CHAPTER 2

INDIAN ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Indian Administration and Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy is an important pillar of the structure of the government. It plays a very critical and central role in nation building in modern societies. Society’s socio-economic development highly depends upon its performance, and success or failure of all crucial programmes depend upon its significant role.

In a wide sense public administration is an old organized governmental activity. Whenever there is organized, social, economic and political activity of some kind, there is administration. In different countries since ancient times there had been some set of public officials to implement public policies. According to Varma, “the Egyptian and Babylonian empires of antiquity, the Vedic kingdom of Punjab and Madhya Pradesh, the vast empire of Romans, the Han and Tan dynasties in China, the almost Pan-Indian empire of Ashoka, the political and empirical system of the Mongals extending from near Kiev to Sinkiang and the Caspian, the kingdoms of the Guptas and Vardhanas—all these had some set of public officials to execute their policies”.

In dealing with public administration, the term ‘public’ needs to be analyzed. ‘Public’ constitutes an important dimension of public administration. There is no standard definition of public. Dwight Waldo defined ‘public’ in terms of words such as ‘government and state’. E.N Gladden said about administration that, “is a long and slightly pompous

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10 Chakroborty Bidyut, REINVENTING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2007, p-15
word, but it has a humble meaning." The Administer derived from the Latin words ad+ministrare means to care for or to look after people to manage affairs. Public administration is a universal process which pursues co-operative effort, be it public or private, military or civil, large scale or small scale. However, today public administration has three distinguishing features, “its purposes have been completely reoriented, and its functions have enormously increased in number, variety and complexity, and its methodology has grown from the trial error stage into an orderly discipline with an organized, ever increasing body of knowledge and experience”.

India’s governmental administration was indispensably a creation of the Indo-British contact of two countries. Its main features were formed during this period. Independent India inherited the concept of centralized civil service from the British India system. To understand the nature of Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and the formal structure or tradition which India accepted from the Indian Civil Service (ICS), it is important to look at its predecessor.

The erstwhile East India Company initiated the idea of organized civil service. But the idea took over two centuries to get a practical shape and was executed by the second decade of 20th century. In the early days, the clerks of the East India Company, called civilians, came to India to seek their fortune and for many years the contractual civil service was the only organized service for civil government in India. As per their own request or petition Court of Directors selected the service of the candidates.

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13 Avasthi Amreshwar, op. cit, 1978, p-4
14 Bansal Premlata, ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1974, p-1
Though the British approach was very much open, efficient, accountable and well structured but the other sources also influenced the system. These were, first, the administrative system of the Mughal rulers whom the British replaced in India, and secondly the thought of British intellectuals about the function of the government and the position of the individual.

An open competitive examination for entry into the Indian Civil Service (ICS) was needed after 1830 when the interests of Indian administration claimed a better selection of recruits. The Macaulay Committee recommended an open competitive examination for the entry into ICS, introduced in 1855.\(^{15}\) The then examination was based on the subjects of liberal education which could have been more useful to Indian civil servants. Objective was to prepare themselves as a generalist civil servant with broad education and general knowledge so that they could serve manifold duties.

From 1858, after the demise of the East India Company’s rule in India, the British civil service took on its administrative responsibilities. The cause of the change in governance had been the Indian Rebellion of 1857, which came close to toppling British rule in the country.\(^{16}\) In the beginning, the British civil service was a key institution in maintaining a colonial form of rule over the Provinces of British India, its major tasks including law and order functions. The different provinces controlled their own civil services.

After 1858, there was a clear distinction between the 'Indian Civilians' of the ICS, who were government officials, and the military officers of the Indian Army. Before 1858, the officers of the East India Company’s

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\(^{15}\) Bansal Premlata, 1974, op. cit. p-4

\(^{16}\) Naithani Sadhana, Choube Pandit Ram and Crooke William, IN QUEST OF INDIAN FOLKTALES: Indian University Press, 2006, p-6
Presidency Armies were company employees, like its administrators, and a career in both was not extraordinary.

