CHAPTER II

IMPORTANCE OF LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT
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Local Self-Government has always been considered to be an important branch in Public Administration, as its purpose is to provide all civic amenities and conveniences to the residents of the Municipalities and in the context of the political democracy ushered in under the Indian Constitution, it forms an important plank in the scheme of Self-Government.

Local Administration is the training ground and the basic feature of a democratic society. It is where the talent for administration, public service and leadership are first tested. In a backward and developing society like ours it gains much greater importance. It furnishes the grass-roots for a democratic system.

Local Self-Government has been recognized as the training ground for the service in the larger administration of the State and of the country as a whole. Local Self-Government forms the base of our democratic structure and plays a vital role in the preservation and promotion of our democratic institutions.

With the growth of economic activity there is a trend towards urbanization and the problems of Local Self-Governments at all levels whether Gram Panchayats, Town Municipalities, Borough Municipalities or Corporates are becoming more and more complex. It is all the more necessary, therefore, that the educated youth of the country should take more and more interest in these Local bodies as it is in these institutions that the budding leaders get useful training to shoulder greater responsibilities of running a democratic Government in the country.

Local Self-Government, the very nomenclature sprouts in a sense of Self-reliance and confidence. This setup not only causes the primary needs of man like hygiene, water supply and road facilities to be attended to rapidly and adequately. It gives full opportunities to people of the areas concerned to value themselves their primary needs and decide themselves through their elected representatives as to how to attend to those needs, accustoms the people gradually for the democratic way of governing themselves which is absolutely essential for sharing at a later stage in a deserving manner the task of governing the nation, knowing and respecting the wishes of the people.
To discuss the importance of Local Self-Government institutions in a modern state, we must examine that what we mean and understand by them and especially we must consider whether these institutions have real, and in any sense, independent spheres of action. We all know that they have not only political, social, economic and ethical value but also indeed penetrate more deeply into the significance of life.

**Local Government : Meaning**

It is a well recognized principle that the Local Authorities, as far as practicable, should control within their areas all the matters affecting the public interests of the community. The administration of some affairs like water supply, drainage, sewage, highways etc., are of regional importance. The chief concern of Local Authorities is what we may call "the domestic work of a civilized community".¹

In a word, 'Local Government' is the management and administration of Local affairs by people. We mean, the Government of a Locality, in respect of certain functions by the residents themselves or through their elected representatives. Matters affecting Local interests are best known to and are best administered by Local Bodies. A service is 'Local' when a preponderant share of the benefit can be directly traced to persons interested in the Locality.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, 'Local Government' means the authority which determines and executes measures within an area inside and smaller than the whole State. Local means restricted area. The variant, Local Self-Government, is important for its emphasis upon the freedom of Locality to decide and act.²

According to Websters International Dictionary, Local Government is "Self-Government in Local affairs by a city or other limited area as distinguished from the regulation of such affairs by the Government of a larger territory, as the State of which it is a part."³

**Definition of Local Government:**

Sir Ivor Jennings gave the following definition in his book "Principles of Local Government Law".-
"Local Government may have wide variety of meanings. Since it is Government, the system of Local Government which a country adopts must be a part of its Governmental or constitutional structure. Since it is Local it relates to the specific portions of the country defined by Locality. This institutions of Local Government are thus Governmental organs having jurisdiction not over the whole of the country but over specific portions of it.\(^4\) 

Professor G.D.H. Cole regards it as "the master-architect of the fabric of community living."\(^5\) 

It is easy enough to describe the activities of Local authorities who "supervise, direct and control our lives, awake and asleep, at work and at play" \(^6\) but well-nigh impossible to lay down an accurate definition of 'Local Government'.

From the above mentioned definitions it will become clear that it is very difficult to comprehend the true spirit of Local Government in brief definitions extending over a few words. It has a variety of purports and meanings.

In various dimensions Local Government is mainly concerned with the Local affairs related to a particular area and not to the country as a whole. As these affairs are purely Local, they need Local solutions. It is difficult for the National Government to take over and perform all these functions because of want of time and non-availability of Local knowledge about the Local problems. Representatives elected to Local bodies are certainly in a better position to express the Local needs and to suggest programme of work for their respective areas. In this way, Local Government can take care of the affairs of each Locality in an efficient and speedy manner.

Besides, Local Government is found to be economical to manage Local affairs at that level only. This is because of the fact that the Local people can find suitable and realistic solutions to their problems. They not only participate in decision-making but also exercise popular control over the Local bodies and the administrative personnel as they pay for the Local activities.

Further, Local Government helps in neutralizing the overbearing influence of which tends to injure democratically-organized institutions. The bureaucrats, being conservative in outlook, rigid in behavior and stereotyped in mentality, are hostile to popular feeling and not amenable to public criticism. This attitude which
is dangerous to the growth of democratic spirit is curbed as the officials have to work under the constant watch of the people, their masters.

As Local Government performs Local functions, it lightens the burden of the central Government in administering the whole country. The central Government is confronted with various problems of great importance from the point of view of the nation as a whole. If Local functions which are routine type are also entrusted to the national Government they are bound to be neglected or managed carelessly. Local Government is therefore, necessary to relieve the central Government of such minor responsibilities. This makes the central as well as Local Government efficient because of division of responsibility.

In the words of Dr. Munro, "It is in the art of Governing themselves". The Local Government also serves as a training institution for politicians and ensures a regular flow of talented leaders at state and national levels.

The Rural-Urban Relationship committee appointed by the Government of India has rightly observed the importance of Local Government in the following words:

Local Bodies are important units to help to achieve the decentralization of political power and promotion of democratic values. They are also an indispensable part of Governmental machinery contributing to the efficiency at the higher echelons of Government by relieving them of purely Local tasks, Local Government can also be more efficient in routine matters by avoiding the inflexibilities inherent in a centralized system. As against Departmental specialization at the Central and State levels, Local bodies are the media through which functional compartmentalization can be canalised into a co-ordinated plan of all-round development at the community level. Similarly, defining the role of Local Bodies in development programmes, the Planning Commission, in the First Five Year Plan, stated that many in the administration realise that official machinery by itself cannot carry out these development programmes which call for a great deal of initiatives and participation on the part of the people themselves. Representatives elected to the Panchayats, Local Boards, and Municipal Committees are certainly in a position to express Local needs and to suggest programmes of work for their respective areas. The problem and needs of economic and social development in any area are, however, wider than the functions and the outlook of civic bodies
like the Panchayats, the Local Board and Municipal Committees. At the stage of
development which Local Self-Governments have reached programmes for Local
development may be best conceived of as joint enterprise to be carried out in
close co-operation by the agencies of the State Government and the representatives
of the people elected to Local Self-governing institutions. Local Self-
governing Bodies have thus a vital part to play in the field of development, we consider
that general direction of policy should be to encourage them and assist them in
assuming responsibility for as large a portion of administrative and social service
programmes.9

The Study Team on the Community Projects and National Extension Service
similarly stressed the importance of Local Bodies in the following words: "So
long as we do not discover or create a representative and democratic institution
which will supply the Local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that
expenditure of money upon Local objects conforms with the needs and assigns to
it appropriate finances, we will never be able to evoke Local interest or excite
Local initiative in the field of development".10

To conclude from the above discussion, Local Government is the basis of
any true system of democracy. Democracy can have substance and reality only
when a vigorous system of Local Government flourishes in the country. Apart
from its educative values, Local Government is essential for efficiency and economy
as it lightens the burden of the Central Government by concentrating it Self on
Local problems. It encourages Self-help, Self-dependence and Self-reliance among
the people and thus makes the country strong in all respects.

Like merits, Local Government has also some demerits. In the first place,
Local Representative Bodies as well as Local Services do not attract persons of
high intelligence and integrity. They are also accountable to public opinion. The
public, under whose eyes they act and by whom they are criticized, is both more
limited in extent and generally far less enlightened. All these factors transform
Local Government into a narrow-minded, Selfish and ignorant institution. Instead
of becoming an efficient and economic institutions, it may turn into an inefficient
and uneconomic body due to abuse of powers by those who control and supervision
by higher authorities, is, therefore, necessary to ensure proper functioning of Local
Government. State control and supervision are exercised over Local Government
in almost all countries in varying degrees of strictness due to the following factors.

1. Local authorities are legal creations of the State.

2. They govern only a tiny part of the state and in the uniform and homogenous
development of all the areas in respect of important nation-building
activities, co-ordination by the State Government becomes essential.

3. The Local Authorities cannot command so technical skills as Government.
Their experience is also limited to a particular Locality. Government, on
the other hand, has advantage of knowledge derived from its long, rich
and varied experience of all communities, and has in its employment a
permanent body of professional experts who can bring to the notice of
the Local Authorities improved methods of administration successfully
tried elsewhere.

4. The financial assistance, in whatever form it may be, implies control,
Government must have power to see that the money advanced is properly
and usefully utilized.

However, while devising a system of supervision and control, care should
be taken to see that the system of control and supervision does not unduly hamper
the independent functioning and dampen the initiative and discretion of these
institutions. The Local Institutions should be saved from pitfalls and dangers but
should not be prevented from growing. Local-Governing institutions would be
allowed as much freedom and discretion as possible within the limits of overall
responsibility of State for General Administration, development and welfare of the
people.

Improvement of National Government as well as State Government ; With
the influence of Local Government;

Anderson observes: “It is an important but neglected fact that in every
nation, whatever its dominant political philosophy, whatever the form of its National
Government there is a system of Local Government that is doing much the same
work everywhere”. This fact propels us to probe the congealable difference in the
nature of work both the levels of Government do every day. Firstly, the vision
and responsibility of National Government are larger and wider than Local units. Secondly, the area of jurisdiction, as is obvious is much larger than that of Local units. Thirdly, the interest of Central Government is national and that of Local Government is Local. National Government looks after the business which has national importance like Education, Defense, Agriculture, Finance, Communication. It is the custodian of general laws of uniform application. Fourthly, Local problems, Local needs, Local politics stand on a different footing needing a different treatment. Thus the Local units will come to arm themselves with laws peculiar to themselves without impeding the national laws. As little boats they must always be kept near the shore.

