After examining the balance sheet of Panchayati Raj System, it may not be out of place to identify the basic challenges and crucial problem areas that decentralisation as institutionalised in Panchayati Raj faces particularly in a developing country like India. Some of the critics, while examining the system have questioned the rationale of the system and its usefulness as providing guidelines for development administration elsewhere. For example according to the analysis of the administration of agricultural development by Guy Hunter, "Indian experience is more useful as a warning of the pitfalls than as a model for other developing countries. As a matter of fact it is easier to identify the weaknesses of a working system than to recommend available alternatives. Therefore the crux of the problem is not to examine the weaknesses only, but to focus attention on those stresses and strains which a developing country is bound to have. India is not an exception, rather a number of problems which have not been experienced by the other developing countries are faced by the Indian planners. The solution lies in a dispassionate analysis of these problems to find out reasonable solutions. Some of these problems have been discussed below.
Political Parties and Panchayati Raj

One of the major problems faced by the states after the introduction of Panchayati Raj is the intrusion of party politics in the activities of these local institutions. But opinions vary about the desirability of such interference by the political parties. One of the basic objects of Panchayati Raj was to secure the willing and active cooperation of rural people in the implementation of various developmental activities and thereby ensure their maximum participation in the process of democracy. With this objective in mind the Sarvodaya leaders have been vehemently opposing the intrusion of political parties in the activities of village institutions.

To Jayaprakash Narain Panchayati Raj and political parties both are contradictory. The former sprang from grass-roots, the latter means implementation of decisions from above or by a few. Again "parties create differences where they should be minimised." In a 'communitarian society' in his opinion differences should be resolved by consensus relations between the members of community. But the question of consensus has to be examined against the background of facts of village life, country's parliamentary set up and the perspective of industrialisation.

The unity of village community, unanimous elections and decisions on the basis of consensus, inspite of being plausible are utopian propositions. Weiner, A leading western-scholar Myron rightly argues that factionalism and caste politics are nothing new in the villages. There are caste and class differences, there are family and personnel factions, and there is hardly any collective will in village. In the context of such a village life, unanimous elections (if elections are free and fair) are neither possible, nor desirable, because this unanimity is likely to be more artificial and imposed than genuine and spontaneous. "The Indian villager is to be taught and trained in the art and necessity of changing the old institutions, systems and practices. This cannot be done if unanimity is imposed in the name of preserving the unity of village — a unity which really does not exist."^1

Conflicts in our village life are bound to increase, because of land reform, adult franchise, higher literacy, growing decentralisation, higher standard of living and a number of other social and economic changes.

The contribution of political parties is to inject the ideological issues in the traditional disagreements. It is with the introduction of Panchayati Raj that the people have experienced for the first time the value and importance of vote—particularly the weaker sections are provided with a weapon to challenge openly the established authoritarian and dominant groups. It is for the first time that the weaker sections find themselves in a better bargaining position. For the first time they have got an opportunity to challenge those whom they were previously supposed to obey. Hence many times political rivalries take a violent turn. But that passing phase is to be over in course of time when the old dominant groups become used to this challenge and the traditional leadership is replaced by the new leadership.

Closely related with the issue of consensus in Panchayati Raj decisions and unanimous elections is the issue of the role of political parties in Panchayati Raj institutions. In the context of our present system of government, it is not possible to keep political parties away from and indifferent to the happenings in rural India. The three tier structure of Panchayati Raj which organically grows upward step by step has to operate in the bigger structure of parliamentary democracy.
cannot function properly without the party system. There are different approaches to the social, economic and other problems, which actually lead to the formation of political parties, therefore, the conflict between the parties is most natural, rather desirable in a democracy. If there is an open competition it encourages the secular outlook. Hence party is the only remedy to eradicate casteism, groupism, and all sorts of village rivalries. When the people have the right to elect and reject leaders, to make and unmake government, to accept and to reject the basic national policies, they require an organisation. That organisation is provided by political parties which place issues in proper focus both analytical and remedial. They give the issues a national outlook. Their participation in the welfare activities of the villages engages them in the mobilisation of local resources. Further, parties ensure the growth of better leadership at the lower levels and create an organic link between these institutions and the parliament.

The criticism that "parties create dissensions, where unity is called for, exaggerate differences where they should be minimised" is not new in political theory. In the West also the debate had run
a full circle. Ostrogorski suggested the abolition of political parties after discussing that "government is a monopoly; it is in the hands of a class which, without forming a caste, constitutes a distinct group in society" - a highly developed electoral system is, therefore, only a purely formal homage to democracy, and produces in reality, a diminution of its strength.  

Such type of criticism encouraged people to think ways and means for the improvement of the working of democratic institutions. Therefore, from a practical point of view in this reference also the question is not how to get the parties out of the Panchayats, but how to manage the parties to provide a good government at the local levels. To get them out is simply out of question because of the basic fact that power, politics and parties go together. Panchayati Raj politics can not operate isolated from the overall framework of parliamentary democracy.

"Politics and democracy together is a dilemma which is inherent in the very process of democratic decentralisation. It is not peculiar to Panchayati Raj

administration, because the same dilemma is to be faced by administration at national and state levels - It may be emphasised here that the development administration under Panchayati Raj will have to learn to co-exist with politics which can be rationalised and thereby made sober, but cannot be banished altogether."

In the process of the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions people were expected to be more activised, politically as well as in terms of developmental consciousness. The process of activisation generated by Panchayati Raj has to "politicise" the rural masses and that is why it is the popular slogan from Gram Sabha to Lok Sabha.

No doubt with the complexities of democracy of a participatory model committed to rapid socio-economic change, all the evils of politics are bound to manifest themselves as concomitant factors in the functioning of political institutions. To try to

separate politics from the process of socio-economic development is an attempt to try to separate milk from water. What is more pertinent is to give the political process a sense of direction and clothe the institution with a sense of responsibility and accountability to the people and leaving the process with administrative and technical expertise. Herein will lie the main distinction between the institutions of the old days and those of the modern days.¹

With a greater degree of decentralisation, there is an increasing participation in local government politics. As already mentioned earlier "those who argued, as many Gandhians did, that local bodies should be given more powers but that there should be no politics in the local bodies - whether involving political parties or castes or factions - were taking a contradictory positions. Where there is power there must be politics - a law as fundamental in political science as supply and demand is in Economics."²

As already mentioned, according to the various evaluation of Panchayati Raj administration, the problem of relationship between the officials and non-officials is a serious one. It is an important problem of "role equilibrium". "The temptation of role transgression in both the civil servants and non-official institutional leaders is particularly irresistible in the initial stages of the life of decentralised democracy. The result is usually tension, conflict and clash between the officials and non-officials, specially at the Zila Parishad and Samiti levels". ¹

The implementation of the principles of democratic decentralisation had two immediate effects:

For the first time it brought together below the state level two divergent sets of people - elected representatives of people and the public servants - in an active working association of unprecedented magnitude and scope. The areas of differentiation are many and varied training and educational background, illiteracy/high education, social background-rural/urban, low caste/high

¹ Iqbal Narain, "Panchayati Raj, Planning and democracy."
caste; economic and occupational background—agriculturists/political careerists, white collar salaried class, politico-historical background—the ruled/rulers, with their dedication and training in typical British colonial administrative pattern, its essential feature being to keep a distance from the people.

Secondly the democratic decentralisation has raised the expectations of people of a radical change in the role, attitude and behaviour of the civil servants.

One of the important and difficult tasks faced by both the officials and non-officials is to maintain good working relationship and to create a mutual sense of regard and understanding between the two. The importance of this mutual trust, and understanding was well emphasised in the report of the Committee on Democratic Decentralisation set up by the government of Maharashtra. The report says that "we cannot, however, overemphasise that the success of decentralisation will depend essentially on a mutual sense of regard and understanding between the administrative machinery, and their respective local bodies."² Previously the administrative machinery

1. Background paper prepared by Dr. V.R. Gaikward, Deputy Director of Sociology, NICD.
2. See Naik Committee Report, 1961, Maharashtra.
played a dominant role in formulating and executing the policies. Now the functions are passed on to the elected representatives of the people. This is wrongly interpreted by some quarters as a process of wresting power and authority. While the officials have the right to advice on policy, they have to understand it clearly that the final decisions in the matters of policy rest with the elected representatives. The later, on the other hand, should recognise the officer's right to advise on policy and regard them as collaborators to secure the desired objectives, as Professor Laski has stressed: "the whole difference between efficient and inefficient administration lies in the creative use of officials by elected representatives."

