CHAPTER-5

State Government Contribution to Rural Development

At the time when Ch. O.P. Chautala took the reins of government in the state of Haryana on 24\textsuperscript{th} July 1999, the liquor-mafia was holding the state to ransom, school children were hiding wine bottles in place of books in their bags, the police stations were the centers from where the trade of illegal liquor was being plied, the law and order situation was at the lowest ebb, and the roads were in deplorable conditions.

Prior to the tenure of O.P. Chautala, the Government was constituted by the HVP-BJP alliance, which misappropriated the public money by distributing either ministries or equivalent posts among 43 MLAs. Earlier, during the period from 1991 to 1996, the Congress Government reshuffled ministries or portfolios nine times, and changed the departments fifteen times.

But during the Chautala tenure, public money was lavished neither on jumbo-sized ministry nor on frequent reshuffling of portfolios or departments. After the Assembly Elections held in the year 2000, only ten MLAs took oath as ministers at Kurukshetra, and the number of ministers remained the same in the course of the entire tenure. Only one minister, Kartar Singh Bhadana resigned, but he suffered a humiliating defeat for that
at the hands of electorates of Rajasthan in the ensuing Elections to the Lok Sabha. Chautala provided the state with a stable and firm government, and washed off the stigma of ‘Aya Ram’ and ‘Gaya Ram’ from the face of the state politics. His Government completed five years with the smallest sized cabinet in the country. His Government never experienced financial constraints in spite of the high increase in salaries of employees, implementation of many development programmes and schemes, providing the employees with all the facilities as availed by the Centre Government employees, and increase in old age pension and number of pensioners by seven lakh. The Government provided the facilities like free medical check up, free spectacles to restore the eye vision, and free eye camps in the rural areas, and it opened old-age houses at many places in the state. A sum of Rs. 25 crore was distributed every month among widows, aged and handicapped persons. It is also enhanced the monthly honorarium of the Anganwadi workers and their helpers from Rs. 1000 to Rs. 1200 and Rs. 500 to Rs. 600, respectively.

In the power sector, seventh unit of 250 Mega-watts was set up at Panipat, was dedicated to the state by the then President, that brought about a good deal of improvement in the supply of power. Work on the eighth unit was going on so that the state might get sufficient power supply.
Livestock wealth plays a significant role in the economy of the state. The Government provided modern medical facilities and expert services for livestock in the villages. Under various stages, the Veterinary Hospitals were converted into Polyclinics and equipped them with the latest medical technology and equipments. Earlier, one had to visit Hisar to avail these facilities, but then these were easily available at the district headquarters. The government fixed Rs. 3000 as price of a young one of the Murah buffalo.

On the 39th birth anniversary of the state the Govt. launched many schemes to improve socio-economic conditions in the state. Apart from this, it gave relief to children, employees, ex-servicemen, senior citizens, teachers, unemployed youth and widows, and increased the rate of old age pension from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per month w.e.f. 1st November, 2000.

The Government initiated unemployment allowance scheme under which a sum of Rs. 400 was given to middle or Matriculation pass diploma holder visually handicapped jobless boys and girls, Rs. 500 to graduate diploma holder jobless blind youth, and Rs. 600 to Post-graduate diploma holder visually impaired male and female. Also, it abolished sales tax on the shoes and chapplas upto the price of Rs. 200 to help the poor and needy people. The Government distributed bicycles among rural girls to reach schools, and exempted them from paying tuition fee upto graduation.
The Government released an installment of 3% as D.A. to benefit the state employees. In the year 2000, D.A. installment along with pension was given for the first time in the history of the state.

The Government honoured martyrs by christening schools, colleges, hospitals and roads after their names. Besides, it accorded due social and economic honour to the Kargil martyrs.

Haryana is the first state which announced an award of Rs. one crore for the sportsperson who wins gold medal at the Olympics or World Games, Rs. 50 Lakh for the silver-medallist and Rs. 25 Lakh for the bronze medallist of these games. An amount of Rs. 5 crore 31 Lakh was distributed in cash among 2358 sportspersons.

No unemployed youth had to pay fee with application forms for jobs. Earlier, it was Rs. 500. The wage earner received Rs. 100 as minimum wage per day, which was more than that was given in other states. The state farmers were exempted from paying compound interest on agriculture loans, and they had not to mortgage more than 3 acres of land to secure loans for purchasing tractors.

The Government started work on Dadpur-Nalvi Project, which will, on completion, provide irrigation facility to the cultivable land in Ambala, Kurukshetra, Yamuna Nagar districts.
Also, it launched Drinking Water Scheme for the rural people, constructed lavatories for the rural women, and made village ‘firnies’ pucca. Besides, to control population ‘Devi Rupak’ Yojana was started as incentive, which motivating all the developing countries to follow the suit. With the implementation of ‘Devi Rakshk’ Insurance Scheme, a new history was created in the field of social security. Till now this has benefited 580 headless families, giving Rs. one lakh to each family.