The Indian Civil Service (ICS), which after 1886 was officially called the Imperial Civil Service and was also known as the British India Civil Service, was the civil service of the Government of India in the period of the British Raj. Its members were appointed under Section XXXII of the Government of India Act, 1858 of the Parliament of the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{17}

There were two exclusive groups of civil servants during the formative stage of direct British rule in India. The higher employees who entered into covenants with the Company came to be known as "covenanted"\textsuperscript{18} servants, whereas those not signing such agreements came to be known as "uncovenanted". The latter group generally filled the lower positions. This distinction between the covenanted and the uncovenanted virtually came to an end with the constitution of the Imperial Civil Service of India based on the recommendations of the Public Service Commission, 1886–87, though the phrase covenanted continued to be used of anyone in a salaried position with a long term contract—including boxwallah peddlers.\textsuperscript{19} The name Imperial Civil Service was changed to Civil Service of India. However, the term Indian Civil Service (ICS) persisted. The acronym ICS continued to be used to denote the covenanted civil servants.

A third group, the Statutory Civil Service which functioned in the second half of the nineteenth century was disbanded by the beginning of the 1890s. To this group were recruited young men from respectable and affluent Indian families. This service was replaced by the provincial civil

\begin{footnotes}
\item[17] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/civil_service_in_early_India
\item[18] Ibid.
\item[19] Ibid.
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services, which was constituted on the basis of the recommendations of the Aitchison Commission. It consisted of two cadres, Provincial Civil Service and Subordinate Civil Service. Further developments took place as a result of the application of the scheme of cadre organization to the administrative departments. Thus, for example, the departments of Forest and Public Works had both the imperial and provincial branches. The basic pattern of the cadre system in the civil service was thus established following the recommendations of the Aitchison Commission.

In 1912, the Islington Commission was appointed, but its report could be published only in 1917, by which time its recommendations had become outdated due to the First World War and Edwin Montagu's August Declaration presented before the House of Commons on August 20, 1917, that in order to satisfy the local demands, the government was interested in giving more representation to the native Indian population. Therefore, no consideration was given to them. By 1934, the system of administration in India came gradually to consist of seven All India Services and five Central Departments, all under the control of the Secretary of State, and three Central Departments under joint Provincial and Imperial control. The ICS and the Indian Police (Service) were in the 'transferred field', that is, the authority for the control of these services and for making appointments were transferred from the Secretary of State to the provincial governments. It seems relevant to mention that the All India and class I central services were designated as Central Superior Services as early as 1924 in the Lee Commission's report.²¹

²⁰ http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/334619/Lee-Commission

²¹ The Lee Commission proposed in 1924 that 40 percent of future entrants should be British, 40 percent Indians would be directly recruited, and 20 percent Indians would be promoted from the provincial service. By independence in 1947, more than half the service of about 1,000 members was Indians, many with long experience and holding high positions.
When Great Britain took the decision to quit India as a colonial power in 1946, which was going to be a new nation, leaders of India, confronted a difficult choice—whether to continue the “steel frame” of the British administrative system, which was reputed for integrity and efficiency, but conservative in nature and somewhat authoritative in its attitude or to abandon the structure altogether.\textsuperscript{23}

India as an ex-colonial country has a variety of traditional structures, habits and behavioral patterns. It also has modern political and economic structures. Her administrative system is therefore a blend of the administrative systems of the former colonial administration and concepts and directions of the new system established after independence. So it can be said that the present form of Indian bureaucracy is a British legacy.