Due to widespread education, absence of caste like social system, less rural-urban bias and less economic disparities and combination of experienced and enlightened public and the professional managerial class, the gulf between the official and the elected representatives of the local self-government bodies is not so divergent and varied in the developed and progressive countries of the west as it is in India.
The general attitude of the officials towards the elected representatives is that of contempt and resentment: contempt because of a sense of superiority, which in turn is the result of higher education, better standard of living urban background, higher social status and position, power and authority and special privileges enjoyed so far; feeling of resentment towards the emerging local leadership because of its efforts for more powers, fear of loss of power, prestige and privileges enjoyed so far.

In the countryside an ambitious and dynamic leadership is emerging fast which is also power-oriented, and the officials have a general lack of faith in the capacities of these leaders. To these leaders district is a small replica of the state. They want the prestige, status and powers as enjoyed by the ministers which is a natural instinct, but creates a number of problems in the day to day administration. They are not satisfied with the formation of policies but also want a hand in its execution.

On the part of the officials even today there is a sizable section of them that see a challenge in democratic decentralisation to their position of power
and status, and there are no appreciable visible changes in their attitude, outlook and working method.

Under the patronage and constant pressure of politicians the elected representatives have developed a habit of interference in the legitimate duties of the officials, having a deep demoralising effect. It makes it difficult to attract the attention of capable officers for Panchayati Raj bodies. Even the capable officers are hesitant to show drive and initiative because of the fear of politicians, having bad effects on administration.

According to Sadiq Ali Committee Report the main source of misunderstanding and strained relations are lack of past conventions, an emphasis on exercise of power and discretion and external interference. Therefore the Committee recommended that the role of the two functionaries should be clearly defined.

In this regard, the Isvaran Committee has very specifically defined the roles of officials and non-officials of Village Panchayat, Samiti and

1. Study Team on Panchayati Raj, Report, Sadiq Ali Chairman, Rajasthan, 1964
2. Study group on Panchayati Raj administration, Hocel rules of Business, V.Lavran, Chairman, New Delhi, 1961
and Zila Parishad. According to this committee, the Panchayat secretary and village-level officials should make available to the Panchayat whatever information it needs. The Block Development Officer should attend all the meetings of the Samiti or its standing committees. The Block Development Officer should record the minutes of the proceedings. Other Samiti-level officials should attend the meetings if they are needed by the Samiti. At the Zila Parishad the other district or divisional officers of departments connected with the work of Zila Parishad shall, if asked, attend the meetings of the Zila Parishad or its committees.

Although it is very important to have a clear distinction between the functions of the elected representatives and the officials of Panchayati Raj, it is very difficult to enforce it through Acts or Rules. "Development administration is one of those few sophisticated silhouettes of administrative concepts whose broad shadow outlines are widely recognised though its inner details admit of no ready and precise identification."¹

¹ Quoted by A. Krishnaswamy Aiyangar, "Relationship between officials and elected representatives in P.R. Institutions, Local Government Institutions in Rural India," NICD, Hyderabad, p. 273
Because the relationship between the two functionaries is primarily personal, their roles being complementary and supplementary to one another, therefore, what is required is a temperamental adjustment which, of course, is a long and slow process. It should be basically understood by both that their spheres of activity are well defined. One is primarily concerned with the formulation of policies, other has the responsibility of its implementation. Any temptation of 'role-transgression' and 'role-aggrandisement' will jeopardise the success of decentralisation as a medium of both development and democracy.

In the new situation the bureaucracy has to understand that the main characteristics of administration under the British period cannot fit into the present development-oriented administration, and therefore it must change. "Development of the people can be of three types - economic, social and political, and in all these, the officials (administrators) have to involve themselves." ¹

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¹ A.Krishnawamy Aiyenger,"Relationship between the officials and elected representatives in Panchayati Raj institutions, Local Govt. Institutions in rural India", p.270.
They should be fully conscious of their new role. In the words of Ashok Mehta, under the existing socio-political conditions of India the Civil service has to play an increasingly important role during the next two decades, not only in planning and implementation of development programmes, but also in the process of transformation and modernisation of Indian society. Because of their educational background and experience, according to late Jawaharlal Nehru, one of the basic functions of administration should be to direct democracy in the right direction. In the present Indian context the officials cannot remain isolated and have to march along the path of development side by side with the people. The non-officials think that the officials have no role to play, while the officials feel that they have to play the second fiddle. In the initial phase of development, it has got to be a guided democracy. The administrator has to play his part as guide. This involves attitude orientation and cultivation of job skills - the primary responsibility of training. Attitude orientation is equally important in case of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions. They have to change the approach and outlook towards the officials - their partners in the responsibility of modernising the country.
They have to tell the civil servants what the public wants - how much and at what cost. They have to appreciate that there is already a significant departure in the outlook of the officials from their conservative approach and that they are responsive to new demands. The elected representatives should also consider Panchayati Raj as a new avenue of service to the people rather than an opportunity to exercise authority. Here again training has to play an important part towards attitude-orientation.

Efficiency of administration not only demands fixation of responsibility in case of officials but also an effective control and proper supervision of the non-officials. To make it sure that politics does not demoralise the officials, it is essential that the non-officials should be made responsible for the malpractices and abuse of power. Broadly speaking under the existing acts the most powerful weapon of state control is the power of cancelling or suspending the resolutions and administrative powers to remove the office bearers of Panchayati Raj bodies. The principal controlling authorities of the Panchayat employees in
different states are the state government's Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner or the Collector and Sub-Divisional Officer. The Acts of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Haryana and West Bengal empower the state governments to remove the office bearers of Zila Parishad, whenever necessary. In Gujarat the power is vested in the Development Commissioner, while the Acts of Tamil Nadu, Mysore, Rajasthan and M.P. have no such provision.

Similarly the power of removal of the Panchayat Samitis office-bearers rests with the State Government except (1) in case of Uttar Pradesh where the Commissioner is empowered to do so, (2) Gujarat, where the District Panchayat Council exercises this power, and (3) Tamil Nadu, where the Panchayat Union has this power.

In U.P. according to article 95(1) of Panchayati Raj Act the office bearers of Gaon Panchayat, Nyaya Panchayat, Land Management Committee as well as joint committee may be suspended or removed from their offices because of their constant absence or in case of
the misuse of their office. Government has delegated this right to S.D.O.'s on the condition that an appeal may lie to the district officer against his decision. In case of dismissal order by the district officer the final appeal may go to the Divisional Commissioner.

S.D.O.'s usually are not in a position to dispose off quickly all such cases, and make on the spot inspection. As a result suspended office bearers remain suspended for years, that adversely affects the working of Panchayati Raj institutions. Because of the constant changes in the dates of the cases the persons concerned have to appear frequently before the S.D.O. which is a sheer waste of money and a heavy burden on them. Following figures show the unnecessary delay in deciding such cases causing a loss of trouble to these personal. In June 1969, 308 such cases were under consideration of S.D.O. Out of these cases 3 cases of 1962, 8 cases of 1963, 21 cases of 1964, 33 cases of 1965, 31 cases of 1966, 81 cases of 1967, 132 cases of 1968 and 79 cases of 1969 remained undecided.¹

The Administrative Reforms Commission has made the following recommendation in case of the

1. By the Kind Courtesy of Panchayati Raj Officer, Aligarh
removal of Panchayati Raj Office bearers.

"A district tribunal consisting of the Collector and a subordinate judge should hold enquiries in cases where removal of members of Panchayati Raj bodies is involved. Final orders regarding the removal of members and office bearers should be passed only by the State Government after considering the report of the tribunal."

The nature and extent of supervision and control by the State Government should be considered in the light of the fact that the main objective of supervision and control is to train and educate the non-officials of P.R., to enable them to assume more responsibilities pertaining to development administration. In this relation Haripad R. Subramania Iyer says that "The terms supervision and control and hierarchical organisation are synonymous, but local self government and supervision and control are contradictory. Instead of supervision and control over the activities of Panchayati Raj bodies and the personnel, there must be an agency to guide, assist, encourage, stimulate, suggest, educate and train the non-officials of Panchayati Raj institutions." Therefore, he suggests that there is need for a separate Panchayati Raj development board for looking after development and growth of Panchayati Raj Institutions in the State. In this connection the Seminar on problems of Panchayati Raj has recommended the formation of a statutory board in each state, composed of senior officials and non-officials to watch, review and control the various aspects of Panchayati Raj bodies. The Seminar also recommended the creation of separate Panchayati Raj Cadres for different services, as solution of the complex problems of official and non-official relations.

2. Haripad R. Subramania Iyer, Kollam, February 1, 1971, p.3
3. Seminar held under the auspices of N.I.C.D. Hyderabad 1969
STAFFING PATTERN AND RECRUITMENT

The success of any programmes has to be judged from the point of view of its administrative structure and the capacity to handle the various organisational matters smoothly. The staffing pattern and their recruitment, therefore form an important aspect of Panchayati Raj. For the officials at the three tiers of Panchayati Raj administration, different states have different types of staffing pattern, depending up on the overall structure and organisation of these bodies in each state.

