 2617 villages nearly 1700 were from the acutely affected districts.

The groundwater survey of Maharashtra and development agency had procured 49 high speed air-hammer drilling rigs some of which were imported. By the end of June 1973, 30 air-hammer rigs were in operation in 20 districts. 1092, bore holes were drilled in 1042 villages covering a total footage of 180705 feet. Of these 1092 bores as many as 681 were successful. It is significant that nearly 70% of these bores were in the acutely affected districts of Aurangabad, Beed, Osmanabad, Solapur, Satara, Sangli, Poona, Ahmednagar, Nasik and Dhulia.

Nationalised banks provided assistance to sink new wells. Under this 22 schemes over 7 districts were operational. The setting up of groundwater surveys and development agency in Maharashtra in July 1971, provided an adequate basis for the proper investigation of groundwater resources and potential. Drinking water scarcity problem over some area became so severe that even attempt of rationing of drinking water brought into practice. Even railway oil tankers usually used as wagons for supplying oils were

98 Subramanin pp.212-213.
99 Subramanian p.211
100 Government of Maharashtra, ‘Scarcity’ Opp. Cit. P.119 G.C. R. & F.D. No SDW-1372/56190-J dated 9th May 1972 supply of water per head per day should not exceed 9 liters a day.; , p. 205 G.R., U.D. P.H. & H.D. No. MWS-3672/76333-M 31st October 1972. Municipal areas where water supply falls below 3-5 gallons per head per day, should be given special treatment by the authorities concerned.
used for water supply where availability of water was not possible by any other means. This was the innovation in drought relief program which was sought by bureaucracy. Desilting of private wells and to make water available from such wells was also innovative idea. In order to augment and increase current potable water supply existing public wells were de-silted and deepened, new scheme of community wells introduced. Drilling of bore wells from ground surface to a depth of 200 to 300 ft. by powerful air-hammer drilling rigs some of which were donated by the UNICEF and some purchased by government. For implementing these schemes easy and fast financial resources as cash help or in easy installments or providing means of resources to local bodies were made or to village community. In order to get appropriate and exact financial assistance from the centre it was made known to every concern which item is admissible for central assistance and how to keep accounts for that sake. To tap the optimum availability ground water scientific and technical help from ground water survey was sought. In

101 P.135. G.C.R., & F.D. No, SWK-1372/172377-J dated 14th July, 1972. Desilting of percolation/minor irrigation tanks should be taken up as scarcity works subject to certain conditions

102 Ibid P.110 ground water surveys and development agency G.C. G. A. D., No. GAD/DC/GSDA-72-73-CU, dated 4th April 1972. Intensive program for augmenting water supply Ground water surveys and development agency should initiate an intensive program for deepening of existing wells and the boring of new wells where feasible.

103 P. 162 D.O., & F.D., No. SWK-1372 J dated. 9th September 1972, by shri V. Subramanian secretary to government to all collectors.;

104 Subramanian p.212

105 Ibid P.119 G.C. R. & F.D, No SDW-1372/56190-J dated 9th May 1972 government to reimburse to Zilla Parishad expenditure on supply of drinking water by tankers or bullock carts to scarcity affected villages

106 For works in scarcity affected villages where water is required to be brought from a distance exceeding 3 K.M. The collector should make funds to the extent of Rs. 2000 per village available to the joint director from 64 Famine Relief: In other villages which are not declared as scarcity affected but where scarcity of drinking water is felt funds required deepening and boring of wells should be made available by the Zilla Parishad.

107 Ibid p.114 G.C. R. & F.D. No SOW-1372/56190-J dated 10th April 1972.; p. 242 G.C.R., & F.D. No. SCY-1372/247773-J dated 18th November 1972. Desilting of wells of individual owners should be taken up as relief program and expenditure should be met from “ 64-A famine Relief “ and the well should be kept open to all for drinking water purposes till scarcity prevails.; P. 234 D.O & F.D. No. SWK-1372/2474732J, dated 14th November 1972. By shri V.Subramanian to all collectors Expenditure on the removal of debris of the new wells for drinking water dug or old ones bored or deepened should be debited to the scarcity funds., p. 241 G.C., R. &F.D. , No SWK-1372/237480-J dated November 1972. Installations of pump after a new well is constructed or the old well deepened bored is a part of the program for the supply of drinking water and therefore expenditure on pump also should be debited to “ 64-A famine relief”; p.32 G.C. R., & F.D. No. SWK-1373/57419-J dated 14th March 1973. Cost of blasting and cutting of stones and their transport to the site of the community wells to be met from ’64-A Famine Relief” cost of transport of bricks for community wells also can be met from “ 64-A Famine Relief”

