Rural development is a strategy designed to improve the living standards of the low income groups in rural areas and making the process of their development self-sustaining. The constitution of India manifests the constitutional commitment on the part of the democratic and popular government and entrusts it to take up the task of fulfilling the national goals of achieving social, economic and political justice to all the people in the country in general and rural areas in particular. To achieve these goals several programmes of rural development were undertaken and new approaches were also adopted during the pre and post independent period. The creation of a three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj system as rural local self-government institutions committed to democracy and development is a major breakthrough in the history of rural development in India.
All the developmental programmes designed since the creation of Panchayati Raj institutions channelled through these institutions and the latest centrally sponsored programme like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana the topic on which the present study is made also stood on the pillars of Panchayati Raj namely the Village Panchayats.

Anantapur district which is adjudged as the stalking ground of famine and one of the six drought prone areas in the country is fortunate enough to come into the healing touch of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and launched various development programmes under the cover of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana from April 1, 1989.

With the implementation of the newly coined centrally sponsored programme like Jawahar Rozgar Yojana various achievements could be visualised both at the national, state, district as well as village levels. It paved way for the merger of the two employment generation programmes namely National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme and thus eliminated the chances of having two or more parallel administrative agencies. This resulted in an implementation of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana under the supervision and control of one agency. It is
clearly experienced that the growth of multiplicity of programmes and their related agencies since the decline of Community Development Programme has created administrative difficulties and lack of cohesion resulting in tardy achievements in almost all the sectors. In this connection it may be recalled that introduction of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme in August 1983 was not viewed with sincere favour as there existed already a similar programme of National Rural Employment Programme. It is also certainly in the interest of planning that these programme should have been merged. With an enhanced outlay for a single programme aiming at employment generation through creation of productive assets, planning at gross roots level and above will not only become easier but also be more comprehensive. Monitoring at the execution stage similarly will be possible in the desired direction. It is also a fact that the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana guidelines are very clear with regard to timely release of funds directly to the district level Panchayati Raj body i.e., the Zilla Parishad/DRDA which as a planning body will be in a better position to decide the priority in consultation with the Gram Panchayats or the lowest planning unit. The coverage of entire rural areas under Jawahar Rozgar
Yojana has been envisaged by making it obligatory on the part of the Zilla Parishads/DRDA to distribute minimum of 80 per cent resources to Gram Panchayats. Lastly, the Yojana envisages resource allocation to states and Union territories on the basis of incidence of rural poverty alone instead of 50 per cent weightage to poverty and the rest 50 per cent weightage on combined number of small/marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. There are about 19540 Gram Panchayats in Andhra Pradesh of which 18372 are minor panchayats with less than 5000 population and an annual income of less than Rs.40,000. There are ten Panchayats which have practically no income worth the name. It is these small panchayats which are benefitted most under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana.

**PROBLEMS:**

Conceptually the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is certainly an improved employment programme and is much better conceived than the earlier programmes of National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme. But it also suffers from various problems. Some of them emanate from the fact that although the implementing agencies at the Gram Panchayats have been asked to formulate and execute economically productive schemes, none the less they have not been
provided any technical support/staff. Again, though
the physical and financial audit of the works implemen-
ted by the gram panchayat have been made compulsory,
the authority which should undertake the job has not
been specified. Moreover, the staff pattern of the
grassroots level panchayats does not, in most cases,
have the competence of accounts keeping involving lakhs
of rupees. Besides, though the manual of Jawahar Rozgar
Yojana forbids employment of contractors or middlemen
in one form or the other for executing works under the
Yojana, it is apprehended that even under the Panchayati
Raj bodies the middle men will continue to have their
shares in the same way in which they enjoyed the bene-
fits under National Rural Employment Programme and
Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme though
the latter also banned employment of contractors.

The programme has been launched with high hopes
with total proposed expenditure of Rs.2,625 crores of
which central share was Rs.2,100 crores (including
cost of foodgrains). The proposed outlay consolidates
the estimates on rural employment generation programmes
like National Rural Employment Programme and Rural
Landless Employment Guarantee Programme and assumes
an additionality from the new surcharge on income-tax.
The enhanced allocation for the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has already put the State Government in some sort of awkwardness as it became difficult for most of them to accommodate the extra burden of Rs. 185 crore over and above the normal share of Rs. 340 crores for National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme, particularly when their budgets were already prepared before the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana could be announced with increased provision in 1989.

There is also bitter criticism of the programme on the ground that it is an encroachment on the jurisdiction of the states. The Yojana was described as a 'Political gimmick' on the eve of 1990 general elections. It is said that the Scheme was only a new banner under which the National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme would merge and operate. "Even the bottles have not been changed. Only a new label has been posted for unsuspecting voters". Unfortunately, the criticism ignores the several points of difference between the old and the new schemes mentioned earlier. It may further be noted that it is not the first time that the existing rural development schemes were merged
into new ones. Earlier, the SFDA and MFLA were merged to become SFDA which itself was made a part of IRDP. The Food for Works Programme later became National Rural Employment Programme. It was contended by the Government that after gaining experience in the working of rural development schemes, new programmes were undertaken as a measure of improvement. The merger of National Rural Employment Programme and Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme would perhaps have not been noticed if it was not done before the general elections.

It is rightly contended by many that Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is riddled with too many operational problems and difficulties. The elaborate guidelines issued by the Central Government may, in fact, act as constraints on the efficient implementation of works. The criteria for allocation of resources is too stiff and complicated. The distribution of funds between panchayats is made on the basis of population with the stipulation that population less than one thousand should be considered as thousand. The formula for distribution is said to provide a raw deal to tribal villages. Thus the district as a whole may obtain more funds because of the large tribal population but
the invariably small tribal villages would get limited funds compared to the larger non-tribal villages of the district. The expenditure targets prescribed may prove to be another major hurdle for the panchayats. The Union Government prescribed expenditure targets of 10 per cent, 20 per cent, 25 per cent and 35 per cent for the four quarters of the year and any shortfall in a quarter would result in proportionate reduction in the release of next instalment. It is almost impossible for the panchayats with their several limitations to stick to the schedule and maintain expenditure targets on works. Consequently they would stand to lose the benefit of the full grant.