It is beyond human imagination to conceive of a critical agency in which all the varieties of functions are concentrated and yet expecting it to administer all the detailed operations of the multitudinous public services of a modern Welfare State. Thus the units of Local Government serve two vital purposes:

(1) They act as the agents or media through which the national laws can be made applicable and

(2) side by side, they represent as independent blocks depicting their own culture and political life for fulfilling special ends desired by Local community.

Just as a child represents not only its own individuality and character but also some of the traits of its parents, so also the Local Government units have not only their independent existence but also act as helpers and instruments to take up some functions and powers of the State and Central Government for the enforcement of their laws on their behalf.

Views of political thinkers on the importance of Local Self Government:

"For forms of Government let fools contest; what is best administered is best."

Despite this opinion expressed by Alexander Pope, no body to-day denies the importance of Government. Its importance has been recognized by almost all political thinkers from the days of Plato. Plato's greatest works, the Republic, the Statesman and the Laws represent his attempt to devise a best possible happiness.
The fore-runner of the French revolution, Jean Jacques Rousseau also spells out in his book "The Social Contract," that all forms of Government do not suit all countries. "Monarchy", he says "suits only wealthy nations; Aristocracy, States of middling size and wealthy and Democracy States that are small and poor." John Stuart Mill, a great individualist, writing on Representative Government has stated that daily ideally best form of Government is a Representative Government. The significance of various forms of Government has been recognized ever since ancient times. But this significance of any form of Government is not only important from the point of view of State Government but also from the point of view of Local Government. Different countries have adopted different types systems of Local Governments in their jurisdiction. However, like other human Institutions, the system of Local Government has been the subject of great criticism.

Need for innovation and change:

Experimentation and innovation in operational programmes and responsibilities in view of the present imperatives of urbanization and potentialities of new resources have to be undertaken atleast by the stable and more forward looking Municipalities to begin with. The situation is fraught with complexity in view of the variety of conditions prevailing in Municipal Bodies all over the country. But there must be clarity and consensus about the basic purposes. As the Punjab Local Urban Enquiry Committee expressed the hope, in the new setup Local bodies should be used more and more as instruments of national policy and there should be a steady enlargement of their functions. They would have to ensure concentration on an efficient and adequate provision of basic civic services with common standards of performance and evaluation of actual working.

In a democratic society like ours Local Government has to fulfil the following two general objectives:

(a) development and management of Local socio-economic services and public utilities;

(b) providing a vital base for the democratic structure through an effective system of Local Self-Government deriving its strength from and being responsible to the Local community.
There is a tendency on the part of the state Governments to give the first objective on overriding dominance without a corresponding concern for advancing responsible Local Government and enhancing its democratic values. Even this service-oriented approach is generally negative going to extremes of doing away with the democratic frame itself rather than giving the necessary guidance, assistance, strength and support to enable the Local Authorities to develop capabilities for discharging their multifarious responsibilities and solving increasingly complex problems. There is also a growing trend towards a Departmental take-over of some important functions and services sometimes by creating Boards or Special Agencies removed from popular control. The general result is to dilute Local Government, limit its responsibility and reduce its significance as a democratic structure.

The focus has thus been shifting all the time from a concern for strengthening this vital level of Government to the doubtful alternative of achieving results through bureaucratic agencies. In the process the Local Government is weakened further setting in a vicious circle, over-loading the Government Departments with tasks that had best be performed Locally.

Local Governments, in the words of the Rural-Urban Relationship Committee, "are an indispensable part of the Government machinery, contributing to the efficiency of the higher echelons of Government by relieving them of purely Local tasks. Local Government can also be more efficient in routine matters by avoiding the inflexibilities inherent in a centralized system."^{12}

Advantages of Local Self Government:

It includes matters of administration pertaining to Local problems. These Local problems may be those of villages, towns, cities, districts etc.

The ideal of Welfare State can be achieved only through Local Self-Government. This was what Lord Bryce envisaged in the following words:

"Local Government is the basis of training in democracy."

Local Self-Government has several advantages. These advantages are all of varying nature. They vary from place to place and from time to time.
1. Through Local Self-Government, it is possible for people to take an active and effective part in the administration of the Local affairs. It, therefore, helps the development of the qualities of organization and leadership in the citizens.

2. Local Self-Government can be made an effective agency of solving the Local problems without undertaking the rigours of red-tapism.

3. Since many of the problems have Local significance, it is possible to solve them Locally. It, therefore, lightens the burden of the Provincial and the Central Government, who take more time to solve the problems of Local importance.

4. In Local Self-Government, there is economy in administration. Since the problems are of a Local nature, there is no need to have detailed discussions, either about the formulation or about execution of certain orders or schemes. Those responsible for the working of the Local Self-Government are people who have interest in the problems. They are also vitally concerned with these problems. They can, therefore, do things in the shortest possible time. Local Self-Government, therefore, brings about economy in administration.

5. Since the functions of the Local Self-Government concern the Local affairs, everybody affected by it keeps an eye on the completion of the work. Schemes of the Local Self-Government are, therefore, completed within the prescribed time.

6. Institutions of Local Self-Government serve as a training ground in the values of democracy. They help the citizens to realize the requirements of democracy.

7. People are able to know about their problems and take interest in their solution, and while doing so, they do not take help from others. It, therefore, gives a feeling of Self-dependence and Self-reliance.

8. Local Self-Government represents decentralization of administration. Through this system of Government, it is possible to distribute authority amongst different agencies. It is also helpful in giving a Local bias to problems and authority.
9. Today most of the States in the world have the object of a Welfare State before them. This object envisages the maximum good of the maximum number of people. Such a State owns the responsibility of over all and all round developments of the personality of the citizens. In such a State the health, the education, the recreation and the development of the personality etc., all are the responsibility of the State. Through Local Self-Government, it is easy to acquire this object.

10. Since Local Self-Government is an effective agency of translating into practice the ideals of Welfare State, it helps the all-round development of the personality of the citizens.

11. Problems pertaining to health and such other affairs are the responsibility of the Local Self-Government. If the machinery of the Local Self-Government works effectively, it can bring about proper development works effectively, it can bring about proper development of the health and the life of the citizens.

12. Since Local Self-Government deals with Local problems, it connotes in the citizens the spirit of social service and participation in political affairs. In other words, it brings about political and social consciousness.

13. Useful for the developing countries: Local Self-Government is very useful for the developing countries as well as under-developed countries. Since it brings about decentralization of administration, it is not difficult to bring about the development. It gives to the representatives of the citizens the right to do things that are their own. They are responsible for various activities with the result that development takes place at a fast speed. In the spheres of health, industry and education, the country has to make a rapid headway. It will be necessary to have a national plan and programme, and among the agencies which will be entrusted with the task of their execution, the Local Bodies will easily have the foremost place. This weakness will not only hinder the political development of the country but also react adversely on our progress in all spheres of national life.

14. Administration, when it deals with Local problems, cannot afford to be rigid. Then it is possible for it to understand the Local needs and change the working accordingly. This thing is not possible when the provincial
Government or the Central Government is working. Local Self-Government, therefore, brings about the flexibility of administration.

15. Through the agencies of Local Self-Government it is possible to create civic consciousness and involvement in public administration. It gives a new look and attitude to the citizens. This is what we find in the following lines:

"It is the determination of Local wants by the Local people of the representatives and supply of these wants by the Local people - or by an agency under their control."

16. Once a citizen feels involved in the administration, or the working of the Government, he feels, very much for his country. Such a feeling leads to the development of patriotism and national consciousness.

To sum up, Local Self-Government is a very important institution in a democratic set up. It is, in fact, the backbone of democracy.

Functions of the Local Self-Government and those of the Provincial and Central Governments are quite interlinked. There is only difference of degree.

Local Self-Government is based on the principles of decentralization of authority. It is, therefore, very important for a large country like India. In fact, Local Self-Government means involvement of the Local talents in administration.

The Role of Local Government in the Process of National Development:

The study of the importance of Local Government can be seen in the study of process of national development and also political development. Now, we can observe the role of Local Government and also the changing role of Local Government in the terms of political development, people's participation, training ground for politicians, political education of citizens etc.

A Research Paper submitted by B.S. Bhargava, on 'The Role of Local Government in the process of National Government Development' with special reference to political Development aspects' can be cited in this connection.

Development in all its possible dimensions and in every activity of life (social, economic and political) is a cry of the day, especially in all the developing countries.
of Asia, Africa and Latin America. For this general work of development the central and Local Governments will have to carry the major responsibility.

It is often suggested as one of the objectives that Local Government and the Central Government should form a harmonious 'partnership' in the task of achieving rapid national progress. It is not Local Government versus central Government but the two working together; recognizing their inter-dependence which will produce the greatest results. Partnership will imply contributions from both Central Government and Local Authorities.

From this angle - what is and what can be the possible role of Local Government in the process of National Government, especially political development, seems to be a proper subject for investigation.

Changing Phase:

Twentieth Century is witnessing the independence and emergence of many states - India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Burma, Sudan, U.A.R. etc., of Asia and Africa from the long paws of colonialism and imperialism. These States may be called 'New States', because their acquisition of sovereignty is relatively recent. They are new also in the sense that they aspire for modernity and feel the pressing necessity of rapid national development.

These countries vary very greatly in their population, structure of society, natural resources and industrial capacity. They have problems of multi-dimensional nature. But elites of new states are not sitting idle. They have been facing problems. With determination and leading their countries on the way to national development.

A phenomenon common to most of the new states is that just after achieving independence, they try to have constitutional arrangements and to maintain law and order in general. These are in a sense deemed as urgent objectives of national unity. But once these have been met, the pressure of circumstances and social urging has invariably been towards some form of deconcentration of administration and often to decentralization of Government. However, the Constitutional arrangements in the developing areas are far from uniformity.

In some, there exists an embroyoncalely comprehensive structure with Field Administration and organs of Local Self-Government. Some west African states are good examples of this. In others, there is a field Administration but little
attempt at Local Self-Government. Such a situation is to be found, for example in Burma, or in the Middle East. In some countries of Latin America there is no field Administration, other than that needed to maintain order, and no Local Self-Government, save that required for traditional functional co-operation.

On the other hand, in Western Countries like England, France, Netherlands, United States of America, Local Governments have been functioning well since long. Changes have been made from time to time, according to the changing circumstances and conditions.