108 p.110 G.C., G.A.D., No. GAD/DC/GSDA-72-73-CU, dated 4th April 1972. Ground water surveys and development agency should initiate an intensive program for deepening of existing wells and the boring of new wells where feasible. The collectors should supply to this organization a list of scarcity affected villages where acute shortage of drinking water exists or is anticipated. ; The Joint Director, Ground water surveys and development agency should ensure in each affected village his geological assistants would survey more than one well and recommended a few wells for deepening take up work in the wells which are not currently providing water to the local people and endeavor to
order to reach the deep ground water beneath the hard basalt rock of Deccan new machines were imported. To take more bores even help of some volunteer agency was sought. Prevailing untouchability in rural Maharashtra noticed even in modern Maharashtra at common drinking water over rural Maharashtra. Maharashtra government issued clear orders to concern authority to provide facility of taking drinking water from common water outlet without any hurdles to all village community. Baba Adhav social reformer of Maharashtra launched special drive ‘one village one common drinking water cistern.’ The same policy is reflected in community well scheme and due cognizance of benefit to schedule caste and schedule tribe community has been taken. Community well scheme was to conserve and tap the available local ground water in distress for drinking and agricultural purpose for all the community of that particular village. This scheme was more vigorously and intensely pursued by state machinery in state. This scheme was seen as making of sustainable asset and a more useful potential productive work in dearth of other productive work available at rural Maharashtra at that time.

Medical Relief
The Mumbai Municipal Corporation and its three medical colleges offered the free services of their doctors and interns for drought affected rural Maharashtra. These doctors with help of the civil department, pharmaceutical organizations, Indian Oil Corporation and other philanthropically-minded institutions set out for service in drought affected area. These medical teams were equipped with drug and mobile vans supplied by the Mumbai Municipal Corporation. Later government colleges in Mumbai city as well as government and Municipal colleges in Pune, Miraj, Aurngabad and Nagpur joined them. This mission was put under directorate of medical and health services for drought affected areas under Dr. L.H. Hiranadani. Perfect coordination between existing district personnel and outside personnel was sought. Dispensaries, vehicles, medicines were complete the blasting and deepening work within 4 days at latest. The district collectors and chief executive officers should extend the fullest co-operation and assistance to the fullest co-operation and assistance to the officers of the ground water surveys and development agency.

109 p.253 G.C.R.D.D., No. VWS. 3872/51645-F-3 dated 2nd December 1972. The chief executive officers to ensure that all public wells and tanks in rural areas meant for drinking water are thrown open to Harijans, Buddhas Backward classes etc.,

110 Subramanian p. 217
utilized properly with proper coordination.\textsuperscript{111} Immunization, inoculation, disinfection of all drinking water, administration of doses of vitamin, distribution of drugs and medicines were assigned works to the medical students and medical units which were touring entire scarcity affected area of Maharashtra. After scarcity experience and on honorary director of medical relief’s recommendation it was made compulsory to every medical intern to render his six month’s service in rural area during his or her internship.

4.11 Concluding Remarks

1970-73 were drought years over Maharashtra. It was severe drought of latter half of 20\textsuperscript{th} century over Maharashtra. Intensity of drought was more due to consequent droughts. Government of Maharashtra was aware of the scarcity arose due to failure of agriculture due to incessant rains in 1970 and subsequent drought over major part of state in 1971. It seems that people of state and government did not worry much from prevailing drought till August 1972. Scarcity relief programs were operational over major parts of state. In absence of environmental and ecological replenishing measures, absence of improved agronomic practices, unavailability of drought resistant varieties of seeds, absence of soil and water conservation techniques, absence of programs like water shade development and absence of major dams over Maharashtra, along with these factors moderate performance of rainfall in the sixties Maharashtra was facing drought condition over some parts or other every year. Reports of scarcity and drought elevation programs of almost every year reveal this fact. Thus, Maharashtra state was implementing drought relief programs over some parts or other every year. After measure drought year of 1971 dismal performance of monsoon in 1972-73 awakens people of state and government too. People realized that they have to face adversity in near future. To my mind this awakening created work culture in Maharashtra and saved Maharashtra from disaster. Grain situation on all India scale was satisfactory agriculture minister of state of union ministry spelled out the confidence that there was nothing to worry on grain front. However, somehow people of state and government realized the danger. Scarcity relief programs that were operational over some parts of state since 1971 picked up pace after September 1972. The experience of government and bureaucracy that had in preceding