The bureaucracy in India has faced many challenges and its situational behavior has analyzed by many scholars. Their study has been carried out to know the differences between the “guardian class” i.e. the Indian Civil Service (ICS) of the British days, and the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) after independence.\textsuperscript{24} The change from pre independence to post independence period, was not only from ‘Limited Government’ to ‘Big Government’; it was also from ‘autocracy’ to ‘democracy’\textsuperscript{25}

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\textsuperscript{22} The expression ‘steel frame’ comes from Lloyd George’s speech of 1922 in the British Parliament: ‘If you take that steel frame out of the fabric, it would collapse. There is one institution we will not cripple, there is one institution we will not deprive of its functions or of its privileges; and that is the institution which built up the British Raj – the British Civil Service of India’


\textsuperscript{24} Pliannia G.P and Singh Hoshiar, ADMINISTRATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE, Printwell Publishers, Jaipur, 1985, p-42

\textsuperscript{25} Bhambhi C.P, ADMINISTRATORS IN A CHANGING SOCIETY, National, Delhi, 1972, p-8
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India as a new born country took over the govt. as a running concern; no radical change in the general administration was considered.\textsuperscript{26} At the time of the partition of India, the Indian Civil Service was divided between the new Dominions of India and Pakistan. The parts which went to India retained the name "Indian Civil Service", while Pakistan renamed the parts it inherited as the "Civil Service of Pakistan" (CSP).

The govt. of India Act, 1919, made the division of the field administration into two segments, the central and the provincial, for the first time. Defence, communications, external affairs, customs, income tax and criminal administration were among the more important subjects retained by the centre. Certain other subjects like agriculture, education, industry, land tenures, local self govt. medicine, public health and public works, retained wholly to province.\textsuperscript{27} Though this arrangement was made to form a federation but the objective was to meet the demand of politics and to restrict political concession to the provincial sphere. So the whole arrangement remained unitary in spirit.

Actually the Govt. of India Act 1935 was an attempt to convert a unitary state into a federation. This Act clearly broke the unitary concept of India’s administration. The Act specified three distinct lists of subjects, federal, provincial and concurrent. The provincial administration was conferred the trust upon their councils of ministers which were fully answerable to wholly elected legislature.

The Govt. of India has adopted a parliamentary form which is sovereign in nature and civil service is necessarily subordinate to it. One of the major problems of parliamentary system in India is the proper adjustment between the political wing and the civil service wing of the administrative machinery. This is implied that bureaucracy under the

\textsuperscript{26} Bansal Premlata, op. cit. p-11

\textsuperscript{27} Misra, B.B, GOVERNMENT AND BUREAUCRACY IN INDIA, 1947-76, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1986, p-11
democratic form of govt. is accountable to the people’s representatives; its further implication is that the bureaucracy should adjust to the claims and requirements of a democratic political system.\textsuperscript{28} So this is a challenge to the Indian bureaucracy to accept the power of the political leaders and to give it full co-operation. But in reality bureaucrats do not accept it in performing their function. This is a very common phenomenon that the bureaucrats reproach the ministers and political leaders for all the evils of Indian administration. On the other hand ministers also publicly accuse the efficiency of the civil service. The clash between the political executives and permanent executives in the context of policy making and policy implementing occurred because each role had developed in isolation and neither was shaped by a continuous process of interaction.

The higher civil services needed to adjust to the demands and challenges of a democratic welfare state since independence. That is why some modifications and changes were required in the structure, recruitment and training accordingly. The changes were based on the recommendations of the committee\textsuperscript{29} and commission\textsuperscript{30} appointed by the Govt. of India partly on its own initiative and partly under the pressure of legislative and public comments and criticisms, to enquire into the administrative inadequacies of the system that was devised to meet colonial needs and was not necessarily the structure best suited to the conditions of sovereignty.

At the time of transfer of power the problem of manpower recruitment was immediately connected with a very large vacuum in the strength of the Indian civil service. But Govt. of India made a temporary

\textsuperscript{28} Bhambhri C.P, ADMINISTRATORS IN A CHANGING SOCIETY, National, Delhi, 1972, p-9

\textsuperscript{29} Report of the Public Service Committee, Qualifications for Recruitment, New Delhi, The Manager of Publications, 1956,

\textsuperscript{30} Report of the States Reorganization commission, New Delhi, The Manager of Publications, 1955,
arrangement to meet the problem. The vacancies at the centre were filled by promotion of officers in the central secretariat and other services. In the provinces (now states) the gap was filled largely by officers of the respective provincial services, in addition to a number of ICS officers being withdrawn from the judicial services and appointed to executive posts.\textsuperscript{31}