Need for Organizing or re-organizing Local Governments:

In many developing States, it appears that there is a tendency towards organizing Local Governments, to give them sound footing, and to make them play a substantial role in the process of social, economic and political transformation. Those countries where Local Governments have been already working, the need to recognize them is being felt. In India, Local Governments in both urban and rural areas have been functioning for a long time, still the need to recognize them, especially in rural India, was felt. Accordingly, the system known as 'Panchayati Raj' has been evolved. Almost all the States of Indian Federation have introduced the same scheme with certain minor changes here and there suited to their Local conditions. Similarly in Nepal and Pakistan, steps have been taken to recognize Local Governments by implementing 'Panchayat Democracy' and 'Basic Democracy' schemes. A question may be asked - Why there is need for organizing or reorganizing Local Governments? The answer can be found in changing conception of the State. Now the State is no more regarded as a 'Police State', performing only limited functions. The Industrial Revolution, new scientific and technological advancements, need for social and economic changes are some of the causes which have greatly widened the scope of the activities of State.\footnote{14}

More the activities increase more the expansion we find in administrative machinery. All functions can not be performed by Central Government alone. Thus, increasing activities of the State and administrative expediency demand decentralization, both territorial and functional, and organization of active Local Authorities to share the burden.
So far we have discussed from an angle, of course in brief, the changing conditions in the developing countries and analyzed the reasons of a tendency towards organizing or reorganizing Local Bodies.

People's Participation of 'Self-Involvement':

Many scholars and experts evaluate the significance of Local Representative Governments on the basis of 'people's participation in public affairs.' It was well-organized and properly armed with powers and functions. Representative Local Governments can become the best centers for arousing enthusiasm and interest among the people to participate actively in the management of their own affairs. This seems to be an ideal situation. However, it is evident that when a number of Local Units of Representative Government function in a country more people have an opportunity to participate in the management of public affairs. The number of active participants in Local Self-Government is certainly a few hundred times the number of the very restricted circle of people who take part in national affairs.

Besides the numerative aspect of participation, functioning of representative institution at Local levels leads man to feel that he is not ignored, and that his dignity and freedom had been accepted in the 'political fabric' of the State. This sort of 'Psychological gratification' in the long run proves to be a source of stability to the roots of the 'body politic' as a whole.

How to seek more participation of the people in public affairs has been one of the assets of Modern Government. If we look critically at existing Local Representative Governments in western countries such as England, United States of America and Netherlands, there is little doubt that they have been relatively successful in seeking the 'people's participation' in the management of public affairs, though the need for more active participation is never ruled out. But the greatest need of 'people's participation' is acutely being felt in many developing countries which aim at rapid national re-construction.

In India it was felt that without the participation of the people at different levels (village/Town, block and district) in the public works of economic and social development, success in the real sense would not be achieved. Need for mobilizing human resources was a necessity. Thus, the process of decentralization and reorganizing the structure of Local Government specially in Rural India started. It is popularly known as 'Democratic Decentralization for Development'. More
powers and functions have been allocated to Representative Local Governments so that they may perform new functions for development along with their traditional Local functions. In this way, Local Representative Governments are becoming organs for stimulating 'peoples participation' in various activities for development.

In Pakistan the idea behind the scheme of 'Basic Democracies' was that all her inhabitants must have a say in their affairs. The structure and functions of Local Governments has been remodelled in the light of changing demands for development.

In Nepal, 'Panchayat System' has been introduced with the object of organizing Local Government at various levels. The most striking feature and the greatest virtue of Panchayat System is the gradual devaluation of powers among four balanced and capable institutions of varying magnitude namely - Village Panchayat, District Panchayat, Zonal Panchayat and National Panchayat. The extent of devolution of powers is such that the basic initiative of action on most of the social and economic problems is vested with the primary unit of village. The strength and advantage of this technique to associate people on nearly all the problems faced by society and the state is that it inculcates the habit of positive thinking and outlook among the populace of a given unit.

Thus, 'Panchayat' which is Local Council has been in existence since the time of countries recorded history, has been made as the organ capable of fostering the participation of the people in the political processes. It is estimated that more than 32,000 people (in a country of 8,400,000 population) have been participating in the 'Executive Work' in village and town panchayats only. Never before have such a great number of people participated in the management of their own affairs through Local Governments.

Training ground for Politicians:

Another corollary of the people's participation in the management of their own affairs is the concept that the Local Representative Government forms a valuable training ground for the elected leaders at higher levels of representative institutions.

Again it is often said that experience on a Municipal Council is valuable elementary training for budding statesmen and politicians. Though it is named
as the classical or traditional argument for Local Government, there seems to be much truth in this concept even to-day.

First, an important aspect of the 'training ground' concept is based on the fact that many things can be learnt about politics and administration at Local Government level.

Secondly, the training ground argument is found in the notion that persons trained in the Local Government area go on to achieve renown on larger stages and before greater audiences.

These aspects need elaboration. It is an undeniable fact that participation in the activities of Local Government in many ways adds to the knowledge and experience of the leaders. Different aspects of the election process, knowledge of the political parties, disciplines, ideological considerations, pressure groups, understanding the problems of people as to how to decide issues of public importance, idea of the welfare of the community, procedural aspects of conducting public business, ways of executing the decided items - in brief many things about politics and administration can be learned by budding statesmen and the politicians at the Local level. Sometime it is argued that such a training received at Local level leads to a certain narrowing of the horizon of Local Government leaders contrary to the spirit of national politics. The argument may contain some elements of truth. But this does not rule out the fact that the training in politics and administration which leaders at Local level receive prepare them in a better way to understand and participate in national politics.

The second training ground argument is also valid to a certain extent, especially in those countries where Local Representative Governments are relatively well-established and have long traditions.

In the United Kingdom and Western Countries, participation in Local Governments often regarded as a sort of apprenticeship for service in the Central Parliament. In the 1940-50 House of Commons (United Kingdom) fifty six percent of Labour Members of Parliament, political leaders who have had experience at Local Government level during the early stages of their public career. The most famous case, often quoted by the supporters of training ground argument for the defence of Local Government in Britain is that of Chamberlain at Birmingham.
Political Education of citizens:

Local Representative Government not only forms a valuable training ground for the elected leaders at higher levels of representative institutions but also becomes a source of Political education of citizens in general. And, here, the contribution of Local Representative Government is to be appreciated.

Generally speaking, 'Political education' of citizens means that citizens know and experience the political machinery operating at Local level and understand their role in it.

Local Representative Government is a 'door to door' Government. Its composition and functioning are open to the citizens of a Local unit. Hence, citizens can observe and learn many things about it. Moreover, Local Representative Government by its system and character makes citizens conscious of their rights and duties. That is why it is known as the 'School of civics'. They learn how to exercise the vote. They learn how to decide issues of public importance.

The Local electors learn to recognize the spacious demagogue, since it is harder for him to deceive them on familiar ground. They learn from their mistakes in choosing incompetent representatives, and realize that dissatisfaction can only be expressed at stated times.

Since political parties have come into the arena of Local Government in most of the countries, they play their own roll during the election campaigns. Citizens become aware of different types of problems. Understanding problems of Local magnitude develops their mental horizon and makes them capable of understanding national problems.

Citizens also become aware of their needs and demands. How to press Local Authorities for proper acceptance and executions of their demands is probably better learnt by citizens at Local Government level. The world of politics and public affairs becomes intelligible and familiar to them. So they can stand up to strain and to the tides of national fortune with stability and fortitude they develop a political resilience which is a national asset of supreme importance.

Judging from actual practice in countries where Local Representatives Governments are operating, it appears that people are becoming more sophisticated in political matters.
PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND LOCAL BODIES:

It has been rightly said that the Local Bodies are the training ground for citizens. They enable a vast majority of citizens to associate themselves in the public affairs. As such Local Bodies are desirable not only from the point of view of the services they render as Government but also for the opportunities they offer to citizens. Hence Local bodies have been rightly regarded as 'nurseries of democracy'.

They play a very important part in developing countries. Apart from providing the basis for democratic training, they also act as the basic unit of development and change. In developing countries, besides the work of General Administration, the work of development has increased both in extent and in importance. These countries have to change an economically stagnant society into a dynamic and developed society. This change does not require the general type of administrators, but administrators who have professional training. It is only through such type of administrators that change and development will come in an orderly manner. Hence it will be in the interest of the Local Bodies in our country to see that their administrators are trained to enable them to tackle these problems scientifically.

The All India Institute of Local Self-Government, has started a Short Course for Higher Training of Officers of Local Bodies. The candidates are provided theoretical as well as practical training within six months. Practical training is imparted to the candidates in the different Departments of the Bombay Municipal Corporation.

It is hoped that the Local Bodies will encourage such type of training by deputing their officers for this course of Higher Training. The Government should also help such type of higher training by providing financial aid to those Local Bodies who are anxious to train their administrative staff.

WORKING OF LOCAL BODIES:

The main intention to establish Local Self-Government was to build up democracy from the bottom and on a sound basis. The first essential thing was to impart accurate information to all the voters who went to the polls, so that they might form correct opinion not with regard to Municipal affairs conducted
by the municipalities but also with regard to all those people who were contesting election. If this was so, quite a lot of the dissensions which were now cropping up in Municipal affairs would be removed. The emphasis should not only be laid on the efficiency of the persons in charge of Local administration but attention should also be paid to the people, who were entrusted with the work of publishing Annual Reports and presenting facts about Municipalities with the result that voters were informative of various problems confronting the Municipalities. The Central Government should establish a Research Bureau and collect relevant material.

Local Government in various senses:

From administration point of view it is a Governmental organism. To a politician Local Government is an institution of power. "Ideologically, Local Government is a political philosophy. To a lawyer, Local Government is a law. To a citizen, it is a school of citizen-ship. From the social standpoint of view, Local Government is a discipline and a way of life."  

Local Government is a Science:

There is a science of Local Government in the same sense that there is a science of society. It is impossible to apply to it rigorous scientific methods of investigation. Yet Local Government is a science if we describe science as a fairly unified mass of knowledge relating to a particular subject, acquired by systematic observation, experience or study, the facts of which have been co-ordinated, systematized and classified. It is true that it is not an exact science in the sense that Mechanics, Chemistry and Physics are. Experiments are not conducted in the real sense but a number of experiments have been made in Local Democracy so as to make Local Government a dynamic organization.