The Centre Government directed other states to follow the suit of Haryana in respect of three major decisions, namely, full utilization of central grant, implementation of VAT system, and starting of high way patrolling or Road Safety System.

At the meeting of States’ Finance Ministers, the Central Finance Minister lauded the Haryana Government for the implementation of VAT System, and called upon other states to follow in the footsteps of Haryana. The World Bank also appreciated the Government for the same. Apart from this, the Centre Government asked other states to implement the Road Safety System on the lines of the Government of Haryana.

Under the programme, ‘Government at Your Doorsteps’, 45000 development works or projects were accomplished. It is a historical achievement.
Seats in the Technical and Engineering Colleges were increased to the number of 27312 that gave opportunities to fifteen thousand engineers to speed up industrial development in the state. Status of 1172 schools was upgraded, and nine new colleges were opened, out of which four colleges were meant for girls. English as subject in the class First and Computer in the class 5th were introduced.

The Government constructed new roads measuring 6429 Kms, repaired old roads measuring 22000 Kms., and improved the condition of highways.

In the power sector, 100 new sub-stations were set up, 32000 new transformers were installed, and 25 new connections for tube well were imparted daily. By then, 44000 new connections were given. In the field of Co-operatives, new Sugar-mills were set up. More than two lakh jobless youth were provided with jobs in public as well as private sector. The Government purchased food grains at reasonable prices, and made timely payments to the farmers for sugarcane.

The Government accorded due honour to the artists and literati, and opened four new academies for all languages. Monthly pension scheme was started for folk artists. It boosted inculcation in the spirit of brotherhood prevailing among communities on the bases of language, religion and caste. The state enjoyed full peace, and as a result, there was no trace of disputes in
the social field. Thus, it was a remarkable contribution of the previous
government to rural development and socio-economic life. The salient
features of the contribution and achievement are as follows:

- Farmers were given the price of sugarcane at the rate of Rs. 117
  per quintal, which was the highest one in the country.

- Job-reservation for ex-servicemen was increased to 14% from 10%.

- Number of technical institutions was increased from 58 to 153.

- 2509 new buses were purchased for State Transport.

- Under Yamuna Action Plan, 11 water treatment plants were set-up
  by spending Rs. 231.78 crore.

- 3% jobs in the public sector were reserved for excellent sports
  persons.

- Farm Tourism was started, under which 13 farmhouses were
  selected in the surrounding of Delhi.

- Foreign capital investment worth of Rs. 3378 crore was made.

- Entertainment-tax was reduced to 50% from 125%, and show-tax
  was abolished.

- Local Development tax was reduced to 20% from 40%.

- Bajra was purchased at the price of Rs. 515 per quintal.

- Haryana occupied the first place in the export of Basmati rice.
Loan facilities were provided for the farming of strawberry, flowers and herbal plants.

Excellent farmers were honoured with the Ch. Devi Lal Jana Nayak Award; carrying Rs. 25000 and 1 lakh for the farmers who stood first at district and state level respectively.

In the rural area Stamp-duty was reduced to 6% from 12½%.

Fire-tax was abolished in the urban-housing areas.

House-tax was abolished in respect of the houses built on the area up to 100 yards.

In the urban areas, stamp-duty was reduced to 8% from 15%.

Under HRDF, a sum of Rs. 860 crore was released for rural development.

In case of SC and BC students, the amount of stipend was doubled.

Export of industrial goods increased to Rs. 1600 crore.

Registry Fee was abolished in respect of transfer of father's land to sisters.

‘Health at Your Doorsteps, programme was launched w.e.f. November 1, 2003.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions and Local Bodies were accorded with more administrative and financial powers. Village Development Committees were formed with a view to accelerate all-round development in the villages.
In fact, the state made a tremendous progress in the fields of agriculture, irrigation, power, industry, roads, transport, health, technical education, sports, tourism, environment improvement, and social welfare. The state remained at the first place in some fields, and guided other states in other fields.

The state government took several steps for the welfare and uplift of farmers, labourers, tradesmen, industrialists, employees, SCs, BCs and other sections of the society.

But there were some drawbacks and loopholes for which the government had to face a humiliating defeat at the hands of electorates. First, centralization of the state power was viewed as a blunder. Second, it failed to contain corruption and crime. Third, retrenchment of employees bred resentment among the people. Fourth, it failed to contain high handedness of bureaucratic machinery. Last, discriminatory policies on the political grounds were adopted in the field of development.