Village Panchayat:

Though the responsibilities entrusted to Panchayats are numerous, there is not enough provision of staff attached to it in most of the states. In Maharashtra and Gujarat, the village TALATI is appointed as TALATI-cum-Secretary. In other states the Panchayats have independent whole-time or part-time Secretaries, working under the administrative control of the Sarpanch. He is the chief and principal officer in the staff. The educational standard is usually low except in U.P., Andhra Pradesh, Madras, Assam, Bihar where matriculation is the prescribed qualification.
In some states V.L.Ws. have to do the work of Secretary. Some committees have also favoured the system. But it is not a satisfactory arrangement. The close contact between the two is highly desirable but if the two posts are combined: (i) it is likely that village level worker will lose his character as an extension worker and will be reduced to an office clerk, (ii) Panchayats will be interested more in administrative functions rather than development work, (iii) there is a danger that the village level worker may get involved in local politics and group factions.  

In some states Panchayats are responsible for the collection of land revenue also. To facilitate the collection and economise the expenses the Patwari is made the Secretary of the Panchayat. The Sadiq Ali team has strongly recommended the system. His main function now is to keep village records, collect land revenue and maintain statistics. He has now very few regulatory functions to discharge. If Patwari is appointed as Secretary to keep duplicate statistical records of the Panchayats, all problems relating to disputes about grazing areas and coordination with revenue agency will be easily solved. But that system too, is not free from faults. Patwari has to maintain not only land records but also to collect land revenue. Recently in some states he has also been empowered to collect Panchayat taxes. Because of too much responsibilities he will not be able to do justice to either work. Moreover this system will introduce dual control over the Patwari. As a Patwari, he will be required to work under the control of revenue department and as Secretary under the Panchayat.

2. Report of Sadiq Ali Team, p.69
3. *Panchayati Raj in India*, Rajeshwar Dayal, Metropolitan, N. Delhi
"The Secretary of the Panchayat is its kingpin and the backbone of its numerous activities. Part time secretaries do not owe their full allegiance to the Panchayats. They do not even put in their hearts into the work.\(^1\)

As the Secretary assists Panchayats in writing decisions, keeping minutes, preparing budget estimates, preparing reports, looking after Panchayat servants and doing the other works namely preparing notices, receiving dues, helping in the organisation of Gram Sabha meetings etc., it is necessary that each Panchayat has its own full time Secretary. In case of very small Panchayats where a full time Secretary is not required, the services of a Secretary may be shared between two or more neighbouring panchayats. He should be a well qualified and properly trained person with chances of promotion to the higher posts.* The service conditions should also be well defined and there should also be a security of service. Dual control over the Panchayat Secretaries by the Collector and the Panchayats should also be avoided by making them responsible only to the Panchayats.

Village Level Workers

The village level worker who is thought to be a kingpin of the development programme under Community Development and Panchayati Raj both is the weakest link in the chain of functionaries. Previously supposed to be a multipurpose man he is described now as a cent percent agricultural man, with his multipurpose, obligations and wide jurisdiction continued. Many informal roles are assigned to him, he is the only contact man at the village level for all sorts of developmental and other work, but for which he is not mentally equipped and has no proper educational background and adequate training.

*As a result of recent agitation in U.P. the service of Panchayat Secretary has been given the status of a Govt. service.

\(^1\) In the 12th Officers Conference held at Jaipur on September 19, 1971 it was expressed that the workload on Patwaris is the main cause of this state of affairs.
He has limited chances of promotion, yet being a developmental functionary, he is expected to bear a missionary zeal in his outlook and work, without proper material incentive for it. The contribution of V.L.W. towards the rural development depends upon the way, the villagers recognise the status of the V.L.W. According to "a role analysis of the village level worker" his role vis-à-vis the people of the upper socio-economic group is not that of a leader, but of a key communicator who provides all the information sought by them, of the activities of the B.D.O. and the Panchayat Samiti. His status makes him subservient to the wishes of the elite of the village and he is a source of help to them to achieve their ends. The upper middle and middle socio-economic groups; the owner cultivators and big landlords are greatest beneficiaries of the V.L.W.s' activities in case of supply of fertilisers, seeds and improved implements. The lower middle socio-economic group - petty land owners, artisans and other occupational caste groups - is the one that does not benefit at all from the V.L.W., that is why the group does not recognise his services in reconstructing the village.

To the lower socio-economic group of the village which consists of mostly scheduled castes V.L.W. is an adviser and guide. Again the beneficiaries in this group are the elected members of the Panchayat who have good relations with the Sarpanch of the Panchayat.

On the whole in terms of the four categories of people - the rich, the poor, the agriculturist and the non-agriculturists, the V.L.W.'s preference is to work more willingly with the rich and agriculturists and less willingly with the poor and non-agriculturists.

The role of V.L.W. being mainly of initiator, communicator and moderator, is very challenging and he can achieve the rewarding results by developing his personality, understanding of the community and avoiding affiliation with rival factions in the rural community.

"With the increasing complexities of the new agricultural technology and the rising demand for greater expertise, the time has come to sharpen the role of the V.L.W. more than is evident in the oft-repeated
statement that he should devote all his time to agriculture. His work is indeed that of a salesman than that of a service agent. The salesmen job is to know the buyer, to convey in simple terms the essential details as given by experts above him, and above all, to sell the idea while a service agent is expected to be trouble shooter and must accordingly be equipped with greater knowledge and expertise in the subject matter."

Therefore higher educational standard, adequate training and proper material incentives can be suggested if the V.L.W. is to make a real contribution towards the rural development.

Panchayati Samiti

The staffing pattern at the Samiti level is more or less the same in all the states, with minor variations. A uniform staffing pattern had been adopted for the blocks in the country as a whole under the Community Development Programme. In consultation with


* See Appendix H.
the Panchayat Samitis, the staff functioning at the block level became their staff. Generally Block Development Officer serves as the Chief Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samitis, under their Presidents. The staff consists of the following cadres, (a) the state cadre generally consisting of the Block Development Officer, Medical Officer and the various Extension Officers (b) the district cadre, consisting of generally the employees connected with Health, Development and welfare departments; and (c) the block cadre consisting of class IV employees and others in that category. A uniform staffing pattern at the block level has little merits. The Sadiq Ali team has suggested that the Panchayat Samitis should be grouped in three categories for staffing purposes: (i) on the basis of area and population (ii) potentialities of agriculture, irrigation and power development and (iii) nature and scope of other developmental activities; and that staff strength should depend upon the volume of work.

Block Development Officer has an important position in the functioning of Panchayat Samiti. He is

the head of the Samiti staff and is responsible for implementing the resolutions of the Samiti and its Committees. To start with, the B.D.Os were recruited mainly for their capacity to organise and enthuse the masses. For this purpose they were either personnel drawn from administrative ranks or were social workers, known for their organisational and administrative skill. This phase of Community Development saw multipurpose activities in the block. But the B.D.O. has been a controversial figure since the inception of Panchayati Raj. The Madhya Pradesh has even abolished the post of Block Development on the 1st of January 1966, but here a clarification is necessary that M.P. is one of the few states which have not yet introduced Panchayati Raj System in full. In Rajasthan the Samitis were made very powerful and generally the Deputy Collectors were appointed as Block Development Officers. However, it was found that officials and non-officials could not get along very well and the post of Block Development Officer was down-graded. After 1962 with the main emphasis on agricultural development Agricultural Extension Officers were appointed on the plea that Block Development Officer's work mainly consists of agricultural activities. The lack of knowledge about other fields as well as lack of interest
in other activities led to gradual withdrawal of funds and man power from activities in all fields except agriculture. The important point to note here is that even the agricultural work had a setback due to the fact that agricultural prosperity is linked with the development of many other activities. The Agricultural Extension Officer was dragged in several administrative problems and his duties faded in the background. With allocations for schematic programme drying up and no funds coming forth for social welfare or educational programmes, block agencies started functioning as only agricultural extension agency. Whatever may be the priorities which guide the Government, Community Development agency in neither suited nor should offer itself for working as mere agricultural extension service.

The Community Development organisation should claim, and it will be a very valid claim, that the work of agricultural extension on its own cannot stand. It has to be supported by other programmes, failing which the work of agricultural extension will also suffer.
For this purpose it is necessary that the personnel to be recruited as Block Development Officer's must undergo a change. They may be suitably assisted to carry on the work of agricultural extension and essentially they should be organisers, capable of carrying on multipurpose functions.

The non-R.A.S. Vikas Adhikari (B.D.O.) could not create a team spirit in the staff working under him. The reasons were equality in status with his team of extension officers and in some Samitis being even junior in service than some of extension officers working in the same block; because of little or no experience and knowledge of administrative work, and narrow specialisation, as well as inability to provide leadership to the extension officers.