It is one of the several Social Sciences which seeks to investigate and study social phenomena. If Political Science is a science of State, Local Government is a Science of Local bodies. If a political science investigates the phenomena of Government, Local Government as science investigates the phenomena of Government as organized at the level of villages, towns, cities and Local areas. We can apply the remarks of professor Giddings which he had made in connection with focussing the relation between Politics and Sociology, though with a little variation, that to teach the theory of State and Government to men who have
not learned the first principles of Local Government, is like teaching Astronomy or Thermodynamics to men who have not learned the Newtonian Laws of Motion.

With sociology, indeed, Local Government is closely related. Sociology is concerned with scientific study of society; Local Government is concerned with the scientific study of society in a specified Local area. In Sociology the individual is viewed as a neighbour, a citizen, a co-worker, in short, a social creature. In political science, a man is viewed as political animal. It can well be said that in Local Government, man is a civic animal.

Local Government, as a science, has also much in common with other sciences, which do not belong to the family of Social Sciences. Biology is a science of life; Local Government is a science of village, towns and cities. Local Government believes that cities and villages have a life. They are born, they grow and they decay like human beings. The object of Medical Science is to cure the maladies of man; Local Government seeks to cure the maladies of villages and cities. While various Health services seek to build up public health, Local Government seeks to build up civic health. If Ethics is a science of moral order; Local Government is a science of civic order. If the object of the service of education is to elevate individuals, the purpose of Local Self-Government is to elevate the masses. We must conclude, therefore, that Local Government can claim to be treated as science. It is an experimental service. It is also a progressive science.

Local Government is an Art:

It is well known that an Art stands for creative order, and its highest manifestation is beauty. Local Government is the art of civic management.

Most of our towns present a dismal picture of squalor, hideous dwellings, dreamy shops, constructive encroachments, narrow streets, dirty roadsides, offensive drains and every other species of civic inequality one can possibly think of. It is only whenever Local bodies try to learn to appreciate the art side of Local Government and make an earnest endeavour to transform the areas under their charge into places of civic beauty that our towns and villages will become worthy of a free nation. Under the artistic conception of Local Government many Local Bodies in Europe and America have become active to new aesthetic experience and have made creditable efforts in conversing hideous most strolights of civic
ugliness into movements of civic art and beauty. A special mention may be made in this connection of the remarks made by councillor, I. J. Hyward, the Australian delegate at the International Union of Local Authorities Conference held at the Hague in 1955, that "Local Government is no longer solely concerned with sewers and roads and necessary services Local Authorities recognize; they can have a civilizing force and a cultural purpose".

Now it is widely recognized that Local authorities could play a very prominent part in maintaining and developing the cultural life of the people. There is a great need of developing Local Self-Governing institutions whereby the people of the Locality will be able to assume control over matters affecting the cultural life of the Locality.

Local Government is Government:

Local functions, rightly conceived, become much more than mere parochial concern of the town, city or village. They assume the character of vital interests and influence the shape of life of the nation. Says Sir Earnest Simon, "The City Councils' services mean the difference between savagery and civilization". Speaking of the contribution of Local bodies to the health, prosperity and well-being of the English people, the Editor of 'A Country of Municipal Progress', says: "Local Government in the past hundred years has halved the death rate and reduced infantile mortality rate by three quarters. It has taught to think of the Cholera which used to be a periodical menace as something remote and oriental - The other infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, etc., have been reduced to proportions which would have been regarded a century ago as almost utopian. These are facts which can be proved by statistics."

In every State, whatever may be its political dogma or philosophy, whatever may be its form of good moment, we come across a system of Local Government which since long is not only performing a very valuable work but 'the same kind of work'. The services provided by Local bodies affect the lives and happiness of Local community in a most direct and intimate manner. Civilized life would not be possible without ceaseless activity of Local Government organs in maintaining the works of public utility. It would not be a mistake to assess the importance of Local Government in terms of services it provided. It is one of the several convenient agencies for the administration of public services. It must be accorded
a first preference in our mental approach to the choice of administrative agency for any service in which organization on Local basis is a necessary element.

Local Government has always been recognized as an integral part of the national administrative machinery and it is increasingly realized that this branch of administration must eventually take charge of ever expanding social services. Local Government, in short, is a Social Government.

The term ‘Government’ generally conveys the notion of interference with the activities of individuals. The application of the word Government to Local Authorities which perform Local functions may be justified on the ground that the authorities have certain powers of control over citizens and their activities. Making of laws for the welfare of its citizens in all States is prime concern of Parliaments or Legislatures. Local Government authorities, however, have the primary duty of enforcement and execution of laws and also of management and administration. This is the main activity of Local Authorities in almost all the States. Besides this, Local Authorities have a lot to do in regulating the conduct and to that extent interfering with the activities of the individual member of the society. For this they make byelaws and other regulations. Whoever fails to comply with the laws and orders of Local Authorities is likely to get himself involved in legal proceedings and penalties.

Thus Local Government possess all the necessary attributes of a Government and by all tests it is a Government. Governmental power is generally exercised in four main channels viz., legislative, executive, judicial and fiscal. A Government has the power to make laws and execute them. It has also the power of General Administration. It has the power to raise taxes. It has also the power to maintain law and order and to adjudicate.

Government in a state can be compared to a river, while the Local Governments can be linked to canals. A river whatever the volume of water that flows therein, can bring fertility to a narrow strip of land. It is only when canals are dug and the water is carried to different corners of the land, that entire countryside comes to wear a small productive fertility. Just as country would be desert without canals, so a State be a political desert without system of Local Government. In England, Government at the national level is buttressed by hundred of Governments at the Local level and herein lies the strength of the
system. In U.S.A. Government is not one Government, there are many Governments. It is not one giant, there are thousands of sturdy Self-reliant partners to share the task of Government and each with its own job to do. Switzerland is a very small country in the heart of Europe, but it has been able to defy the assaults of different political ideologies because of the inherent strength of its system of Local Government.

An Ancient Institution:

The institutions of Local Self-Government, as we know it today, may be a recent growth but they were practised hundreds of years ago in different countries of the East and the West. The English ‘Parish’, the French ‘Commune’, the Persian ‘Gemeinde’, the ‘Solo Soviet’ of present Russia, the Indian ‘Panchayat’, corroborate and substantiate their existence from times immemorial. In all Aryan Communities, at least Local Governing Institutions, have been in existence or ascertain the motive force which first brought them into being. The Mark, the Mr., or the Manor in the Tuonic, Slavonic and Celtic races, in Europe, corresponds to village system in India and other Eastern countries as a unit of Local Government. In consciousness and purpose, all these institutions seem to be identical, though in course of history, and according to the vicissitudes of different races, the actual forms of these institutions in the several countries may be different. For the Greeks the City was ‘life in common’. The Greek City State was the center of all activities - political, social, economic and moral. In the words of Lord Bryce, it was “at once a Parliament, a Government, an Executive, Legislative and Judiciary in one”. A good account of co-operative life practised in village communities in Europe is given by Prince Kropotkin in his well known book, “Mutual Aid”.

Says Prince Kropotkin: “But whatever opinions as to the first origin of the mutual aid feeling or instinct may be - whether a biological or supernatural cause is ascribed to it - we must trace its existence as far as back to the lowest stage of animal world, and from these stages we can follow its uninterrupted evolution; in opposition to a number of contrary agencies through all degrees of human development, upto the present times”. China and Japan have also been some of the oldest homes of such decentralized rural institutions. Dealing with the system of village communities in the ancient land of China, Lin Mutand has rightly remarked: “The family system and the village system, which the family raised to a higher exponent, account for all there is to explain in the Chinese social
life. Further he said: "The real Government of China may be described as village socialism." Moreover it is to China that the world owes the famous dictum: That Government governs best which governs least. These institutions have survived the wreck of dynasties and fall of Empires. Applying Dr. Radha Kumud Mookerji's expression to these institutions it may be said: "The dependent development of Local Government provide like the shell of the tortoise, a heaven of peace where the national culture could draw in for its own safety when political storms burst over the land."

**Forces of Origin:**

Though Local Governing institutions based on village or city as a unit were common from the earlier dawn of history in all nations, it is very difficult to determine exactly the motive force of their origin. However, many grounds be attributed for their later development and refinement.

Administrative convenience is the first and foremost ground. Every modern country is a more or less centralized form of national Government, but such centralization is harmful to the proper Government of small units constituting the nation as a whole. A Politic State is merely concerned with Locality to make any substantial contribution to the solution of the Local problems. The people of Locality are often in the best position to judge the utility of decisions which affect them vitally. "The Modern State with multitudinous activities and a pervasive concern in each particular branch, especially threatens us with danger of Centralized Government. The reacting impulse is Local freedom." The development of Rural and Urban Local Governing institutions afford much relief to the Central State or National Government. Much of the burden and responsibilities is shared by these Local Government Institutions. In all countries the reason of administrative convenience is equally effective. Local Self-Government is, in fact, a gradual process of political decentralization - a necessary concomitant of the present day complicated central structure. The conception of Local autonomy is a fundamental principle underlying it.

The second ground is their effectiveness as a training school for Self-Government. It is universally recognized that Local Governing Institutions are training schools where people learn the duties and responsibilities of a citizen. When people come to learn the solving of Local problems, it is only then that
they can solve the complex and complicated problems at national level. Here the
people are taught first lessons of citizenship. They also offer an opportunity for
training in leadership. It prepares intelligent citizens and capable leaders.

The third reason is the existence of a definite type of special problems. K.T.
Shah observes "there is a definite type of social problems which can be solved
only by Local governing Institutions. The city differs from the country in having
specially marked type of population, with its own peculiar problems. These problems
have their own place and importance in the general special organization; and the
latter cannot be maintained without attention being paid to the special problems
of the cities and their citizens...The task of co-ordinating all these special problems
of a clearly distinct type of population makes the role of Local governing institutions
more important than ever today".36

The Self-Government affords to the Local initiative and genius opportunities
to understand best and in a way a very satisfactory way the problems that arise
in their area, and to make the impress of its education, intelligence and character
felt on the corporate and collective life of the area. "Local Self-Government lays
a field wide open for initiating and creating, encouraging and developing, preserving
and maintaining the constructive or the creative skill of the people".37.

