CHAPTER – 3

STRUCTURE OF DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The general structure of the administration in the district is in a series of tiers, usually three, sometimes four tiers. There will be one level which comprehends the whole district within its jurisdiction. It may be the Collector, the District Magistrate, or the Superintendent of Police or the district agricultural officer; it may be the chairman of the Zilla Parishad, or the district education officer, or the health officer and so on.

Secondly, there is usually an intermediate territorial level. Sometimes there are two intermediate levels in the large districts. The intermediate level can be the tahsil, or a sub-division, or a block, or a Panchayat Samiti, a circle inspector of agriculture and so on.

Then at the ground level, in the so-called grass-roots level, the village provides a convenient territorial jurisdiction. Here we have the village panchayat, the nyaya panchayat, the village headman, the village chaukidar, the village patwari, the village level worker – each an important element in the administration of the district.

Now one observes a certain common pattern of departmental and functional jurisdiction, normally at three and sometimes at four levels of the District Administration.

After having a brief account of the structure, now we move to the detailed discussion of the structure of District Administration.

DISTRICT

Each district in India has an officer-in-charge who represents the state governments in that area in the capacity of Collector, District Magistrate and District Officer. He is the head of the administration in the district and for the
performance of his functions he has a well-knit hierarchy in the district which will be dealt in the succeeding pages. The function of the Collector are well known; their keynote is ‘Quantity, not Quality’;\(^1\) Whatever cannot be assigned to a well-defined or technical department is given to the Collector, but which ever serves as a source of strength to him like the control over the police is assigned to an outsider.

**REVENUE DIVISION / SUB-DIVISION**

The district is geographically divided into a number of units known as sub-divisions in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, revenue division in Tamil Nadu, and *prants* in Maharashtra. Each sub-division is placed under the charge of an officer of IAS rank or State Civil Service Class I officer. The official-in-charge of this unit bears a variety of names; he is called Sub-Divisional Officer (SDO) or Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) in Uttar Pradesh, Revenue Divisional Officer or Sub-Collector in Tamil Nadu. *Prant* Officer (Deputy Collector or Assistant Collector) in Maharashtra. This unit helps to further decentralise authority as well as provide field training to recruits to the IAS. The sub-division is a principal unit of land revenue administration between the district and the village in the States of Assam, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.\(^2\)

The Sub-Divisional Officer is a colleague of the Collector, occupying a position in his sub-division which the Collector does in the district but carrying out the orders of the Collector faithfully. Like the Collector, he is a generalist area administrator and is in touch with other government departments in his sub-division and acts as the head of the extension team. The Government expects him to have the same general knowledge of his sub-division as the Collector has of the district. The Collector holds him responsible for the honest and proper discharge of duties by the subordinate revenue staff including those of the village and for

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keeping him informed about all things and men in the sub-division including matters relating to law and order and the general well-being of the people. He is link between the District Collector and the tashsildar in revenue matters and the District Magistrate and the Station Officer (Police) in matters relating to law and order.

According to Prof. S.R. Maheshwari, the sub-divisions may be classified into two broad types – an ‘office’ type sub-division, and the ‘touring’ type sub-division. In the former, the SDO maintains an office just as a Collector or a Tehsildar does. Here, the headquarters of the sub-division is usually located within the sub-division itself. This type came into existence during the earliest phase of British rule in India and has since continued. The States which represent this type are Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam and Rajasthan. There is also a touring type subdivision in which the SDO does not maintain any office. He is a touring officer, gathering information, transmitting it to his district chief, contacting people, supervising subordinate officials and finally, looking after the execution of the governmental activities in his sub-division. The SDO is “primarily”... an inspecting, testing and supervising officer, hearing appeals and trying cases. He moves about the villages and ascertains the villagers’ grievances and wants and gains experiences.³

The SDO is thus a valuable field aide to the District Collector and is an integral part of the District Administration. Besides law and order duties, he is responsible to the Collector for the maintenance of maps and records of his sub-division, assessment and collection of land revenue. Appointments and transfers of lekhpals are made by him and the responsibility for their disciplined working rests on him. Inspection of the office of the registrar Kanungo in the tehsil is an annual feature in which special attention is paid to mutations in land records, timely and

³ Government of Bombay, Report of the (Bombay) District Revenue Officers, Bombay, 1949, p. 18
correct preparation of statistical returns regarding crops, and area, holdings, land revenue, and rentals, crop failures and remission of land revenue, etc.\textsuperscript{4}

**Tehsil\textsuperscript{5}**

Each sub-division is divided into two or more administrative areas called Tahsils in Andhra Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, and called taluks (talukas) in Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Maharashtra and Mysore. Tahsil is the basic unit for purposes of general administration, treasury, land revenue, land records and other items of work. It has the closest and widest contact with the rural population.