Sectoral allocations prescribed for the Yojana is strictly followed may prove to be another major impediment in the efficient utilisation of funds. Out of the total allocation for the Anantapur district, six per cent is meant for the Indira Awas Yojana and out of the balance amount 80 per cent is distributed among the Panchayats and 20 per cent is retained by the Zilla Praja Parishad. Out of the funds retained by the Zilla Praja Parishad, five per cent and ten per cent are set apart for administrative expenditure and maintenance respectively. The balance amount is to be utilised
for different sectoral works. Out of the total works 35 per cent is earmarked for economically productive assets, 25 per cent for social forestry, fifteen per cent for Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries and 25 per cent for other works including roads and buildings. The same expenditure pattern has to be followed by the Gram Panchayats also which is described by many as an herculean task.

SUGGESTIONS:

In view of the weakness and criticism pointed out in the implementation of the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, there is an urgent need to put the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana on the right track. So, in order to improve the performance of the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana in particular, certain corrective measures are suggested here. They are as follows:

Training - Need of the Hour:

The Jawahar Rozgar Yojana puts a heavy responsibility on sarpanchas and panchas of a village panchayat. As such, they need to be trained for picking up the right types of projects. They would also need to be told the rudimentary principles of planning so that the projects can be such as can be dovetailed into
long-term programmes.

Mixing of Funds - Not desirable:

The Yojana funds should not to be mixed with other funds of the DRDAs and ZPPs. Fund allocation criteria for allocation of resources to the States is backwardness, population of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and agricultural productivity, while at the village level it is only population. It is suggested that the criteria for allocation of resources at village panchayat level should be the same as it is at the state level because poverty level differs from one village to another.

Multi-pronged Approach - A necessity:

It is suggested that any scheme for generation of full employment in rural areas should take certain factors into consideration. For example, there is a highly skewed distribution pattern of resource base in the form of landholding, productive assets and levels of technology adopted in villages. Further there are wide differences in the pattern of incomes, saving potential, investment capabilities, risk-taking, entrepreneurial potentials, educational levels and access to knowledge about improved agricultural factors. Dependency on traditional employment sources, as in the
case of agricultural labour, is also an important social structural constraint.

**Establishment of agro-based industries - Essential:**

Under the Jawahar Rozgar Yojana agro-based industries should be established throughout the country for providing supplementary part-time employment to farmers and their families. The setting up of cottage and rural industries will also stop migration to cities.

**Need for responsive administration:**

A responsive administration becomes imperative when programmes of rural development are initiated and put into operation. The need for an efficient and honest administration is now no more a theoretical slogan. The Government is now busy to bring about radical social changes to usher in a welfare State. Rural employment would bring about social changes for a new awakening in the masses with regard to their rights, duties and responsibilities towards the society in which they live. This perhaps would be the greatest contribution of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana for decades to come.

**Need for Quick evaluation:**

Quick evaluation of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana,
concurrently with its implementation, should be assigned to non-official research institutions. The Department of Rural Development should confine itself to the monitoring of the programme.

**Need for Modification of Guidelines:**

The guidelines are so complicated that in the absence of assistance from officials even the educated Sarpanchas may not understand them. Hence, the guidelines should be modified and simplified.

**Skills of Financial Management:**

The present study also revealed that there is lack of skills in financial management and techniques among the officials and non-officials who are associated with the execution of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana in the district. Hence it is necessary that these persons must be deputed for a type of orientation training programmes to institutions like National Institute of Rural Development where they can be exposed to latest techniques of financial managements especially related to rural development programmes. This would certainly eliminate a kind of slackness that is visible among the persons involved in Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and they would be able to spend the total amount earmarked for each programme.
Monitoring Officers - Motivation:

It is revealed that by and large the Gram Panchayat Sarpanches in the district and sometimes not evincing keen interest continuously in implementation of the development programmes. Hence it is necessary that the monitoring officers are requested to contact the Sarpanches personally and motivate them to expedite the progress. The Bottlenecks if any like engineering problem and so on may be noted and communicated to the District Development Officer for making further arrangements to meet the bottlenecks.

Need for Proper Book - Keeping:

Maintenance of Accounts for the grants released to Gram Panchayats under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana is of paramount importance. This will certainly reflect on the honesty of the executing officers of the Yojana. Even the Monitoring Officers must verify the accounts maintained by the Gram Panchayats especially the Cash Book, vouchers and so on periodically. Proper assistance and training must also be given to the secretarial assistants in this aspect of Book-keeping. The District Development Officer and the District Panchayati Officer must pay keen attention in this aspect. They must broadly check up whether grants released to the Gram
Panchayats are brought to pass book and utilised properly or not. It is also necessary to verify whether the estimates have been prepared and sanctioned administratively and technically by the competent authority may be verified in respect of all the works grounded.

**Co-ordination - backbone of Success:**

The success of any developmental programme always depends upon the Co-ordination among all the participating agencies and personnel in the planning designing and execution of the programme same is the case with the latest programme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. No doubt the Gram Panchayats are the first to get benefit out of the implementation of the Yojana but however the other agencies and institutions like the State Government, Zilla Praja Parishad, the DRDA, the Panchayati Raj Officials including the Mandal Development Officers must function with a sense of Co-operation and Co-ordination with the Village Panchayats in all related activities to success the programme.