Many forces are constantly at work which give a different outlook to these
institution according to the change of time and circumstances, Nevertheless, human
nature, economic conditions and the like also influence their transformation. William
Anderson in this connection remarks : "The ideas on Local Government, we must
bear in mind, are themselves to a considerable extent the product of the nature
of the particular people, its history, stage of development, economic conditions,
social institutions, and general outlook on the world. Russia, for example is
developing as Local Government System that is a curious amalgam of pre-war
Russian institutions and Soviet System worked out by the Communist Ideologists.
It is a virtual pyramid of soviets, from the village upto All Union Congress, with
most sweeping grant of powers to the Soviets at every level to control almost
everything below them, is one of the administrative marvels of modern age. How
efficiently it is working, and how long it will stand up, no one can say, but the
same can be said of systems of centrally appointed and centrally controlled Local
Executives in the Italian and German Systems of today, each with the outgrowth
of a dictatorial political philosophy operating within the frame work of an older
set of political institutions. More important for the present is the fact that whatever
the political theory that dominates the State - whether Liberal Democracy of
England and France, the Communism of U.S.S.R. and Fascism of Italy and
National Socialism of Nazi Germany and whatever form of its Central Government,
every large modern state is being driven by certain powerful economic and social
forces to alter the position, the powers and functions of Local Government - and
all are being driven in very much the same direction. 38

Purpose :

Having discussed the origin of Local Self-Government institutions, let us
consider the question as to why these institutions have come into being at all?
The case for a strong system of Local Government in any State is abundantly
clear. Very strong grounds exist for it. Prof. K.T. Shah mentions three possible,
and not mutually exclusive and inconsistent, answers to this problem. He is of
the opinion that they may be an expression of political consciousness of the civic
community contained in Local Republic. It is an undeniable fact that these
organization express and form predominantly the political consciousness of the
community. They influence the civic life and generate civic patriotism. Then, they
might be an essay in civic aesthetics. The dominant peculiarity of Local units is
well-recognized. It is natural with all inhabitants that they have a tendency to
beautify and adorn the land they inhabit. That is the reason why we find the
difference among different inhabitants in the world. The diversity in every sphere
is the natural phenomenon with the man. Again, they may be an expression of
civic utility and civic amenities. They provide for the satisfaction of the people's
immediate personal and social needs.

According to H.J. Laski, we can not realise the full benefit of a Democratic
Government unless the Local problems are decided by the persons who deeply
feel those problems and are affected by them. This is to so because there is a
consciousness of common purposes and common needs. It offers the best opportunity
to the people to bring Local knowledge, interest and enthusiasm to bear on the
solution of their own Local problems. Thus "if a service is exclusively applied to
the benefit of a particular Locality, it is obviously only fair that the funds for
payment means the certainty that they will demand control of service, and the
probability that they will manage it efficiently in order to keep their bill of costs
as low as possible". Hence it appears reasonable that the people of only that Locality should pay for a service where it is rendering services. Such an arrangement would help much in elimination of all petty mindedness and bickerings and will develop a sense of 'Local pride and Local shame'. He further pleads his case of strong system of Local Government by asserting that "We cannot make an average man realize his citizenship in any creative way if his only relation to Government is obtained by voting once every four or five years in a national election. Its relevance to him must be brought more directly home, otherwise his interest in the political process will wane to vanishing process; and it is elementary that the more inert the citizen-body, the more likely is there to be corruption and sinister privilege in the State.

Strength of a Free Nation:

The importance of Local Self-Government has always been stressed by all leaders, and thinkers all over the world. The persons who rise highest in politics of their country begin their career in Local politics. Instances are not wanting in history to illustrate this fact. Thinkers like J.S. Mill, Alexis De To queville, Lord Bryce, H.J. Laski, Thomas Jefferson, M.K. Gandhi, and Acharya Vinoba Bhave have spoken highly of these institutions. A nation can only flourish in an atmosphere of kindness, love, affection and benevolence. These units have been pictured as exercising effective influence in moulding the behaviour of a nation. It was in these institutions that the popular Government had its first beginning. Nations were creation of these smaller communities, when the Local interests were expanded by their fusion or absorption with larger units. Historically, these institutions are of an ancient origin. Since their inception, they have been creating an impact upon the nature of the people in the direction of Self-Government. These were pictures as organizations where Local citizens participated in town meetings and elections, thereby gaining a sense of public responsibility, ability to co-operate with others and acquiring knowledge of community affairs. To quote Alexis De Toqueville in this connection will not be only opportune but justified also. "The town then exists in all nations, whatever their laws and customs may be; it is man who makes monarchies and establishes republics, but the townships seem to come directly from the hand of God. But although the existence of township is congenial with that of man, its freedom is an infrequent and fragile thing. A nation can always establish great Political Assemblies, because it habitually contains
a certain number of individuals fitted by their talents, if not by their habits, for the direction of affairs. The township, on the contrary, is composed of coarser materials, which are less easily fashioned by the Legislator. The difficulty of establishing its independence rather augments than diminishes with the increasing intelligence of the people. A highly civilized community can hardly tolerate a Local independence, is disgusted at its numerous blunders, and is apt to despair of success before the experiment is completed. Again the immunities of townships, which have been obtained with so much difficulty, are least of all protected against the encroachments of the supreme power. They are unable to struggle single-handed by against a strong and enterprising Government, and they cannot defend themselves with success unless they are identified with the customs of the nation and supported by public opinion. Thus, until the independence of townships is amalgamated with the manners of a people, it is easily destroyed; and it is only after a long existence in the laws that it can be thus amalgamated. Municipal freedom is not the fruit of human efforts; it is rarely created by others; but it is, as it were, secretly Self-produced in the midst of semi-barbarous state of society. The constant action of the laws and the national habits, peculiar circumstances, and above all, time may consolidate it; but there is certainly no nation on the continent of Europe (say, world) which has experienced its advantages. Yet Municipal Institutions constitute the strength of free actions.

Foundations of Democracy:

The foundations of democracy in any country are to be found in the institutions of Local Self-Government. W.A. Hobson has rightly observed 'it is impossible to maintain a healthy system of democratic Government in the national sphere unless it is nourished and supported by democratic Local institutions in the town and country'40. Democracy is made because of Local Self-Government. Without democracy, there can be little Local Self-Government. Declares Lord Bryce: ‘It was in small communities that democracy first arose; it was from them that the theories of its first literary prophets and apostles were derived: it is in them that the way in which the real will of the people tells upon the working of the Government can best be studied, because most of the questions that come before the people are within their own knowledge’41.

In England, India, Japan and U.S.A. and elsewhere, the course of events has shown the impossibility of introducing or maintaining an effective and healthy
system of Democratic Government in Nation or State or Province unless the large organs of Government are supported by healthy and democratic Local councils. Speaking of democracy in England, a reputed writer said: "One of the main foundations of our democracy is our system of Local Government." In modern America, the small communities are playing a very important role in the revival of rural life and co-operative effort. Dr. Borsodi has been trying the same experiment of decentralization and small community life in his School of Living near New York. Dr. Arthur Morgan's work at Yellow Springs, Ohio, for the re-organization of the community life is also a notable attempt to preserve and stabilize the way of Direct Democracy. Lord Bryce, an earlier political writer of great renown, observes: "The best school for democracy and the best guarantee for its success is the practice of Local Self-Government."43

John J. Clarke, a well known authority in the field, writes "It is after all, the Local Government of the country which is the basis of all our principles of freedom and justice. From it has developed the Mother of Parliaments, the Pride of our Europe, and examples to other Nations and States."44 It is highly asserted that Local Self-Government is adjunct to national Self-Government. A nation which abolishes these institutions will certainly lose any Local liberties. In the words of Jawaharlal Nehru, "Local Self-Government is and must be the basis of any true system of democracy. Democracy can never function successfully unless it rests on solid foundations. We have got rather into the habits of thinking of democracy at the top and so much below. Democracy at the top will not be a success unless it is built on this foundation from below."45 Local Bodies are in fact Direct Democracy in action and are, therefore, foundations of Indirect Democracy at the top. "More than a little truth is contained in the assertion that political democracy flourishes best where its roots are planted deep in vital and vigorous conditions of Local Self-Government."46 As Mr. Malcolm Macdonald, High Commissioner for United Kingdom in India, inaugurating the public forum on the working of Local Bodies pointed out that "no national democracy can be sound unless it is supported by Local democracy. National Self-Government would be incomplete, it would be crippled without Local Self-Government."47 He further says, "it is not enough for a free people to go to the polls and elect a National Parliament; they must also go to the polls and elect innumerable Local Councils. It is true that the Supreme Legislature makes all the most important, broad
conditions of life for the population. But the national laws have to administered in countless localities throughout the country. The practical conduct of policy in vital matters is left entirely to the Local authorities. So the manner in which the laws on them is interpreted depends largely on the character of the Local authorities.48 Thus Democratic form of Government depends for its vitality and its responsiveness to public need, on the development, strengthening and nourishing of Local institutions of Government. Parliamentary representative institutions clearly demand the establishment of such institutions. H.G. Wells rightly asserts that “democracy cannot survive far from the village pump”49

Democracy cannot be thrust upon the people from above, but it has to be evolved by their own conscious efforts, Self-sacrificing spirit and devotion. The great bulk of population both educated and uneducated, whether in the cities or in the villages lack the democratic sense. This democratic sense is very essential and is to be created if we want to make the world safe for democracy. Democracy presupposes the ability of the people to govern themselves. Ability of the people to govern needs a thorough training in Self-discipline and a sense of fellowship. Democracy is a system of Government which is worked by discussion and consent. This is what J.S. Mill called political education. In this respect, Local representative institutions are designed to meet the fundamental requirements of democracy participation, discussion and education50. Best opportunities for citizens to take active part in political processes of the country are offered by these institutions. It is verily true that a vast majority of citizens in modern democracies, always excepting national elections, are ‘patients, not agents’ of its political activity. However, in the words of Charles Barratt, “In a democracy, a system of Local Government by Locally elected bodies, by stimulating vigorous life in the sub-ordinate communities and encouraging the citizens in the exercise of his rights and duties as a member of democracy, brings a sense of Democratic Government to the people and so nourishes the front of Democratic Government parliament itself; Local Government is democracy on the doorstep”51.