Each tehsil usually comprises between 200-600 villages. A village in India is a specific area of land generally, but not necessarily, inhabited. In inhabited villages, several village officers, such as accountants, watchmen and others, are posted or recognized. The size of village communities varies significantly from State to State; on average, approximately 68 per cent of the total rural population live in very small villages (less than 500 persons), 19 per cent in small villages (between 500 and 1000 persons), 9 per cent in medium-sized villages (between 1000 and 2000 persons), three per cent in large villages (between 2000 and 5000 persons) and one per cent in very large villages (over 5000 persons).\textsuperscript{6}

The officer-in-charge of the tehsil is the Tehsildar who belongs to the State Civil Services. He is the principal official in the district administration responsible for actual revenue collector. His performance, also, is judged by his efficiency as a Collector of revenues. He is the sub-treasury officer, thus accepting the payment of the revenue. “But a Tehsildar who merely sits in a tehsil waiting for the land revenue to come in would not get very far.”\textsuperscript{7} The Tehsildar is often assisted by the Naib Tehsildars, is Kanungs, and Patwaris or Lekhpals. His main duties include

\textsuperscript{5} Bihar has no Tahsils
\textsuperscript{6} David C, Potter, *op. cit.*, 19
\textsuperscript{7} S.S. Khera, *District Administration in India*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1964, p. 181}
supervision of: timely collection of land revenue and other dues such as recovery of *taccavi* dues, etc., and maintenance of land records and agriculture data; maintenance of records pertaining to crop damage due to floods and other natural calamities and distribution of government funds meant for this purpose; assistance to Deputy Commissioner and the SDO in the exercise of their power and duties; to decide the revenue cases; and to provide services to the State and the Central Governments wherever required.

The Tehsildar may delegate his power to the Naib-Tehsildars. In this absence, one of the Naib-Tehsildars holds charge of the tahsil. In Uttar Pradesh State, in Naib-Tehsildar exercises first class powers in the maintenance of law and order. He acts as Deputy Collector and assists the Tehsildar in his revenue works. He also looks after all important visitors. He gets a number of reports prepared from the officials under him and submits them periodically. He keeps in touch with the people in his tehsil or sub-tehsil, to hear their grievances, and tries to redress them. Floods and other calamities, cases of land acquisition, watch on the maintenance of stock supplies etc., are some other matters which occasionally cast a heavy burden on him. He also extends co-operation and help in development work.\(^8\)

The Tehsildar is a the chief agent of government at the taluka level, especially when the sub-division officer is not resident in taluka headquarters. In these cases the Tehsildar is a miniature Collector, with the Inspector of Police (or Station Officer), Assistant (or Sub-Assistant), Surgeon, Overseer (or Assistant Engineer), Veterinary Officer, Agriculture Inspector, and such other departmental officials, in company; he too co-ordinates their services and receives their co-operation in his own general administration. The Government look to him for the execution of their orders, sent through the Collector who may add his own directions while communicating to the Tahsildar by virtue of his position as supervisor of taluka administration. These directions are necessary on

\(^8\) Parmatma Sharan, *op. cit.*, p. 220
developmental matters which involve expenditure of public funds or use of tact or abuse of power by minor revenue officials. Conversely, Tehsildar owes a duty to his collector in regard to distribution of patronage, grant of muafi lands, appointments of minor revenue officials and general position under law and order. Less directly, he has to satisfy the collector about his plans for communal harmony (if threatened), public hygiene and sanitation, bandobust and material help for visiting ministers, secretaries and high officials or parties of high officials, arrange their programme in the taluka and keep a katchful eye and general check upon supply position in the talula and general overall position in the taluka administration. He should not only be personally energetic and alert but also drive the government machinery with speed and efficiency and report any breakdown in it to the collector after taking necessary action to a temporary repairing.

The outlines sketched above give a picture of the normal conditions generally all over India. But there are a few states where this normal type does not exist and where the system is slightly different. In Bengal there are no Tehsildars. There is a cadre of Sub-Deputy Collectors which corresponds to that of Tehsildars. There are neither Inspectors Accountants. There is an official by name Kanungo who is really Surveyor and does not have any resemblance to his namesake in other States.

In Assam the Tahsildar is in the same position (more or less) as in other States. In Punjab the position of the Tehsildar is the strongest; there is no place for a Sub-Division Officer in the State. The few who exist are of the resident type. This helps to make the Tehsildar the Chief Executive of his taluka and the most influential of all government servants in it. He has usually the powers of a first-class Assistant Collector and Magistrate.

Thus, there are four categories of tehsildars in India in the following ascending order: (1) non-existent (as in West Bengal), (2) weak (where the sub-division officer is resident), (3) stronger (where the sub-division officer is not
resident), and (4) strongest (where there are no sub-division officers at all, as in the Punjab).⁹

**PARGANA**

The next lower rung of the revenue administration is called a Circle in Punjab and Maharashtra, Pargana in Uttar Pradesh and *Firka* in Tamil Nadu. The circle is headed by a Kanungo in Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, a Circle Inspector in Maharashtra and a Revenue Inspector in Tamil Nadu. He is entrusted with supervision and a compilation of land records maintained by the Patwaris under his control. He is the first line supervisor in the chain of revenue administration in the States.¹⁰

Revenue Inspector is more a clerk than an authority, more an inspector than a worker and a more link in the chain than any independent self. There is nothing difficult or extraordinary about his powers and duties. As the name indicates he is an inspector in all matters relating to revenue, from the beginning to the end. He works under the orders and subject to disciplinary control of the Collector, the sub-division officer and Tehsildar. He is usually an individual trained and tested for his post. His duties are, generally, supervision of the Accountants, scrutiny of village maps, testing of the accountant’s books and statistics, detection of agricultural deterioration, holding enquiries, attestation of documents and functioning as Tehsildar’s immediate executive Assistant in the firka or circle. He has to tour a lot and to move but slowly from place to place.