The Chief Executive Officer of an institution which is responsible for the local administration and development of the block and who is empowered to handle considerable amount of money should be an officer of a sufficiently high status and authority.

*Non-R.A.S. Vikas Adhikari means the extension officers appointed as Vikas Adhikari.*

*1 This was the experience of Rajasthan. The study was conducted by D.S. Chaudhri.*
It is necessary that the Panchayat Samitis get the service of an officer commanding authority for implementation of its decisions. ¹

Therefore it is necessary that Vikas Achikari should not be promoted from the lower ranks and should be drawn from the State services to facilitate better coordination of the activities of the Panchayat Samitis with other departments, in cooperation with other agencies.

After the establishment of Panchayati Raj institutions and the transfer of some of the activities of technical departments to them, has developed the problem of coordination and collaboration between one technical department and the other technical departments on one hand and the technical departments and the development departments on the other. A sort of "hands off" psychology on the part of technical departments often results in apathy towards the Panchayati Raj Sector and lack of technical guidance to them. There are also complaints that the advice of the technical departments is not always

¹ Report of the Sadiq Ali Team, p.73, Rajasthan.
welcomed and needed to. Their control over the extension officers has also weakened as the administrative control has passed on to Block Development Officer¹ and political control to the non-officials. A pattern of workable liaison between the technical departments and non-official agencies at the block level has yet to be evolved.

The main complaint of Block Development Officer, is of the 'politicization' of extension services. The establishment of Panchayati Raj has caused the conflict of loyalties. The solution lies in fixing up the clear cut line of command and responsibility by the Panchayati Raj Acts. The administration at the block level should be organised on the basis of the principle of unity of command. Duplication of command and interferences with the regular chain of hierarchy is to be avoided as far as possible. All communications, whether formal or informal, to any one at the Samiti level should be routed through the Vikas Adhikari, who is completely in control of the Samiti staff. He himself has to work under the complete subordination of Samiti President, who in turn should be held responsible for the proper utilisation of power as

¹ The Rajasthan Government has granted more powers to district level officer who can now inflict minor punishments on E.O.S. upto two grade increments and transfer them within the district, with the consent of the Collector. The results are yet to be studied.
well as for the implementation of the development programmes. This will cause the emergence of a bond of interdependence between the President and the Vikas Adhikari, the former acting as the political head, and the latter as the chief administrative head of his team with the result that -

1) Line of command will be clearly understood by the employees.

2) Fixation of responsibility will become easier, leading towards efficient performance, thus accelerating the tempo of developmental activities.

3) There will also emerge an effective system of supervision and control over the employees.

And finally the respective roles of officials and non-officials will clearly be demarcated.

The quantum of circulars and reports, in relation to state level supervision and control, makes the block level officials the desk workers than extension agents. Therefore, the development of a healthy, balanced, rationalised yet effective pattern of supervision and control without undue interference with the extension obligations of the block functionaries is essential.
The Panchayati Raj institutions are also threatened by the political interference with the pattern of administrative supervision and control. It is in this context that Sadiq Ali Committee\(^1\) has recommended the institution of an independent administrative tribunal to deal with such types of cases.

Thus the success of community development programme is dependent on the persons working in the field. The role of Samiti working as an agency which may bring about development of rural areas by coordinating different units will be impossible to achieve without making a change in personnel. With the passage of time there is also a need of thorough revision of the methods of extension and the degree of emphasis on various methods. Persons engaged in an organisation may be so busy in accomplishing the results that they are not conscious of the trends of growth.*

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1. Sadiq Ali Study Team, Rajasthan, 196\(^4\)

* See Appendix for trends of growth.
Zila Parishad

With the transfer of the institutions of Ex-District Boards, their staff has also been transferred to Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads. The personnel of Zila Parishads consist of government and non-government service, the former covering those transferred from government departments and the latter comprising those previously belonging to the district board service.

The state cadre staff of Zila Parishad consists of (1) Secretary, Zila Parishad (2) Deputy Secretary, Zila Parishad, Assistant Engineer (Planning), (3) Local Engineer; (5) Head Clerk; (6) Draftsman; and (7) Local Development Work Supervisor. The second category that is the district cadres, includes the clerical staff, teachers (junior and senior) medical staff, and other service staff.

The position of the Secretary of Zila Parishad is not uniform in all the states. He ranks equally with the Collector in Gujrat, of the rank of a Senior Deputy Collector in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar. In other states he is of the rank of a Deputy Collector.
The Administrative Reform Commission has suggested "that a senior officer, designated as district development officer, should be appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Zila Parishad. In selecting him, his suitability in the context of the developmental functions devolved upon the Zila Parishad should be the sole criteria and the selection should neither be confined, nor denied to any particular service." Same is the opinion of most of the Committees that the Chief Executive Officer of Zila Parishad should be a Senior Indian Administrative Serviceman, with complete administrative control over all the district level officers related with the various developmental programmes. He in turn should be responsible to the Zila Parishad. In case the required number of personnel is not available, senior members from Provincial Civil Service may be deputed. In this connection clear definition of the relationship between the collector and other district level officers is also highly desirable.

1. India, Report of the administrative reforms commission on State administration, New Delhi, Govt., of India, 1969 pp.267 + iv.
The system of writing the confidential reports of Panchayati Raj staff differ from state to state. With the exception of Andhra Pradesh the confidential report on the working of the Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti is initiated by the Collector/Dy.Commissioner/District Agriculture Officer or any other officer prescribed, by the State Government under the rules. In Andhra Pradesh the President of the Panchayat Samiti initiates annually the confidential report of the Executive Officer. In Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh the President of the Panchayat Samiti makes observations annually on the working of the Executive Officer which are taken into account by the officer who initiates the confidential report of this functionary. The power of inflicting punishments on the Executive Officer of the Panchayat Samiti has been vested in the State Government or in the officer working under them, except in Punjab where the Panchayat Samiti is empowered to ensure or withhold increment (without cumulative effect) of the staff at their disposal.

The confidential report on the working of the Chief Executive Officer of the Zila Parishad is written by the officer prescribed by the State Government in all the States where the Zila Parishads have been
constituted, except in Andhra Pradesh, where the Chairman of the Zila Parishad initiates these reports annually. In Orissa and Rajasthan the officer initiating the report takes into account the observations of the Chairman of Zila Parishad, the punishment in case of default on the Chief Executive Officer of Zila Parishad can be inflicted by the State Government.

Recruitment to Panchayati Raj service can be made directly by promoting and obtaining officers on a temporary basis from the State Services. In many of the States in which Panchayati Raj is under implementation, separate block and district cadres have been created to staff the Panchayati Raj bodies and detailed procedures have been prescribed for their recruitment etc. The recruitment to the posts included in the Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishad services in Rajasthan is made by State level Selection Commission consisting of two members appointed by the State Government and the Parmukh of the district concerned. While the Commission prepares the merit list for each category of posts, the actual appointments are made by the District Establishment Committee consisting of a member of the Commission, the Parmukh and the Collector. In Gujarat, for certain classes of posts included in the Panchayat Service, recruitment
is made by the State Panchayat Service Selection Board and for other by the District Panchayat Service Selection Committee. In Maharashtra, for the Technical Services, the selection is made by a Divisional Selection Board, while for the non-technical services, District Selection Board choose the candidates. In the other States, like Andhra Pradesh, the selection is done by a District-level Committee/Board.

Opinion varies in regard to bringing the employees of Panchayati Raj bodies under one cadre. Bassappa\(^1\) and Hardyal Singh Committee\(^2\) are not, for instance, in favour of creating a separate Panchayati Raj cadre. But they recommended that the employees of Panchayati Raj bodies should be considered as government servants and be entitled to all the privileges of the state government employees. Sadiq Ali\(^3\), Diwaker\(^4\) and Parikh Committees\(^5\) on the other hand recommended the formation of a Panchayati Raj cadre in the states, covering the officers of district block and village Panchayats.

3. Study Team on Panchayati Raj, Rajasthan 1964
4. Study Team on position of Gram Sabha in Panchayati Raj movement New Delhi 1963
But they are also of the opinion that the service conditions of employees under Panchayati Raj and other state services should be the same with open avenues of promotion from Panchayati Raj cadres to the state cadres. Some of these committees have also recommended the requisite machinery to complete such recruitment. Parikh Committee, for instance, has recommended the establishment of states as well as District Selection Boards, while the Sadiq Ali Committee prefers only the later to recruit for posts at all the levels. The Bassappa Committee not in favour of a separate Panchayati Raj cadre, however, makes an exception in case of primary school teachers. These teachers in the Committee view should be recruited through a selection committee, consisting of district collector as Chairman, Chairman of Education Committee of Zila Parishad and District Education Officer as members.