During 1949 the most important development was the emergency recruitment to the All India Services. It was the extension of the IAS what was formerly known as the Indian states or union of states. This was made to integrate the administration of the country as a whole. Then the states were advised to accept the IAS scheme which was already accepted by the Provincial Governments. The scheme declared that, next recruitment to the IAS would be made from the results of competitive examinations held by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) in the same rules and regulations as with the ‘Provincial Cadres’

The Public Service Commission of India was first established in 1926, with Sir Ross Barker as chairman and four ordinary members. It took shape on the model of the civil service commissioners in Britain.\textsuperscript{32} The Commission changed its name into the Federal Public Service Commission in1937, when the Government of India Act of 1935 came into force. The Act also provided separate Public Service Commission for each Province or a group of two or more Provinces.

To conclude, it must be noted that British rule had a major influence on the structure and functioning of Indian Administration but key changes took place only after independence to make them effective for the citizens of the country. British rule always treated people as subjects to

\textsuperscript{31} Misra B.B, op. cit., p-97

\textsuperscript{32} Misra B.B, op. cit., p-147
be governed but not as citizens to be empowered. That is the reason why British rule was always characterized by suspicion towards ordinary citizens, high levels of secrecy, complete aloofness and alienation from people and above all the ivory-tower approach of officials.

The contemporary Indian administrative system has been built on its British heritage. All India services, civil services recruitment, administrative training, the secretariat system, office procedures, management of districts, revenue administration, police system, budgeting, accounting, auditing and a number of other structural and functional areas of Indian administration have their roots in the British rule.

2.2 State Governments and Administration in India

Under British regime India was divided into three Presidencies. Namely, the Presidency of Fort William in Bengal, the Presidency of Fort St George, in Madras, and the Presidency of Bombay. The earlier name of state was Province.33

The Britishers had introduced federalism, grounded on centre-state relations for the first time in Indian Administration. It continued after independence with the Constitution providing sanctity to the administrative arrangement between the centre and states.

Since independence the Govt. of India has adopted a federal form. The Govt. of India Act (1935) prescribed for a federal union of autonomous provinces who need not derive their authority, political or economic, by devolutions made by the centre, but gained as a direct grant from the Crown under statutory provisions, specifying three distinct lists of subjects, Federal, Provincial and concurrent. Abridgement of the authority of the provincial governments or withdrawn did not depend

33 Maheshwari S R, STATE GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA, Macmillan, New Delhi, 2000, p-14
upon the pleasure of the centre. The administration of the provincial governments was entrusted to their council of ministers and they were responsible to wholly elected legislature.

Indian governmental system can be explained as a complex and integrated system. But the state government’s function as a real government in the context of public welfare and it takes the responsibilities for performing the administration of basic services. In true sense, central government plays only the role of leadership, consultation and advice, but states actually implement all the programs and rest of the responsibilities. In addition, in the case of execution of the central government’s different programs the states are involved at several points. In other words this can be said that states act as agent of central government of its functions.

In the Indian governmental system the predominant position of the states was fully realized by a sensible foreign commentator in Indian affairs. Paul H. Appleby, in his classic report of Indian Public Administration emphasized that, “the nation crucially dependent on the states for actual achievement of the chief programmatic objectives of the nation.”

In 1950 when the present constitution came into being, the constituent units of the Indian union found themselves classified into part A, part B, part C, part D states. The states comprised the then governor’s Provinces; part B states were under Princely jurisdiction; parts C were the chief commissioners’ Provinces and some of the Princely states; and the Andaman and Nicobar Island were the solitary part D state.

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The writers of the Report on Indian constitutional Reforms\textsuperscript{35} were well persuaded towards Provincial reorganization for three main reasons. Firstly the Provinces made themselves artificial, secondly, to made governmental business simple, units should have been smaller and more homogeneous in character, because there was a special significance in the context of the proposed transfer of burden of Provincial govt. to comparatively inexperienced Indian hands. Thirdly, for organizational purposes and transaction of governmental business, linguistic Provinces were required. If a Province wanted to educate itself and used its own language as a medium of daily work, it must have been necessarily a linguistic area. Language, as a rule, corresponds with a special variety of culture, tradition and literature. These factors helped a lot in the progress of a Province. Administrative convenience was also another factor of development of Provinces.