Means of Political Education:

For political education, the case for Local Representative Institutions emerges as its strongest. the object of political education is to make the citizen fir in the process of exercising responsibility, to familiarize him with public affairs; and, to
develop a political resilience. W.B. Munro declared: "Democracy is said to have an educative value. Its eulogists are fond of asserting that it enlightens the people. But the educative value of democracy depends upon the nature and spirit of its Local Institutions. They are the potential schools of citizenship. It is in Ward Caucus and in Town Meetings that the people meet easily learn first lessons in the art of governing themselves. Until you learn to govern, or be governed by, your own neighbors, it is futile to expect that you can successfully govern people far off". To sum up, they do provide, on the largest scale, an opportunity for the citizens to share in public decisions and administration, they do provide the machinery of discussion and vote to elicit his consent, they do provide, in the only possible way, for the political education of the people. Theoretically speaking, the most important effect is the political education the citizen receives. It is this makes his society intelligible to him, so that he knows it not only with his theoretical reason but also with his practical reason, that is to say, is able not only to entertain an understanding of it but is able to act in it". Prof. Laski observes "Local Government is educative in perhaps a higher degree than other parts of Government".

Local institutions train men not only to work for others but also to work effectively with others. They develop common sense, reasonableness, judgment, sociability. Those who have to bring their minds together learn the need for concession and compromise. A man has the opportunity of knowing what is in him and commending himself to his fellow citizens. Two useful habits are formed, that of recognizing the worth of knowledge and tact in public affairs and that of judging men by performance rather than by professions or promises. Certainly, Local Government forms "a most valuable training ground for the education of the people in their rights and duties as members of the community".

Field of Local Experimentation and Study of Psychological Attitudes:

Local Government has an additional advantage of providing a vast field for local experimentation and variation. Local Government may serve and often has served as "an experimental laboratory for new techniques and devices of Government and Administration". The use of Proportional Representation, the Recall, the Non-Partisan Ballot and the unicameral Legislative Body may be cited as examples. Finally, in the words of Fisher and Bishop, "Interest and
participation in Local Government bear significant fruit in the formation of psychological attitudes. If Local Government is recognized as important and civic action on the Local scale is considered worthwhile, these attitudes are likely to be applied to Government on a higher level. If on the other hand, the prevailing attitude toward Local Government is one of apathy and indifference and Local participation seems meaningless, such attitudes are likely to colour the individuals' reaction to public affairs on the State, National and International levels.  

Centre for Local Information:

According to Charles H. Wilson, the one specific advantage to Central Government which arises from Local Government Institutions is the contribution of Local information. In his own words, "It is a function of very great importance. The services which are administered by Local Government vary from those in which there is absolute uniformity in application as between area and area to those in which there is the maximum diversity. In all the services where uniformity is not essential the recruitment of Local knowledge for the purpose of suiting a service to its object and recipient is best done in the Locality itself and by, or assisted by, those who live in the Locality. Local knowledge can be acquired by persons sent to an area from the Central Departments to acquire it but the information so acquired is inferior to that which can be provided by those who have not only knowledge—but interest—the local residents themselves. This is the intimate and first hand knowledge which makes administration concrete and relevant. And it is needed not only for successful administration of the Local area itself but by Central Government where, assembled, collected and reflected on, it provides the data for National Domestic Policy."  

Reservoir of Trained Personnel:

It also provides a vast reservoir of trained personnel available for national service. A great democracy needs great leaders - leaders in regional affairs and in national affairs, leaders of various parties and leaders in all kinds of Governmental activities. A few men are born leaders but most leaders are to be made. So in the national scheme of things there must be provision for competent training of hundreds of leaders. In democracy, the system of Local Self-Government is one of the principal means of giving them democratic education. Many of those who have risen highest in American, British or Indian politics began their career
in Local politics. Examples are not wanting in this respect. Not only this, but the participation of ordinary humble citizens in the management of small village or town affairs trains them to understand better the significance of larger Country or City affairs, and then of largest National and International affairs. So this system plays a large part in teaching both electors and the elected, the followers and the leaders, their democratic duties. Thus, Local Representative Institutions are the true foundations of democracy in a state. They serve as a training ground for citizenship and political education, inculcate firmly the fundamental principles of democratic Government and development in instincts of civic patriotism.

Process of Decentralization:

It is relevant here to talk of the fact that these Self-Governing Institutions play a predominant part in the process of decentralization of powers. Though the extreme centralization of Napoleonic State has everywhere been discarded today, yet in the words of William Anderson, "The international tension seems inextricably bound up with a marked tendency towards centralization of powers and expansion of Governmental functions in the capitals of leading nations. Which is cause and which is the effect, it would be impossible to say. Suffice it to point out that the world was accompanied by striking centralization of power in leading countries". A tendency towards centralization is the most notable fact which we notice in recent years. This tendency is impelled by social, economic, political and more so by modern industrialism. It is wrought with great dangers. This is revealed by the establishment of striking ruthless dictatorships in a number of countries and in the curtailment of individual freedom, liberty and initiative. Hence believers in the establishment of healthy democratic traditions in the Modern State support their case for Local Self-Government. As a result of this tendency towards centralization, there is also a trend towards greater devolution and decentralization of political and economic power. Prof. C.E.M. Joad states: "If man's faith in social action is to be revivified the State must be cut up and its functions distributed". Prof. G. D. H. Cole also observes in this connection: "Democracy is hostile to centralization for it is a spirit which wants freedom to manifest itself immediately and on the spot, wherever the need for expression of collective will arises". "To canalize it, so as to make it all flow into a single central channel, is to destroy its spontaneity and to make it unreal". Pleading his case for decentralization, the Gandhian Economist, Kumarappa writes: "Today the tendency
is for centralized economic order and hence it is a movement towards a centralized political administration i.e., an emergence of an all powerful state which monopolizes power and puts an end to individual freedom. This is indeed the greatest danger of our times. The State is increasingly intervening in economic affairs and it is becoming impossible to prevent it from doing so. If we are to have real democracy and freedom for the individual, therefore, we must do away with centralized methods of production. Centralization is very opposite to Self-Government. True democracy can only exist under decentralization where several units live their own lives and determine their own affairs and have Central Government only for such purposes as require joint action of all constituent units and cannot be tackled by each separately. According to Prof. Aldous Huxley, "The political road to a better society is the road of decentralization and responsible Self-Government." Local Self-Government Institutions thus constitute an important element of democracy and are a powerful force in the policy of decentralization and devolution. Thus a healthy system of Local Self-Government offers almost the only method of keeping a check on the new bureaucracy created by the growth in the activities of the State.

Democratic Stability of State and Society:

Having studied the grounds for the existence of these institutions in a Modern State, we naturally come to a very important conclusion which offers another reason for their existence. For democratic stability of the Society and the State, Local Self-Government must be made strong and solid. In the last analysis, the stability and resilience of a Democratic State must depend on the level of ordinary citizens who have developed political capacity by the exercise of active political responsibility and who remain in close touch with their fellows. Firm foundation of Local Self-Government must be laid if we want sound, good and stable Government. The need for ensuring stability is obvious. It cannot be ensured without injecting vitality into the grass roots of democracy. Not only countries that are committed to Parliamentary Democracy stand in need of stable and efficient Local Self-Government units, even China and Russia, stated to be totalitarian powers, are proceeding in the same directions. How efficient is the Government of a country will depend in the long run how stable and efficient organs of its Local Government are. Specially for those countries which have wrested freedom recently, and particularly for India, the need for making use of
Local interest and Local knowledge for carrying on the Administration is now greater than ever. Due to changed conditions in the country it should be possible for Local Self-Government can now be made a reality by being a part of the whole scheme of our stable National Government.

Local Government and Planning:

In every country there is a general feeling that any sort of Community Development Programme could only flourish with the co-operation of its Local Government. Local bodies as the best social service organizations of the land. As the basic units forming the apex of any plan of development, the city, the town and the village are sure to play an increasingly important role in the resolution of the community. They alone are the best medium for implementation of any scheme of national reconstruction. It is very essential that Local initiative in formulating plans and Local effort and resources in carrying them out should be stimulated to the maximum extent possible.

To explain fully this point of view let us discuss here the role which these bodies are supposed to play in the national planning and development of our country, India. Since Independence in 1947, India is moving fast and the progress that has been retarded for centuries, is being achieved in a few years by phasing of programmes and advance planning of development. The Welfare State, envisaged by Indian leaders can only be achieved by the successful functioning and co-operation of these Local Bodies. In the words of Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, “Local Bodies are really Welfare Societies and on their successful functioning depends the success of the Welfare State”66. The Planning Commission of India has rightly laid emphasis that no Community Project and no development work can ever achieve their goal without the people’s co-operation and the latter can only be had if the Local Bodies in the area are alive and can inspire and lead67. Shri R. K. Sidhwa, the late President, Federation of All India Local Authorities, in his address to the General Body of All-India Local Authorities, held at Delhi in 1955, has rightly said: “Local improvement should be entrusted to Municipal Councils and Panchayats and they should be converted into Local Development Councils. Popular opinion and effort should be associated with the programme of reconstruction and there can be no better machinery for this purpose than the popularly elected Local Authority with sufficient autonomy and leeway”68. Alive
to the importance of the role which these institutions can play in the formulation and implementations of development programmes, the First Year Plan has stated "Programmes for Local development should be conceived of as joint enterprises to be carried out in close co-operation by the agencies of the State-Governing Institutions; we consider that the general direction of policy should be to encourage them and assist them in assuming responsibility for as large a portion of the administrative and social services within their areas as may be possible. For carrying out development programmes in any area, it is essential to associate a number of non-officials. The nucleus of non-official representation should be provided by persons elected to Local Bodies." It was also enjoined that Local Bodies should be used as agencies for carrying out the social service programmes. It is good general rule for any authority to try and pass the responsibility for a project to the authority immediately below it if with a measure of help and guidance, the latter can do the job equally or nearly as well. Thus with the proper impetus, co-ordination and backing, the Local authorities can well be associated in diverse ways in the reshaping and rebuilding of our resurgent Nation. At present these bodies are doing Yeoman service in the remodelling of society and building up progressive India. Their association in the effort of reconstructing the country on planned lines makes them really effective and converts them into live organizations beneficial to the country they represent.