The Administrative Reforms Commission has made the following recommendation in this connection:
(1) All officers of classes I and II may continue to be drawn from state governments on deputation basis.
(2) Panchayat Service should be limited to class III (Extension), class III (Ministerial) and class IV services. The officers of these services should, however, be eligible for promotion to class II and III posts respectively.

(3) Posts in class III may be also filled by persons belonging to the state service sent on deputation. If such persons are not available personnel may be recruited specially for panchayati Raj bodies. Recruitment to Panchayat Service Class III (Extension) should be entrusted to the state level selection board, while recruitment to class III (Ministerial) service may be handed over to a district selection board. The composition of these selection boards may be decided upon by the State Governments.¹

It becomes clear from the above recommendations that the service conditions of the employees service Panchayati Raj service and other state government under: should be the same, with all the possibilities of promotion. The employees of Panchayati Raj bodies should be entitled to all such privileges as are accruing to state government employees. That will attract the attention of persons of high calibre and improve the efficiency as well as morale of the Panchayati Raj Service.

The Commission has also recommended that "the district level officers in charge of development departments should be transferred to the jurisdiction and charge of the Zila Parishad. This will ensure single line administrative control and solve the problem of coordination and cooperation between Panchayati Raj institutions and development departments.

Though the idea of deputation has found favour of the Administrative Reforms Commission but it creates the problem of executive development; officers on deputation may not have any emotional attachment to the problems of the Panchayati Raj and therefore may not take active interests in promoting its interests. It would be better if Panchayati Raj enjoys freedom in personnel administration.

While recruiting the personnel of Panchayati Raj administration proper attention should be given to see that the persons have a rural background and sufficient understanding of rural problems.
Integrity, impartiality and objectivity are the three cardinal qualities which the staff under Panchayati Raj must possess and cultivate. The political and other pressures exerted by Panchayati Raj bodies or any influential section thereof must be avoided at all cost. It is, therefore, reasonable that matters of recruitment, promotion and disciplinary control of staff should be handled by an independent board or commission.¹

Fixation of responsibility of Panchayati Raj employees is also necessary. In this regard it would be helpful if the targets are fixed wherever the work done so warrants. Preparation of job charts and manuals in every department connected with development work is recommended by the Vellodi Committee.² The Sadiq Ali Committee goes to the extent of making the officers personally responsible to make the development schemes a success. This can only be possible if state governments give a fare opportunity to P.R. bodies to draw up and execute local development schemes providing the broad guidelines to them. Officials can then be held directly accountable for the non-performance of any particular task.

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¹ Indian Journal of Public Administration Vol. VII No.4 October December 1962, page 523
If Whiteley Councils are appointed in all the departments it will provide a common forum where the Panchayati Raj employees may discuss matters of common interest with the government and people's representatives, thereby generating harmonious relations between the staff, the government and people's representatives.

TRAINING

Training has been recognised as an important tool for personnel development in order to cope with the growing complexities of modern organisations dealing with multifarious human activities. The initiators of community development were fully conscious of this importance. The policy statement on Community Development emphasises raising extension services to higher levels of skills and knowledge.

The main object of training should not only be to prepare one for doing one's job well, but also shouldering higher responsibilities and meeting new complex challenges in future.
An important conclusion of a research study conducted by the Indian Institute\(^1\) of Public Administration is that "the civil service has inadequately adapted to meet the new tasks of developmental administration". It adds however, "that at least in the developmental sectors the civil service was highly change-oriented and less rule-oriented. In other words a certain degree of adaptation appears to have already taken place. If this adaptation has taken place without a conscious effort on the part of the Government then it is conceivable that a greater degree of adaptation could be brought about through a deliberate effort or programme.

The late Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru was of the firm view that it is the community development movement, which aims at changing the whole texture of our society, of our thinking and of our actions. If it ever fails in achieving its objectives, it will not be for lack of money but for lack of trained personnel. After the introduction of Panchayati Raj in India training has assumed greater importance.

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1. See Local Government Institutions in rural India, p.204-205, N.I.C.I., Hyderabad.

Note: This study referred above covers 911 Civil servants of I,II & III class serving in the government agencies in the areas of agriculture and Industry.
OBJECTIVES:

Training is necessary (a) to ensure that both officials and non-officials get a common understanding of philosophy, objectives and methods of C.D. programmes; (b) to ensure that both officials and non-officials acquire knowledge of methods of working with the people; (c) the officials in particular learn techniques and skills to enable them to impart useful knowledge and information to people during the course of extension work and (d) both officials and non-officials develop an understanding of each others role so as to establish a harmonious working relationship between themselves.

In his inaugural address delivered at the conference on training Y.B. Chavan emphasised that, apart from imparting job skills, training of public personnel in the Indian setting, is to inculcate the right attitudes among public employees with special reference to our welfare state, functioning through a constitutional and democratic process. Today public servants are the instruments of welfare and change, and they have to be responsive to the public. In fact the word, 'training' should denote the wide concept of training and education both.

1. Local Government Institutions in Rural India, p.207, N.I.C.e., Hyderabad.
The draft Fourth Five Year Plan emphasises to review closely the arrangements for imparting training. Under the chapter "Other programmes" it states that in respect of training for management, administration and planning, the programmes will fall broadly into three groups, namely (1) management, planning and development programmes; (b) area development planning and administrations; and (c) methods and techniques for economic planning. The Union department of Community Development has decided to continue during the Fourth Five Year's Plan the schemes for training associate Women Workers and boys and girls and for orientation of school teachers in Community Development. Training for boys will be organised at Gram Sevak, Training Centres and for girls at the Gram Savika Training Centres. The training programme will also be located in agricultural and veterinary colleges and young farmers training centres. The aim of the orientation programme for school teachers is to bring about a closer association between the schools and the community and also to enable the teachers to serve as channels of communication of new knowledge to the pupils and through them to the parents.

1. See Fourth Five Year Plan.
Orientation Training

The orientation and Study centres and Tribal orientation and Study centres have been set up for the purpose of training and orientation of various functionaries in the field of Community Development. Institutional training centres were established by Community Projects administration and later by the Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation. The control of Orientation and Study Centres and Tribal Orientation and Study Centres was transferred to the respective state governments in 1967.

Orientation training is a difficult form of training, as it aims at influencing people's attitude and to change them; that is why it requires a lot of patience and effort. Orientation course is a multi-purpose course both in content and composition of participants and flexible enough to suit the requirements of both the officials as well as non-officials. The present general courses have elements of orientation, as well as study and refresher courses, focussing special attention on essential aspects of community development and their
working through Panchayati Raj institutions and Sahkari Samaj Programme, which should be understood by officials and non-officials alike. It also aims to foster habits of critical thinking, logical exposition and purposeful action.

The orientation training programme, according to Devendra Singh Shaktewat¹ "should be built upon; (1) narration of field problems; (2) exchange of experience through case studies (3) drawing up job, field and problem oriented programme; and (4) making available latest information through publication, new scientific innovations, technical know-how, new trends and thinking with special reference to content, teaching methods and personnel management." The orientation training of non-officials should aim to help in adoption of new ideas and techniques through whom by example other could be inspired to follow.

Training of grass roots leadership, should occupy an important place in all the training programmes for strengthening and making the Panchayati Raj System viable to deliver the goods.

¹ Principal, Tribal Orientation and study centre, Udaipur "Training and Orientation of Officials and Elected Representative". Local Govt. Institutions in India, p.206, N.I.C. ...
Gone are the days when development was
considered to be something automatic or rather a
natural process. In the context of planned development
whether social, political or economic, the twin
concepts of "political penetration" and "political social-
isation" are of great relevance. The former demands
the capacity of the political system to communicate its
goal as declared by the rural elite, through effective
channels of communication (two way process) to every
nook and corner of territorial boundaries. This increases
the awareness of the people. The later covers the
devices by which people are politically oriented and
identify themselves with the political system.

For 'political penetration' the local government
system requires installation of an effective means of
communication, demands and support coming as 'inputs'
and going out as 'outputs'. For this audio-visual means,
public relations, publicity through the press, etc. are
of utmost importance.

For 'effective socialisation' of people the
need of training cannot be over emphasised. The emerging
leadership requires the training in the art of running the grass roots institutions, which is not merely learning about the functioning of these institutions, but also a fair knowledge about the functioning of political system as a whole and the interactions between the sub-systems.¹

Therefore an effective training programme for the training of grass-roots leadership should not only cover the knowledge of budgeting, financing, management, administration and public relations etc. but they should also know the processes of modern politics and standardised procedures. The rural leadership has to learn functioning side by side with the urban leadership keeping in view the basic values of the political system as a whole.

Democratic decentralisation has opened a channel between local and state levels and between the state and central levels. Rural leadership is to be made conscious that these are the channel of advance for the grass-roots. The results of many studies as mentioned earlier reveal that the presidents of Panchayati Raj particularly of the middle tier are proving potential MLAs.