Congress party continued renewal of its commitment to the formation of linguistic provinces. Following the announcement of the Simon Commission\textsuperscript{36} it adopted a resolution in 1927, that the, ‘time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis.’\textsuperscript{37}

In 1955 Congress Party cautiously declared its election manifesto and said that, linguistic regions had no doubt cultural and other importance, but economic, administrative and financial factors had to be taken into consideration.

The public service was the immediate responsibility of the ministry of Home Affairs in the govt. of India, until the creation of a separate department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms as part of the Cabinet Secretariat on 1\textsuperscript{st} August 1970. This responsibility was not


\textsuperscript{36} After the name of its Chairman, Sir John Simon, Maheswari SR, op. cit., p-19

\textsuperscript{37} Report of the States Reorganization Commission, Manager of Publications, New Delhi, 1955, p-10
considered as purely provincial services which continued to be controlled exclusively by provincial services as well as to some All India Services arranged and maintained jointly on behalf of the central and provincial governments.

To conclude, some textual references can be produced here to know documents which were forwarded to the 9 provinces. Those were the central govt. and the governments of Assam, Behar, Bombay, the Central Provinces & Berar, East Punjab, Madras, Orissa, and The United Provinces and West Bengal. All of them were agreed to constitute a service called the Indian Administrative Service in accordance with some following provisions:

1(a) The strength including the number and character of posts, of the Indian Administrative Service shall be as specified in the schedule

(b) The schedule may, if and when considered necessary, be amended by the central govt. in consultation with the appropriate Provincial government.

2(a) Recruitment to the Indian Administrative Service shall be,

i) By direct recruitment; or

ii) By promotion of members of a provincial civil service.

(b) Direct recruits for appointment to the Indian Administrative Service will be selected on the results of an examination held by, or under the authority of, the Federal Public Service Commission and appointed to the service by the central government. The regulations setting out the conditions of eligibility, nature of tests etc. will be framed by the central govt. in consultation with the

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38 The All India Services Manual (2nd edition), corrected up to 1.08.69, pp-404-11
participating provincial governments and the Federal Public Service Commission.\textsuperscript{39}

The civil service at the state level was classified into four categories of services:

1) State Civil Service,
2) The Subordinate Civil Services,
3) The Ministerial Services, and
4) Class IV Services\textsuperscript{40}

In West Bengal State Civil Service is called WBCS (West Bengal Civil Service) and recruitment to those services is based on competitive examination conducted by the state level Public Service Commission.

2.3 District Administration in India

District administration is one of the most vital characteristics of the Indian administrative system. District is the basic territorial unit of administration in India. The district administration is ‘the total management of public affairs within this unit.’\textsuperscript{41} The present concept of district is the creation of the British rule in India. This was created to perform the specific tasks as a hierarchical sub-system of the state administration.

In the early days of the East India Company the district was a territory allotted to its principal representative who was the trading agent and carried on commercial business on his own account. Company was apart from this business. When the company extended its function in addition to trading interests, the principal representative became the

\textsuperscript{39} Misra B.B, op. cit., p-98
\textsuperscript{40} Maheswari SR, op. cit., p146
\textsuperscript{41} Khera, S.S, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1964, p-21
collector of land revenue. Along with this the disposal of army from East India Co., any collector of district became responsible officer for maintaining law and order everywhere.

Warren Hastings (1772-85) was the first person who introduced the planning of a uniform system of district administration in modern India. He implemented the rule where revenue collection and judicial functions were done by the same person; he also created the office of collector on 14th May 1772. Changes in the procedure took place in the constitution time to time as required. Due to the heterogeneous character of Indian society, the office combined to settle down to a form of district administration where the collector united in his office on a permanent basis not only the settlement and collection of revenues, but also the administration of magisterial and criminal judicial functions. He became the executive head of his district.