Links of International Understanding:

The world at present is passing through one of the most critical stages of human civilization. It is catering to different political ideologies and tendencies. Under the cover of such a situation, the Local Self-Governing Institutions have come to assume a new form. They will have to play an important part in building up a new society. The international conflicts and fear of war darken the world. Fear grips the world. The Atomic and Sputnik Age demands a change in our social fabric and social outlook. Local Government in all countries, thus has an importance far greater than is usually recognized. A recent International Union of Local Authorities enquiry has clearly shown the importance of different countries. It is suggested that ways and means of establishing better and closer relations between different countries of the world can best be reformed by the institutions of Local Self-Government. Practically in all European countries such friendship links exist and are highly appreciated as a valuable means to further international
understanding. Dr. P. J. Oud, President, International Union of Local Authorities, aptly remarked, "Municipalities can be the links uniting an international society". It will thus ultimately evolve into a real co-operative commonwealth which will be ruled and administered on the basis of Self-rule, Self-sufficiency and Self protection.

Local Government and the Citizen:

The general consideration of Local Government would be incomplete without reference to the intimate association between it and the citizen.

The relationship which exists between the Local Authorities and the man-in-the-street is all important to the existence of Representative Local Government. In no field of Government is the association so close. The authority meets in Local area, its members are widely known among the citizens, it deals with the day-to-day needs. The people are at no time during the day or night far removed from some amenities and faithful service provided by Local Authority. This demands the loyalty of the people to these institutions. The general expansion of modern life threatens a breakdown to these loyalties. Dr. William Robson wrote: "It would be strange if this enlargement of the mental and material horizon of a society were not communicated or capable of communication to the institutional framework of Local Government." But we are far from the State when these wider loyalties seriously threaten the more intimate loyalties of the village and town.

Many comments have been recorded as regards shifting of loyalties and general apathy and indifference of citizens towards Local Government. The general indifference of Local Government has been very nicely denounced by Charles Edison, former Governor of New Jersey in the following words: "Citizens are convinced that democracy is better than despotism and they will send their sons to fight dictators on any continent and on every sea; but in their own States and Cities they will allow domestic dictators to fasten themselves upon their institutions and to enrich themselves at public expense - To join societies for world organization of Balkan are alright; but it is no substitute for knowing about the problems of one's own City, country and State. We can pull our boat here at home. We can throw our influence toward the nomination and election of honest and forward
looking men right here...."72. It seems that there is a decline in the sense of citizenship and co-partnership in Local Government.

This is not only the case of indifference but in the present scheme of things we run after favours and do not hesitate to employ fair or foul means to achieve selfish ends. Any system of Local Government should be developed in such a way that citizens should turn to a Local Body for their civic needs in the same way as a child would turn to his father and mother. The Local Government must be urged to work for winning the faith of citizens. 'Service above Self' should be their motto. The real object of Local Government is to provide a field for selfless service. Self-Government has been mistaken for Self-aggrandizement. Real Self-Government stands for Self-renunciation. These "organs of political communication suited to the natural senses of men and women"73 be so strengthened and developed so that they may come to the forefront and play their role in producing the right type of people who can subordinate their personal interests to the considerations of common good. If the people exercise their own "adult civic responsibility and political education then the foundation of Local Government is found and soundly understood"74. It is said that "it is the sense of personal responsibility which is the essence of citizenship and which alone can save the present basis of Local Government and convert the Local Government machine into a far more powerful and effective instrument for social and material advancement"75.

".....The citizen of a democracy must have a deep concern for the good life of his fellows and a sense of social responsibility. He must have the will to think of his own immediate interests and the interests of his class in the common good and be prepared to give generous service to the community. He must develop the power to form an independent judgment, and must be tolerant of opinions different from his own. He must prefer methods of discussion and persuasion to those of force. He must not only possess intellectual integrity and wish to find the truth on the subjects with which he is concerned, but he must know also how to reason correctly when his own prejudices and emotions are involved. He must have some knowledge of the structure of the various communities of which he is a member. He must have sufficient insight into character to be able to select as leaders men and women who are wise, honest and courageous. Lastly, he must be ready to take the action necessary to enable the policies he thinks right to be
carried out”. It is agreed by all informed observers that “if the public will not play their part no matter what is done to induce them, the ideals of Local Government, Local responsibility, pride of citizenship, will gradually fade away and will have to be replaced by a bureaucratic system of one kind or another”.

Local Government should be regarded as something indigenous, a manifestation of co-operative urge of the people to decide their affairs by mutual consultation and collaboration. According to Mohammed Iqbal, the great poet and philosopher, “self-Government is nothing else but Self-affirmation or Self-realization.

The Local bodies should become centres of community initiative in industrial development, agricultural improvement, village sanitation, educational reformation, public recreation, community-planning, and social transformation.

The Planning Commission observes thus:

“Local Self-Governing bodies have thus a part to play, in the field of development. We consider that the general direction of policy should be to encourage them and assist them in assuming responsibility as large as portion of the administrative and social services within their areas as may be possible”.

For this, it is necessary, that there should be close co-operation between the various Local Bodies working in the same field. The Planning Commission remarks thus:

“It may also be necessary to work out suitable arrangements for linking Local Self-Governing Bodies at different levels with one another; for instance, Village Panchayats with the District or Sub-Divisional Local Boards”.

The Planning Commission further lays down:  

“The experience gained in some States in the field of Local Self-Government could be of value to other States as well and need to be studied.”

As regards the directions, in which close-co-operation may be established between State Governments and Local Bodies, the Commission points out thus.
While the process that we envisage develops, close co-operation in the field of development between State Government and Local Self-governing Institutions could be established in directions such as the following:

1. Programmes undertaken by Local Bodies, which are at present restricted by the resources available to them, should be carefully integrated with State programmes. Within District and the State, they should be shown as part of the District and State Plans respectively.

2. As far as may be practicable, State Governments should use the agency of Local Bodies for carrying out their social service programmes. That is to say, if the choice lies between a State Government establishing a primary school or a veterinary hospital with its own resources and assisting a Local Body in initiating such a development, in principle, the latter course should be preferred, steps necessary for ensuring standards of efficiency being taken simultaneously. It is a good general rule for any authority to try and pass the responsibility for a project to the authority immediately below it if, with a measure of help and guidance, the latter can do the job equally or nearly as well.

3. Institutions run by Local Bodies and the services provided by them should be inspected, supervised and guided by the technical and administrative personnel of the State Government on exactly the same line and with the same rigour as many be adopted for the State Government's own institutions and services. Since the majority of institutions run by Local Bodies receive grants or other assistance from the State Government to ensure their efficient working by enforcing the necessary standards;

4. For carrying out development programmes in any area it is essential to associate a number of non-officials. The nucleus of non-official representation should be provided by persons elected to Local Bodies. Members nominated by the District or Taluka Board may provide the nucleus for Development Committees set up for framing and watching the execution of District and Taluka Development Programmes....The precise manner in which the co-operation and association of Local Bodies in development work are to be secured must, therefore to be left to the judgment and discretion of the authorities concerned; and
5. Wherever Sub-Divisional Officers exist are created in the future, the establishment of Sub-Divisional Local Boards should be considered."

The Village Panchayats have got an important part to play.

The Planning Commission discussing the problem of development through Panchayat remarks thus:

"Latterly, there has been a welcome earnestness on the part of State Governments for the establishment of Panchayats as Civic and Developmental Bodies charged with the general responsibility of attending to the collective welfare of the village community."

Emphasizing the importance of the Village Panchayats, the Commission thus observes:

Panchayats have an indispensable role to play in the rural areas. As representing the best interests of all sections of the community, their status is unique. Many activities such as framing programmes of production for the village, obtaining and utilizing Governmental assistance for the betterment of the village, such as, the construction of roads, tanks, etc., encouraging villagers to improve the standard of cultivation, organizing voluntary labour for community works and generally assisting in the implementation of economic and social reform legislation passed by the States will naturally fall within the purview of the Panchayat."

As regards the importance of Village Panchayat in Village planning, the Planning Commission lays down as hereunder:

The National Extension Movement aims at reaching at every family in the village. This aim cannot be fulfilled unless, as was pointed out in the First-Five Year Plan, there is an agency in the village which represents the community as a whole and can assume responsibility and initiative for developing the resources of the village and providing the necessary leadership. Indeed, rural progress depends entirely on the existence of an active organization in the village which can bring all the people including the weaker sections mentioned above into common programmes to be carried out with the assistance of the Administration."

There is no doubt that the Village Panchayats are eminently fitted to be entrusted with the developmental work. So far, the Village Panchayats have been
performing the civic functions as embodied in legislation in different States. Now, besides performing the civic functions, they should also, look after the developmental work, land management and land reforms.

They should, once again occupy the pivotal position and become the basis of Local Administration. They should perform such definite duties as the following

1. Sale and supply of improved seeds.

2. Establishment and maintenance of cottage hospitals, dispensaries, maternity and child welfare centers.

3. Maintenance of buildings, roads, tanks, wells and other public places.

4. Improvement of agriculture and framing programmes of production in the village.

5. Encouraging, developing and regulating village trade, industry, and commerce.

6. Arranging for the co-operative purchase of raw materials and consumption goods.

7. Arranging for the co-operative sale of farm produce and articles of village handicrafts.

8. Adopting measures for soil conservation.


10. Encouraging the information of co-operative societies.

11. Launching campaign for savings.

12. Organizing mutual aid and joint effort in all activities.

13. Organizing voluntary labor for community works.

14. Erection, maintaining and sustaining an agreeable and wholesome social life.

15. Enforcing of minimum wages for agricultural workers.
16. Organization of basic and adult education.

As regards the functions of village Panchayats, in respect of management of land, the following may be suggested:

1. Maintenance of correct and up-to-date land records.

2. Undertaking cadastral surveys.

3. Close-co-operation of the Village Panchayat with the revenue officials in order to ensure the correctness of the entries relating to cultivating possession of tenants and co-sharers.