There is need to look into the functioning of the various training centres for non-officials and officials and the results obtained, in the light of the above mentioned objectives.

To run the training centres properly Sadiq Ali Committee\(^1\) recommended, cooperation of agricultural research stations and other research institutions run by the government as well as by the voluntary agencies. In this regard, Ramchandran Committee\(^2\) suggested formation of an executive committee at state level to facilitate supervision and guidance of Panchayati Raj training centres and a managing committee for each of these centres. It also emphasised that the training centres must have a regular system of contact with the field problems.

Training of the officials should include among other things, Panchayati Raj and Community Development and special emphasis on official and non-official relationship. Training of VLW and Social education officer should include in the programme first aid, elementary survey and measures of soil conservation.

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1. Study Team on P.R.Rajasthan, 1964
2. Evaluation Committee on P.R. Training centres New Delhi, 1964
With changes in the administrative pattern extension officers of agriculture and animal husbandry are appointed as Vikas Adhikari. This has increased emphasis on certain aspects of the programme, leaving in the background certain other important aspects, e.g., finance, management, human psychology and administrative aspects. Training programmes should pay due attention to these important aspects.

There is need of closer and continuous contact between the officials and non-officials in the field and the training staff. The training staff should attend Panchayat meetings, to be conversant with the latest; the staff should also participate in the appropriate meetings, seminars and conferences convened by the different departments. Similarly the field workers should be involved in the various activities of the training centres, such as seminars, camps and conferences.

Recently the training of extension officers (industrial) is drawing the attention of policy makers. Under the new guidelines given by the Planning Commission for the implementation of the rural industries projects
programme, a greater emphasis is to be laid on planning, programming, coordination and effective extension work at the field level.

There are three groups of officers in the project agency for whom the training programmes are to be devised. The first category is of the Project Officers. They have to coordinate the different sections of the economy for an integrated industrial development, and act as the leaders of the extension personnel. Being the senior and experienced officer a period of about three weeks in a "training workshop" with special emphasis on programming the industrial development plan for their respective areas, keeping in view the broader perspective of development activities in other sectors of economy, may be sufficient. This will require on the part of participants considerable amount of preparatory work, the collection of required related data etc.

A short, four week programme can well serve the training needs of the planning-cum-survey officers and technical officers, composing the second group of project agency. Their training would require, training in the techniques of making feasible studies on the demand of resources in their respective areas, surveyed by them.
They may be asked to bring the survey reports and discuss the rational of various industries proposed by them. In addition they should be provided with the basic understanding and knowledge of extension techniques, entrepreneurs behaviour, communication and publicity techniques.

The third group of project agency consists of the Economic Investigators and Technical Assistants. For them a 12 week training programme, including not only field visits to selected industries and acquaintance with practical methodology and techniques of survey, but also conducting the surveys of resources for specific industries, may serve the purpose.

In order to make the training programme really effective, it is essential that apart from imparting a minimum of training inputs to all levels of extension personnel, there should be a regular follow up programme of refresher courses, to review the actual application of various skills acquired earlier, and the desirability to adopt new elements and techniques properly discussed and analysed.
In Service Training

Earlier training should be supplemented by in-service training to achieve the desired objectives, and to further enrich the training of the trainees by mutual exchange of experience and knowledge and to make them acquainted with the up-to-date research, evaluation findings and latest changes introduced in the programme. It should aim to build up faith, inspire confidence and has to be more responsive and receptive.

In the words of Douglas Ensminger¹ "If India is to continue to strengthen her community development programme, she must in future, not only broaden, deepen and lengthen the period of training required to provide fresh staff for replacements but must also systematise her in-service training."

It will be desirable to organise regular quarterly study circles at the Zila Parishad and Samiti levels in addition to the general staff meetings. In these study circles, the subject matter specialist should present paper on the specific aspects of his programme, based on
manuals, new publications and latest research findings. Annual Seminars of field workers both officials and non-officials should be organised in which persons from various Universities, training centres and research institutes may be invited. Good Libraries should also be built up at Parishad and Samiti levels. Study tours both within the state as well as outside the state to various progressive farmers, research institutes and farms project will also prove helpful. State level conferences will bridge the gap between the field executives and policy makers.

There should be a regular follow up programme of refresher courses as well as supporting actions which would encourage the trainees to use their acquired skills in a systematic manner.

Evaluation:

Evaluation which has been an indispensable part of the training programme, is mainly confined to the assessment of trainer's performance and to training programme during the period of training. It would become
more purposeful if in addition there is an attempt to measure the impact of training on human behaviour and interaction. The teaching staff should be asked to keep the record of class room and field work and discuss it at staff meeting. According to Sadiq Ali report the basic weakness of the training programme today is that the trainee does not take training to be an opportunity. This apathy is both on the part of officials as well as non-officials. Trainees also fail to correlate the importance of training programme with their performance in the field.

The form and content of training should also be made sufficiently attractive and interesting. Emphasis has to be laid on attitude building and development and extension approach rather than theoretical discussions.

Quality of training is directly determined by the quality of coaching staff. They should posses adequate field experience of their subjects and a faith in the programme. They should be the persons who can inspire confidence in the trainees.
In view of the fact that training functions have been decentralised and the responsibility now rests with the states, the consultative council of Community Development has emphasised on the one hand the need for adequate financial provisions in the state plans and budget, and on the other the desirability of ensuring that the training effort is in harmony with the specific job requirements of the various functionaries taking due note of the local conditions and requirements. The council also emphasised the need of continuing the Central government playing an effective role in advising and coordinating the country-wide training effort of block extension personnel.

For an effective training programme it is necessary that it should be planned not just for the need of tomorrow but even for those of dayafter.
FINANCES

Village Panchayats

For any economic, social or cultural activity financial support is a must. Panchayats being agency for rural administration and economic prosperity should have strong financial base. With the introduction of Panchayati Raj, village Panchayats are required to perform not only municipal functions, but also developmental functions, such as promotion of agriculture and village industries. Thus they can carry their functions effectively if they have at their disposal sources of income which are sufficiently 'elastic'. In order to meet the financial requirements the Mehta Team suggested a large number of sources of income for Panchayats. The Government of United Provinces, appointed a Committee known as "Kher Committee" in 1939, in order to strengthen the financial position of Panchayats and other local bodies. It recommended that all public property within the jurisdiction of a Gaon Panchayat or Town Area should be vested in that body. It was based on the analogy of the Section 116 of Municipalities Act, with regard to the funds of these bodies. The committee unanimously agreed that the Government and District Board should be obliged to make
fixed contributions to these bodies, the former out of its land revenue and the latter from cess income relating to Panchayats or Town Area, as the case may be. The other obligatory contribution, provided for, was the compulsory labour by all male adults in the case of Gaon Panchayats. The other taxes proposed were optional. The list of optional taxes referred particularly to the taxes on professions, trades, callings and employment. This tax was mainly intended for non-agriculturists and it was recommended that every Gaon Panchayat and Town Area committee would be advised to levy it.\(^1\) The U.P. Village Panchayat Act 1947 is mainly based on the report and recommendations of the Kher Committee. The Act vested in the Gaon Sabha all the public property situated within the jurisdiction of a Gaon Sabha*, which is required to direct, manage and control it.\(^2\) A long enumerative list has been provided for the fund of Panchayats, but no fixed contribution

\(^1\) The Report of the Kher Committee, Government of UP, 1939 Chapter IV p.47

\(^2\) UP Panchayat Raj Act, 1947, op. cit. Section 34.

* According to article 28 of the Panchayati Raj Act the land management Committee looks after the public property of the Gaon Sabha, as a sub-committee of Panchayat, as provided by the Zamindari Abolition and Land Reform Acts in the state. But the Panchayats have no proper control over the Committee. Because the Committee acts according to the provisions of Zamindari abolition Act and administrative control over the Committee is exercised by the revenue department of the Government. This creates the problem of dual control within in the same field. Village Panchayats are elected by the entire adult population of the village, and have every right to manage the public property of the village by themselves.
is made to them either by the Government from their revenue or by the District Boards from their cess income. No obligatory provision for the compulsory labour is made in the present Act (1947). Panchayats are nevertheless vested with discretionary power to levy taxes and fees for which the maximum rates have been prescribed in the Act.