A few attempts were made to newly constitute the districts which could provide the elements of social and cultural contacts to facilitate the task of a collector. The govt. of India suitably pointed out in one of its memoranda to the Indian Statutory commission in 1930, “it is in the district administration that the Government establishes its most direct contact with the people. The district is a unit which has grown to be part of the people. It is not a mere administrative convenience, but may be regarded as an essential part of the organization of the community. It has established itself in the position, because it corresponds to certain fundamental characteristics of the people.”

In the process of evolution of district administration another important phase appeared. It was establishing the presence of Government in the district. The function of collector was to collect land revenue and other

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taxes and as district magistrate he maintained law and order and administered justice.

The district administration was the test of competency of superior civil servants in British India. The designation of District officers was District Collector or District Magistrate or Deputy Commissioner. The districts covered a large area, the population of some districts being as large as that of Denmark and Newzealand. The duty of District Magistrate was to maintain law and order which was linked up with the wide range to subjects: District Magistrate had to supervise sub-divisional administration and different local self Government organization and co-ordinate all government activities in the district. The district was, thus, a multiple one, an assembly of officers for administering the affairs of government. So the district collector has rightly been called the pivot of district administration. All other officials who were posted in the districts depended on him, and sought his help and advice, not only that, people who had any grievance against any officer came to him, although the matter was not directly related to his responsibility. Since 1872 the year of origin of this office, this overriding role of a district collector was considered. Sir George Campbell, the then Lieutenant Governor of Bengal wrote: “It is the Lieutenant Governor’s wish to render the heads of districts no longer the drudges of many departments and masters of none, but in fact the general controlling authority over all departments in each district......he has, therefore, striven to make the Magistrate collector of a great Bengal district......the real executive chief and administrator of the tract of country committed to him and supreme over everyone and everything excepts the proceedings of the court of justice.” Beside these activities he had to prepare reports about corps’

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43 Prasad G. K, BUREAUCRACY IN INDIA, A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY, Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1974, p-22-23

44 Maheshwari SR, op. cit., p-546
position and future, and, in time of distress, arrangements of relief to the people, that means, a District Magistrate was equally concerned with the public welfare. This was considered as one way of legitimizing the colonial bureaucracy. Along with this he had to play a social role, such as, he was generally the President of almost all the educational, cultural, and social organizations. People used to see him not only as a government officer or functionary but a tangible symbol of the Government. All the efficiency of the administration was depended on his initiative, force, enthusiasm and energy. But since 1919 when constitutional reforms introduced, the authority of the District Officers gradually reduced because new growth of the Secretariats their codes increasing number of rules further contributed to that process.

District administration was one of the major contributions of Britishers to Indian Administration. Even after independence we continued with the same system with District Collector being the fulcrum of district administration in India. Till the passage of 73rd and 74th Amendments, he was the real power centre at the district level. After the passage of the bills, a major change took place with the district collector expected to play the role of facilitator in administration at the district level.

After Independence the district administration has been incorporated to the Indian administrative system with the fundamentals of functional specialization. All the tasks were assigned to different functionaries who were divided into their constituents. Thus, administrative jobs were separated into several departments. Each of these departments based on its activities and again sub divided into smaller segments. In case of a district, when an organization became wider, each segment of a

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45 Prasad G.K, op. cit., p-23-24

46 The amendments were officially enacted through the issuance of government notifications of the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 (commonly referred to as the Panchayeti Raj Act) went into effect on April 24, 1993, and the Constitution (74th Amendment) Act 1992, (the Nagarpalika Act, on June 1, 1993)
department had to maintain harmony in planning so they could fulfill the target.

Since independence a District Collector or Deputy Commissioner started to act for the different organs of the state Government. Many departments of the state Government like the District Agricultural officer, District Medical Officer, Superintendent of Police, Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies etc. were located at the district head quarters and the jurisdiction extended to the districts.