4. Regulation of the use of common land.

The problems, relating to land reforms entail the active co-operation and assistance of the village Panchayat, with such activities as the following:

1. Consolidation of holdings.

2. Restoration of tenants who are found to be wrongfully ejected.

3. Enforcement of ceilings on agricultural holdings.

4. Redistribution of land obtained through imposition of ceilings, Bhoodan etc.,

5. Emphasizing co-operative farming and co-operative management.


7. Determination of compensation for the acquisition of different rights.

8. Developing common lands in the village.

In short, we can say, that the village panchayat, should serve as a useful institution. It should carry out the programme of development. It should undertake the development of village life as a whole. It should try to improve the village in normal and material aspects.

It should furnish the requirements of the villagers, for such things, as games, club, books, newspapers and a radio battery set.
Let the village Panchayat organize competition of all sorts—the best garden, the best home, the best flower etc., and act as a useful agency in the village to organize “Health Week,” and “Cleaning Days.”

The village Panchayat should organize voluntary labor in the village, for such things, as mending village roads, filling up depressions, building bunds and digging drains.

It should furnish Local interest, supervision and care in successfully managing the funds, devoted to education, sanitation, medical charity and Local public works.

It is best equipped to ensure Local knowledge and interest on the part of its members. It should supply Local, political and business talent.

It should give a lead to the people of the village, and thus break their inertia.

The Village Panchayat should be so evolved and developed, that it may become the basic unit for village Self-Government. It should work, as a basic agency of planning from below.

It is to be hoped, that the Village Panchayat would be gradually utilized, as the channel, through which Government assistance reaches the villages.

FINANCE OF LOCAL BODIES:

In the past, circumscription of their powers and resources paralyzed the activities of the Panchayats. They had very little resources. They were ill-equipped with funds. All these handicaps retarded and hindered their growth and development. In most cases, they ended in dismal failure.

It is necessary that the Panchayats should have sufficient funds at their disposal in order to enable them to perform the duties entrusted to them.

Besides the sources of revenue already placed at their disposal by the legislation enacted in various States, the village Panchayats should also be empowered to levy the following description of taxes:-

i. a tax on fairs, festivals and entertainment;

ii. a pilgrim tax;
iii. a tax on sale of goods;

iv. Octroi tax

v. a tax on marriage, adoption and feasts;

vi. a tax on professions, trades and callings;

vii. a tax on any trade or calling (other than agriculture) which is carried on with the help of machinery, run by steam oil, electric power, or manual labor.

The village Panchayats should also, be empowered to impose the following fees:

i. a fee on markets and weekly bazaars;

ii. a fee on cart-stands;

iii. a fee for supply of water from wells and tanks vesting in it, for purposes, other than domestic use.

The State Government must, also give him direct financial assistance.

The State Government should sanction a grant equal to 15 per cent of the land revenue, or 25 per cent of the Local funds cess, collected in the villages whichever is greater.

At present there is a tendency on the part of the State Government to take itself such sources of revenue as should form part of the Local funds.

The State Government should place at the disposal of the Local Bodies such sources of revenue as are required by them. The Local bodies should be made independent.

At present, there is a tendency on the part of the State Government to take to itself such sources of revenue as should form part of the Local Funds.

Now, as regards the system of grants-in-aid, it is, undoubtedly, beneficial in as much as, it develops, a process, by which, a national minimum of efficiency, is achieved without creating a vast bureaucracy, and without a dangerous uniformity.
The system of 'Grants-in-aid' should undergo a radical change. The 'Grant' should not depend upon the condition that certain requirements are to be fulfilled. Instead, the requirements and needs of every Local Body should be taken into consideration. Moreover, the 'Grants' should be made on some permanent basis.

PROBLEMS OF LOCAL BODIES:

The problems of Local Bodies are:

1. The question of proper representation of the population of each unit;
2. Their functions and powers;
3. Sources of their income; and
4. Control of the State Government.

CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS:

The sectional animosities have characterized the working of Local Self-Government in India. This has resulted in inefficiency, incompetence, corruption and partisan spirit among the members.

As a sober type of public opinion should prevail, the smooth and efficient working of Local Self-Government should not be deterred and marred by sectarian animosities, recriminations, mutual bickerings, feuds and quarrels.

A recent tendency, noticeable in the working of Local Self-Government, is that a party system has begun to dominate its working. Elections are keenly contested on the basis of party system.

Theoretically, there may be some advantages of party system, but party system, in the domain of Local Self-Government, brings about utter chaos in Local Administration.

What have the higher politics of the country to do with the day-to-day problems of the Local Bodies? The party system, in the Local bodies, causes bitterness and division.
The party system, with a definite policy and programme, may be of some good, but when, the parties are merely parochial in their outlook, they tend rather to the obstruction than to the transaction of business.

Education, training and right type of morals are the sine qua non for the successful working of Local Self Government.

For the successful working of Local Bodies, it is necessary that, they should not be under the leading strings of the Local officers of the Government. The official interference day in and day out impedes and retards the growth of initiative and responsibility.

The Local Bodies should have adequate resources, and enough funds at their disposal in order to meet their obligations and responsibilities.

They should not be trained with party or group spirit, or be involved in sectarian animosities, mutual recriminations, feuds and quarrels.

It is also necessary that due restraint must be put on the aggressive individualism and keen proprietary instincts in the Local Bodies.

Let us hope and pray that the Local Bodies will fight with courage and determination against the demons of Selfishness, narrow-mindedness, communalism, parochial interests, false notions, social beliefs and customary habits.

It is the spirit and the extent of leadership that they may provide which will determine the success or otherwise of the Local Bodies.

THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATIZATION:

An important question that arises here is whether democratization of the Local bodies is necessary, and if so, to what extent. Indeed, democratization of the Local bodies is necessary, for Local bodies are the training grounds and the most potential schools of citizenship and freedom.

For the purpose of democratizing Local Bodies, things like the grant of adult franchise, accompanied by a literacy movement, abolition of the system of Government nomination, purity of election, proper representation of each unit, a strong, efficient and independent execution in the Local Bodies, and eradication of the evil of nepotism and favouritism are quite necessary.
FUTURE POLICY AND ACTION:

The State Government should let the people learn by mistakes. The control of the State Government over the affairs of the Local bodies is minute, absolute and rigid.

The State Government, armed, as they are, with vetoing powers, are supervising, managing, and controlling the Local Bodies in the following ways:

1. The Government 'Grant' is to be given upon condition that certain requirements are to be fulfilled.

2. The approval of acts of Local bodies in order to render them valid.

3. The suppression clause, when Local bodies, improperly perform or neglect to perform the duties assigned to them.

4. The holding of inquiries, the preparation of reports and the diffusion of knowledge.

5. Sanction of the budget.

6. Audit of account.

7. The issuance of orders with powers to compel performance.

8. Advice and information.

9. Requirements of reports.

10. Requirements of prior permission.

11. Special legislation.

12. Authoritative review.

The State Government exercises its control, partly through Legislation, and partly, through the action of the Executive. In England, the Local Bodies extend the sphere of their work through "adoptive" acts, but in India, this is not possible.

The Local Bodies are afraid of the State Government, as they think, that the State Government is responsible for their very 'being' and that, their life, too, is in its hands. The State Government, rigorously controls the Local Bodies in
the matter of constituting them, in fixing their boundaries, and the number of
members, in the removal of members in fixing delegation of powers.

The State Government sets at naught "the popular will", whenever, it comes
into conflict with its interests.

The problem of official control is not a new one. In fact, it dates back to
the dawn of the history of Local Self-Government in India. The State Government
justified intervention into and control over the affairs of the Local Bodies on three
principles viz.,

1. Whatever is of general interest should be administered, or, at least,
supervised by the State Government or its agent.

2. When Local bodies prove their incapacity to administer efficiently a matter
entrusted to them, it should be given to more capable authorities.

3. The officials of the State Government are likely to be more competent
than the officials of the Local bodies. They are likely to be endowed
with a high order of technical proficiency, and as management has,
gradually, become professional and its task is increasing in difficulty,
responsibility, and complexity. So it is advisable that the officials of the
Local Bodies should derive benefit out of the technical proficiency of the
State officials.

Now, with the dawn of freedom, the State Government should relax its
control over the affairs of the Local Bodies. The State Government should make
allowances for the free play of the inventive capacity of the personnel of the
Local Bodies. An excessive centralization is likely to repress the latent capacities
of public officials.

The effectiveness of an Autonomous Local Administration, as a training
school in Self-Government, is one of the most important problems.

In a centralized bureaucracy, it is impossible to expect a sense of personal
responsibility for good Government.

It should content itself with the provision of experts, who upon request, are
prepared to give advice to Local Bodies to improve their affairs and their methods.
It will be more feasible, if the State Government establishes research centres, especially in specific fields of administration and offers the results freely to Local Bodies.

The State Government should issue instructions for the guidance of Local bodies.
REFERENCES:


5. Quoted from the role of Panchayats in New India: AICC New Delhi, 1957, p.3.


14. Panchayat Raj or Democratic Decentralisation literally means the rule of the peoples' powers and functions in Local Bodies at different levels - village, block and district.

15. The term peoples' participation is used here in a wide comprehensive sense, which does not confine to the participation of the people in the capacity of being citizens only.

16. The basic democracies order was promulgated on October 27, 1959, Nepal, Basic Democracies is a new system of Local Government in Pakistan.

17.


19. Laski, H.J., Laskieven went so far as to suggest that for three years service a local authority should be a condition of eligibility for a parliamentary candidates. He was concerned that candidates should have proved both their seriousness and their competence in public affairs, and he could think of no better school than that of Local Government.

20. When we come to the principle of Political Education, what John Stuart Mill called Public education, the case for Local representative institutions emerges at its strongest. What is meant by political education, political education is in the first place an education in the possible and expedient in the second place. It is an education in the use of power and authority and the risk of power, in the third place, it is an education in practical ingenuity and versatility. (ed) by Willson, C.H. - Essays on Local Government, Oxford Basil Blackwell, 1948, p.18.


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45. Nehru, J.L., Inaugurating of Conference of Ministers for Local Self-Government Ministers Conference, p.3.


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54. Laski, H.J., *op.cit*, p.413


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80. Ibid; p. 239.

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83. Ibid.

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