Gaon Sabhas have been levying the taxes on the land revenue at the rate of 6 paisa per Rupee. Previously they also enjoyed the right of taxation over trade, calling as well as professions. According to Kshettra Samiti and Zila Parishad Act the right was taken away from them. In 1955 they were also deprived of the right of house tax. Mines and Mineral Act has taken all the income of Panchayats received from river, sand, CHOONA, KANKAR, AGARPORA and alike other items. As a result there has been a constant decline in their income. During the last three years their average income has been Rs.464.78 in the year 1967-68, Rs.388.88 in the year 1968-69, and Rs.379.18 in the year 1969-70. During 1964-65 there were more than 32000 Panchayats in the Uttar Pradesh with their annual income less than 100 Rupees. Thus they have casually been doing the work with the support of their manpower.
To improve the financial position of village panchayats it is important to amend article 37 of the Panchayati Raj Act. It is proposed that they should have the power to levy 25 paise per Rupee on land revenue, and to levy house tax upto the maximum limit of Rs.50/-.

Half of the income received from court fee of Nyaya Panchayats and Nyaya Panchayat fines have to be deposited with the Government treasury. It causes great trouble, while the amount deposited is not significant. Therefore, it is proposed that Panchayats should have complete control over the money received from Court fee and Panchayat fines, after incurring required expenditure. The income from the sale of the nomination papers at the time of general elections of Panchayat should also be given to Panchayats after deducting election expenditure. The Uttar Pradesh government like other states should also give 25 percent of its own income to Gaon Sabhas, as grant in aid.

The income of Panchayats varies from State to State and from Panchayat to Panchayat within the same State. The average income of Panchayats in U.P. and Bihar is around 25 paisa per capita while the same in Gujarat is between Rs. 3/- and Rs. 4/- per capita.
From an analysis based on the data of 42 Panchayats of various income levels visited by the Study Team on Panchayati Raj Finances in the various States, the per capital income of an average Panchayat is Rs. 11 in 1961-62 distributed as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of sources</th>
<th>Per capita income in Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self raised sources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxes, fees and fines</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from property</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Grants</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But this picture is not representative for the country as a whole. In U.P. and Bihar where more than 40 percent of the country's Panchayats are located the average income is less than Rs. 0.50 per cent per capita. Such Panchayats would be found in a large number in most of the States. It can, therefore, be concluded that not less than 60 per cent of the Panchayats
of the country have a per capita income below Rs.0.50. In this way the financial position of a large number of panchayats is quite unsatisfactory and their income may not exceed one rupee per capita, though their functions are many and their tasks formidable.

The following constitute the finances of Panchayati Raj: local resources which consists of taxes, fees, fines and other revenues.

TAXES: These include house tax, land cess, sanitary cess, lighting rate, vehicle tax, pilgrim tax, grazing tax, octroi, labour tax, water tax, tax on commercial crops, marriage tax and tax on trade and callings. In some States certain taxes are obligatory while in others they are optional.

The ratio of tax receipts to the total income is less than 20 per cent. It means that

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Panchayats depend to a great extent upon non-tax revenue and grants from the Government and that efforts at mobilisation of resources by local taxation are inadequate and unsatisfactory. A study of income and expenditure of village panchayats in Gujarat by M.J. Pandit reveals that the average tax revenue per panchayat is Rs.146/-, whereas the average income from all sources per panchayat is Rs.1,599/-. Of the total revenue per capita tax revenue comes to 10 paise only.¹

The existing taxes are not being realized properly. According to one estimate, the actual realisation of taxes is less than 50 per cent of the dues. Taxation is an under-utilised source. If proper steps are taken, the income from this source might be doubled.

FEES AND FINES: The panchayats may receive entire proceeds of share of fees and fines from case work, registration of animals and cattle ponds.

ASSIGNED REVENUES: Land revenue is levied by State Governments and in most of the States Panchayati Raj

bodies receive a share. The share of panchayats in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh is a per capita assistance at 20 paise and 25 paise per head of population respectively. Panchayati Raj are allowed to levy cesses on land revenue for such purposes as road formation, education, etc.

NON-TAX LOCAL RESOURCES: These are derived from the management of common land, disposal of panchayat property, fruit trees, fisheries, panchayat tanks, and sale of abadi land. The survey of the Study Team on Panchayati Raj Finances reveals that the non-tax revenue forms 28 per cent of the total income of panchayats from all sources.

Because tax sources are a few/number, non-tax revenue assumes substantial importance in local finance. Panchayats have been given the charge of government lands and tanks available in the villages. It is quite likely that well thought out utilisation of the lands wherever available will considerably augment the resources of the panchayats. Fruit and fuel plantations can be raised in such lands and the panchayats will derive considerable income from such plantations.
Panchayats also derive a considerable amount of their non-tax revenue from the disposal of panchayat property and the sale of abadi land. "Non-tax revenue forms 25 per cent of the total income from all sources. Most of this is realised from the sale of residential plots, i.e., 20 per cent of the total income from all sources. This is an easily available source of income. Hence it has been freely tapped by panchayats." ¹

OTHER REVENUES: These consist of income from agency functions, donations and other types of voluntary contributions.

GOVERNMENT AND SAMITI GRANTS

Panchayats also get grants from the Government and the Samiti. These may be matching grants, adhoc lump sum grants or per capita grants. Revenue grants are equal to all the local sources.

EXPENDITURE PATTERN OF PANCHAYATS

The expenditure pattern of panchayats is different in details but the pattern on the whole is the same. The administrative expenditure exhausts its funds. Although it varies from state to state and
panchayat to panchayat within the state but it has been noted that all panchayats with the exception of a few here and there are financially weak.

PANCHAYATS SAMITIS

The Samitis get finance from Government either directly or through Zila Parishad. In some states Community Development funds can also be transferred to Panchayat Samitis. These Samitis (except Andhra Pradesh and Orissa) have got the powers to levy tax on certain items such as house tax, tax on supply of water, conservancy, lighting tax, tax on fisheries, cultivable land, irrigation tax, cycle registration tax, education cess, duty on immovable property, fair tax, entertainment tax etc. In Gujarat the taxes levied by Gram Panchayat can also be levied by the Samiti. The Acts of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Mysore, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal empower the Samitis to receive a part of the land revenue, besides the usual grant under Community Development programmes.

ZILA PARISHAD

The financial resources of Zila Parishad mostly consist of the funds received from the State
Government in the form of grants. The State government also gives share of land and other cesses and taxes assigned to Zila Parishad. If there are some other specific schemes the funds are also provided to Zila Parishad, In some states the Zila Parishads are empowered to levy certain taxes or to enhance, subject to certain limits, the taxes already being levied by the Panchayat Samitis or Panchayats. Broader the sources of income of Zila Parishad are:
(1) grants (2) taxes and fees, (3) loans, (4) funds of the plan schemes transferred to Zila Parishad and (5) Income from property.

It has generally been noticed that the above mentioned sources of income of different bodies of Panchayati Raj provide inadequate finance to meet out their expenditure. In fact it is a crucial matter. Hence the Central Government appointed various committees, namely, Santhanam Committee, Ram Krishnayya Committee and Khanna Committee to study the Problem of Panchayati Raj finances etc. These Committees differ in their details regarding raising of finances through various sources.¹

¹. See Local Government institutions in Rural India, NICD, 1970 for details.

¹. In this connection the recommendations made by the Seminar on Problems of Panchayati Raj (N.I.C.D., 1969) are worth considering. For details see the next chapter.
Likewise the Committees/Commissions appointed by the State Governments have thrown light on this aspect. For example the U.P. Government has appointed a committee\(^1\) to specifically deal with this problem. The Administrative Reorganisation and Economy Committee Report of Kerala (1967) is of the opinion that if we want to make Panchayati Raj bodies effective units of local self-government, we ought to make an attempt to adequately build up their resources. Until such time that the finances of Panchayati Raj bodies become sound, Hardyal Singh Committee recommended the transfer to Panchayati Raj bodies only such schemes for which either necessary funds are assigned to them or they are themselves able to meet the expenditure from their own resources.

The various committees have recommended various new items for levying taxes and there is complete unanimity in their recommendations regarding the delegation of suitable powers to Panchayati Raj bodies to levy taxes. However, Santhanam and Hardyal Committees have classified the taxes into compulsory and optional. The House Tax, Profession tax and vehicle tax have been listed as compulsory by the Santhanam Committee while Hardayal Committee has categorised house tax, tax on transfer of immovable property and buffaloes tax as compulsory.

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1. Study Team on Panchayat Raj Resources Report, Kailesh Prakash(Chairman) 1965 Panchayati Raj Department, UP Lucknow.
In case of optional taxes the two committees have listed more or less the same items. Other Committees also agree on these taxes, viz; pilgrim tax, marriage and birth tax, octroi, tax on registration of cattles etc. Some committees have also recommended the creation and enlargement of community assets by Panchayati Raj bodies to enhance their economic condition. This may be done if these bodies own shops, markets, trees, ponds, tanks, forests etc.