\textsuperscript{111} Suramanian pp.276-277
years certainly helped them to chalking the new strategy and programs. Despite all available past literature in the form of famine code and scarcity manual on scarcity and famines; altogether different strategies followed. The new procedures and new administrative structures somewhere even institutions evolved which were not contemplated by anyone in advance. Secretariat and cabinet committees, central coordination committees are such institutes. Most significant feature of this drought is that Maharashtra government was successful in bringing substantial central assistance for its endeavor of fighting scarcity. However, after end of financial year of 1972-73 approach of members of planning commission in releasing assistance to state became rigid and tight. Certainly it caught government of Maharashtra in financially embracing condition. There were public protest for payment of their wages all around the state and government found very hard to carry further relief operations. Repeated representation of ministers and officers to centre finally paved the way for releasing further assistance to state. Union government at last realized the gravity and hardship that Maharashtra was facing at that time. At provincial level collector and his office’s role in famine relief remain pivotal as laid down in old famine codes. First time in this drought public participation sought in preparing plans of scarcity works and suggesting new works. Democratic decentralization of this kind is evident from working of relief advisory committees and vigilance committees. It was first time in the administrative history of India administrative organization of Pachayati raj institute worked with revenue wing of administration without any friction. Major part of the relief operations was executed by officers of Panchyati raj institutes. Complete cooperation was sought from officers of all other wings of administration through district officers committee which was operating from collectorate. While commenting on the release of central assistance V. Subramanin asserted that union government helped Maharashtra because Maharashtra government helped itself. This implies that state machinery was on its toes while preparing, planning and keeping accounts for scarcity relief program. Administrative mechanism and works were so expeditious that there was no any hurdle in releasing central assistance. Another significant feature of relief administration was incorporating and encompassing assistance from private enterprises, personnel and nongovernmental organizations. Execution of relief program and scarcity works was inner urge of the administration of all
levels. It seems that from secretariat to talathi and from Chief Minster to Sarpanch everybody involved in relief operation with deep conviction. Two volumes of government rules produced during this scarcity itself evident that how much higher bureaucracy was keen to reach at grass root level. Frequent visits of officers and ministers from Mumbai to village and from taluka headquarters to Mumbai created electrically charged environment and created different pattern of communication. Formal hierarchical decorum and protocol in communication was never observed in expeditious execution of works. In the history of Maharashtra it was never seen such an expeditious execution of relief works. Though instances of irregularities and malpractices reported, it was herculean task of work performed during this drought. Every hurdle in execution in which ever form surfaced, was abolished. It was never in the history of Maharashtra that bureaucracy worked with such zeal and selfless motive. It was also first time in the history of Maharashtra scarcity works prolonged for such a long period. People were so accustomed to the relief works that they could not tolerate of stopping of work. There were public protests on closure of woks after good performance of monsoon over some areas. The manner in which the relief operations were conducted offered excellent material to all those who witnessed the splendid exhibition of energy and enthusiasm which the administration displayed and wanted to give expression to it 1970-73 drought of Maharashtra will be remembered more for successful state interventions than its severity. In the famine history of India the efforts of Maharashtra Government and people of Maharashtra will be praised by coming generations. It was the patience, resilience, dedication, strong resolve to work hard on the part of Chief Minister, council of ministers bureaucrats and people of Maharashtra to overcome all these difficulties that led successfully to overcome distress.112 The remarkable success of Maharashtra’s war against want and misery achieved due to resilience and dedication of Maharashtra’s

112 “…. Maharashtra’s Millions imperturbable like the Sahyadris faced the challenge of drought with confidence, courage and heroism; performance and compassion; bureaucracy by its alertness and efforts wiped away the stigma of ages attached to it; Zilla Parishads and other decentralized institutions lifted a tremendous load by taking a lion’s share in the implementation of the relief measures; the conscience of entire community was stirred to go out of the rescue and the helpof the suffering millions as a result of which money and other material help flowed lavishly.” V. Subramanian in Parched earth pp. 513-514
leadership. It was also due to stimulating positive response that this leadership was able to evoke from an administration.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{113} Subramanian V., p. 516