In district administration most of the departments had a connection with their corresponding departments at the state level. To perform the tasks, planning was necessary in each segment and a co-ordination had to be maintained for the state as a whole. So all the departments played an important role in the process, and had to maintain a close contact between the state directorate and the departments at district level.

The budget was mainly allocated to the state directorate. The budget of each of the directorate contained the expenditure on the programs of district level. The allocation of financial resources to complete work at the district level remained to the state level directorate. And the district department or the collectorate had no connection to this allocation. The district authorities had right to re-allocate budgets between the blocks which depended upon their judgment of the situation.\(^47\)

This type of arrangement gave controlling power to these directorates because without clearance from the state level authorities, district collector had no authority to transfer departmental personnel. This was the responsibility of the district collector to prepare confidential reports.

\(^{47}\) Dayal Ishwar, Mathur Kuldeep, Bhattacharya Mohit, DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION, The Macmillan Company of India Limited, 1976, p-19-20
for all officers in the collectorate but the departments at the state level enjoyed the power to modify them to protect a member of their cadre.

A very specific description of the position of District Magistrate has been given by Sir William Hunter. According to him, the District Officer, also known as Collector- Magistrate or Deputy Commissioner is the head of his jurisdiction. His position comprises numerous duties while the stimulus of his personal example enhances the work of his subordinates, The position of the District Officer has been compared to that of the French prefect, but the comparison is not appropriate because the Indian District Officer is not a mere subordinate to a central bureau. The Indian Collector is a strongly individualized worker in every department of rural well being. As the name of the collector magistrate implies, his main functions are two-fold. Besides being a fiscal officer, being in charge of the revenue collection from the land and other sources, he is also a revenue and criminal judge. His multifarious duties extend to his works in a smaller local sphere resembling all that the Home Secretary superintends in England and a lot more. Police, jails, education, municipalities, roads, sanitation, dispensaries, the local transaction and the imperial revenues of his district are matters of daily concern. Acquainting himself with every phase of social life, he is expected to be a lawyer, an accountant, a surveyor, and a ready writer of State papers, also possessing sufficient knowledge of agriculture, political economy and engineering.48

To conclude, district Administration in India is a legacy of the British Raj. District Collectors were members of the Indian Civil Service, and were charged with supervising general administration in the district. The office of the Collector during the British Raj held multiple responsibilities— as Collector; he was the head of the revenue organization, charged with registration, alteration, and partition of

48 Maheswari SR, op. cit., p- 546
holdings; the settlement of disputes; the management of indebted estates; loans to agriculturists, and famine relief.

The district continued to be the unit of administration after India gained independence in 1947. The role of the District Collector remained largely unchanged, except for separation of most judicial powers to judicial officers of the district. Later, with the promulgation of the National Extension Services and Community Development Programme by the Nehru government in 1952, the District Collector was entrusted with the additional responsibility of implementing the government’s development programs in the district.

District Collectors are appointed by the State government, from among the pool of Indian Administrative Service officers in the state. The members of the Indian Administrative Service are either directly recruited by the Union Public Service Commission or promoted from civil services of the State government. The direct recruits are posted as Collectors in their twenties and thirties whereas the promotees from state civil services generally occupy this position in their fifties.

While the actual extent of the responsibilities varies in each State, they generally involve:

As Collector: land assessment, land acquisition, collection of land revenue, collection of income tax dues, excise duties, irrigation dues etc., distribution of agricultural loans,

As District Magistrate: maintenance of law and order, supervision of the police and jails, supervision of subordinate Executive magistracy, hearing cases under the preventive section of the Criminal Procedure Code, supervision of jails and certification of execution of capital sentences.
As Crisis Administrator: Disaster management during natural calamities such as floods, famines or epidemics, Crisis management during riots or external aggression.

As Development Officer: Ex-officio chairman of the District Rural Development Agency, which carries out various developmental activities, Chairman of the District Bankers Coordination Committee, Head of the District Industries Centre.

This is the changing role of the Collector from the ancient times and British times to the contemporary times since Independence. Even though the District Collector's office has undergone many changes since its inception, he still holds major importance in Centre-State relations and development at the local levels.