In fact the Panchayati Raj bodies have to develop their financial resources according to local conditions but in any case their commitments should not exceed their resources. The government should help the Panchayati Raj bodies in enhancing their financial resources. When necessary, the grants should be provided. In case of non-availability of funds from other sources or emergency they should secure loan from the public and the government. The idea of establishment of a corporation as recommended by Naik and Santhanam Committees is also worth considering and should be adopted by different states according to their own requirements. Moreover as recommended by Administrative Reforms Commission "An advisory committee of officials and non-officials may be set up by each state government for advising on the principles which should govern the grants of assistance to Panchayati Raj institutions."

1. Report, Administrative Reforms Commission on State administration—New Delhi pp.267-IV
Planning by Panchayati Raj institutions relates mainly to programmes which aim at meeting local needs, in which decisions regarding location and size of activity have to be taken on local considerations and in which success depends primarily upon the initiative and cooperation of the local people. Agricultural and associated fields of animal husbandry, co-operation, minor irrigation, primary and secondary education, sanitation, water supply and basic medical care, and local communications are important fields of local planning. On the other hand large industries, power, transport or irrigation projects, and advanced education or health service facilities are outside the field of local planning. The distinction between these two spheres of planning and the fact that the Panchayati Raj Institutions are concerned primarily with planning of local development programmes is fairly well understood.
But even within the area of local planning the present practice is that priorities for different development programmes and schemes, and the pattern of each scheme—content, staff, finance, institutional arrangements, etc—are worked out in great detail at the State (or even national) level and decision-making at local levels is concerned largely with selecting locations and beneficiaries. The Panchayat Raj institutions, like their predecessors, officials of the community development blocks or other development departments have functioned primarily as allocating or distributing agencies deciding where a primary school or a primary health centre should be located or who should get a taccavi loan, how many should be the number of schools and health centres; the details of staff, equipment, buildings for these, and the amount of taccavi loan to be sanctioned in their areas, had been decided at the state level.

The tendency towards planning of programmes at state or central hands has been encouraged by the fact that in much of the rural development activity during the last year the object has been to strengthen
the infrastructure by providing elementary services and facilities, like primary schools, primary health centres, drinking water, wells and approach roads, cooperative credit societies and a basic agency for agricultural extension.

But now as a result of the development which has taken place during the period, the situation is changing fast. As the need for elementary facilities have been met, emphasis in rural development programmes is shifting to provide more advance facilities like secondary schools, cooperative marketing, and processing societies and workshops for the repair and servicing of agricultural implements. Planning for these requires much greater attention to local conditions and it is not possible to apply a uniform pattern to all the areas.

A important consideration in determining the structure of government units is the area they are to serve and the functions they are to perform. The area appropriate to a function is determined partly by financial, but essentially by technical and other considerations.
The optimum size of a local authority for the performance of different functions is not the same and the range of size for the performance of a particular function may vary very widely. As local authorities rendering a wide variety of services to their citizens, the optimum size of the authority has to be determined on the basis of a balancing of the advantages and the disadvantages of a particular size of or most of the major services which the authority has to undertake from the technical and other points of view. As the standard of services it renders will depend also on its own resources, these should be taken into account. The prevalence of a community sense, geography, history, demographic character and potential for development, infrastructure and administrative convenience are other considerations in determining the area of local authorities.

It seems that in the reorganisation of our Panchayati Raj bodies these considerations have not had much influence. Rather the main consideration in determining the area of village panchayats has been the sense of community which is valid one. In case
of block it is a fact that these were the units carved out for Community Development Projects and National Extension Service with an intention to have an area that was easily accessible to its inhabitants and to whom it was easy for the administration, but certainly it was not the most important consideration, for determining the area of the principal authority, in local government. The block was an artificial unit without any sense of community. For a function like planning also the blocks is unsuited and also for executing any large public works and running services like health centres and hospitals. According to Prof. Iqbal Narain the system "appears more conducive to the cause of democracy than to development in its economic sense, because it brings the seat of power and nucleus of participation nearer to the people, though it is not a viable unit in terms of planning and for reasons of non-availability of technical know-how and expertise".

4. Mehta Committee favoured the block as the main unit of decentralisation because (a) it offers an area large enough for functions which the village panchayat can not perform and yet small enough to attract the interests and service of the residents (b) some of the blocks were already functioning as the developmental units and equipped for this purpose with adequate personnel in different fields.

1. Iqbal Narain, Panchayati Raj, Planning and democracy, p.xxxi.
By making the block the principal area, the devolution of larger powers by the State Government on the local authority has been prevented. The ability of the local authority to attract men of talents to its service has also been reduced. Its small size militates against its being an efficient instrument for providing essential services to the public and the growth of leadership that is able to look beyond the village. This is surely placing too large a burden on local authorities of the size of Panchayats and the Block Samitis and too much to expect them to undertake functions like production planning in agriculture and the like.

Though the functions listed in the Panchayati Raj Acts are extensive, the extent of decentralisation effected is limited except in Maharashtra and Gujarat. This is in part due to smallness of the units chosen to be the vehicles of development in all states excepting Maharashtra and Gujarat. Local authorities are subjected to a greater degree of supervision, direction and control than in the past.
The higher local authorities have to approve the budgets of those below them and the government's control through its inspecting agencies and the Collector are retained and even increased.

Local planning even where it is feasible can hardly bear anything more than the statement of the priorities and preferences among a number of alternatives as seen by the local people. To except local authorities like Panchayats and Samitis making five year plans and annual plans in regard to matters other than the provisions of infrastructure needed by the society is to except the impossible. Planning from below has a meaning only in the sense that local needs as expressed by local representatives and interests should be taking into account in drafting plans to the regional and state levels. Channels should exist for such communication of local needs and priorities from the smallest local authority to the planning authority in the State. The functions assigned to local authorities by the legislation could well have been restricted to well defined areas within the capacity of these bodies to undertake. The legislation could well have limited itself to a general clause empowering local authorities to undertake any public works or services of local importance,
The long list of functions give an altogether incorrect view of the responsibilities which the local authorities are actually in a position to undertake.

That is why it was suggested by Naik Committee that the "district body is the best operative unit of local administration as it alone will be capable of providing the requisite resources, necessary administrative and technical personnel and equipment required for a properly coordinated development of the district. In view of this we conclude that, if decentralisation is to be real and effective it would be imperative to establish a strong executive body at the district level."

The efficiency of local services and the maintenance of high standards of performance depends on area resources, the number of quality of the local civil services and their motivation as well as on the leadership provided by the elected chairman and members of the local authority. It cannot be said that our new local authorities have been provided with the best staff or equipment any more than the old. Nor are the other

conditions for efficient administration as, for example, reasonable status, salaries and career prospects for the staff, a single line of control, freedom from political interference etc. to be found in all local authorities.

The development of schemes for evolving a rational pattern of land use, soil conservation, minor and medium irrigation, rural electrifications, transport and social services requires formulation of programmes for the whole area. If the over all development of the given area is to be brought about in an integrated way, it is essential to think in terms of developing centres which would be semi-urban in character and which would serve as nuclei around which various developments in that area revolve. It requires new kind of leadership - political, administrative and technical. That is possible only if the area is not too tiny.

In terms of major functions of Panchayati Raj bodies the balance of advantage would seem to lie with an area far larger than the present block or even taluk, but one that is smaller than the existing revenue district. The size has to be pragmatically determined,
taking a multi-dimensional concept of the area as a physical place, as a problem, as an interorganisational field and as a Community of participation. The ideology of Growth centres " is a pragmatic step in the right direction.

The District Planning Agency

In order to ensure that the district planning agency operates effectively it will be necessary to ensure:

(i) Pooling together of knowledge about the natural and human resources in its area and collection of basic data regarding the social and economic conditions and study of development trend in it, trying to fill in the gaps in information wherever these are found to impede the formulation of development programmes.

(ii) Working out the development plans for the district on the basis of this knowledge and in the light of national and state plans.
(iii) Continuous appraisal and evaluation of the working of the development plans and suggesting corrective actions to the appropriate executive bodies.

Apart from the other administrative, technical staff and the members of academic institutions in the district, it would probably be necessary to have planning officers specially trained for this work, and having the experience of development administration. It may be necessary to provide for a statistician, an agro-economist and an expert in town and country planning. It is important that this core of staff should be specially selected for their competence and the training. Their period of service should also be sufficiently long, so that the team is able to concentrate on the work assigned in a particular district.

For organisational coordination it will also be advisable to have a District Planning Council consisting of the representatives of the Zila Parishads, Panchayat Samities, Municipal institutions, the District Cooperative Banks etc., to assist these devoted and experienced district officers.

The two day All India Seminar on the development of backward districts has recommended to set up district development boards or corporate bodies. Planning Minister Mr. D. P. Dhar has announced in the Seminar that the Planning Commission would prepare a draft of a "specialised agency" for conceiving a time bound programme for the development of the backward regions.¹

¹ The Hindustan Times - August 27, 1972.