In Madras there are two other kinds of Revenue Inspectors, known as Registrar Kanungo and Sadar Kanungo. The Registrar Kanungo remains at the teshil office and does not tour. He may have six to eight assistants. On the other hand, the Sadar Kanungo is placed at the Collector’s headquarters and has to do his work both by staying at headquarters and by touring. He is superior in status to his namesakes in the Tehsils and *firkas* or circles.

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⁹ K.N.V. Sastrī, *op. cit.*, p. 86
The duties of the registrar Kanungo are receipt by registers and papers from the accountants, compiling taluka statistics for submission to the Collector, verifying the entries in the records and returns received from below, being in charge of the taluka record room, keeping the pay rolls and details of the accountants, holding stock forms and registers for distribution, maintaining the records and registers dealing with the land system, especially statement relating to emergency measures, reading the cases presented for correction in the accountants records and keeping the registers showing the correct and upto date lists of government property. On the other hand, the duties of the Sadar Kanungo are consolidation of Registrar Kanungo’s statements for district purposes, taking action on Tehsildar’s reports and papers of land system and preparing cases for remissions and suspensions of land-revenue.

In other words, this Kanungo is really a general adviser to the Collector on land records administration. He checks just those which are already checked by the Sub-Division Officer and Tehsildar. But he is that of an expert, an experienced revenue inspector and a man who has a broader point of view. His business is to indicate broadly the general features, facts and requirements on which the Collector might issue general orders.

VILLAGE

From Pargana we move to the village level, which is the lowest unit for all administrative and fiscal purposes in all the States in India. Whereas the Collector is regarded as the pivot of the District Administration, the Patwari has been referred to, and rightly, as the king-pin of the revenue administration in the district. “Anyone who either comes from a village or has lived in village, or has had anything to do with a village, especially concerning the land or agriculture, will appreciate what is meant when we say that the patwari is the king-pin of the revenue administration in the district.”

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11 S.S. Khera, *op. cit.*, p. 108
The designation of this official varies in the different States. He is called a *Karamchari* in Bihar, *Patel* and *Talati* in Maharashtra, Village Headman and *Karnam* in Tamil Nadu, Village *Munsif* or Accountant in Orissa and *Lekhpal* and *Chowkidar* in Uttar Pradesh.

He is the most powerful government representative, connected with land records at the village level and has in his charge one or more villages. He performs multifarious duties including maintenance of land records and statistical data, land measurement, helping other departments such as the public health department in undertaking preventive and curative measure at the time of any epidemic. In Uttar Pradesh he has to report to the representative of the animal husbandry department whenever there is any outbreak of cattle diseases, and to a Magistrate or to an officer of the excise department or to the police the moment he notices that any excisable article not licensed under the Excise Act is being manufactured or any unlawful cultivation of any such drug is being carried out.  

In some States, domicile certificates and certificates of Backward Class, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe are usually issued by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, on the basis of his reporting.

It is the Patwari who make entries of rights of tenants and landlords and connected matters. He prepares and files the following at the taluka office for consolidation and submission to the district: Papers regarding crop, rent and cultivation areas, Papers mentioning the mode of irrigation, rotation of crops, yield per acre etc. All these will be sent by the Collector to the State which in turn will send all the similar ones in a consolidated form to the Government of India. These constitute the source of agricultural and land statistics studied by experts who advise the Central Government on policy matters. But they are most useful to the revenue officers at the district and taluka levels. They reveal details of agricultural conditions from year to year or for a period of years, changes in methods of

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cultivation and irrigation, substitution of crops, etc., which are all vital to levy and collection of land-revenue.

The remaining duties of a Patwari are those of a general administrator. Irrigation, public health, excise, co-operative enterprise, agriculture, police and even a few matters under Court of Wards Act came substantially within his perview. Fresh duties have been assigned in recent times, such as identifying voters at elections, census work, help in the procurement of food grains, co-operation in the opening of primary schools, advice on the constitution of Panchayat etc.

The introduction of Community Projects and National Extension Schemes has increased the burden of the village officials, especially the Patwari. Time alone will show how far his office will undergo modification in status and character. The only forseeable change would bee the prescription of higher salary etc. But he must continue to reside in the village and to keep aloof from local money market.

**BLOCK**

Rural areas in districts are divided, for purposes of rural development into blocks, the area of which may or may not coincide with a tahsil (taluk). Each block is in charge of a Block Development Officer, whose immediate superior is the Collector (in some States, the Sub-Divisional Officer). Blocks are further divided into ten circles, each of which is supposed to cover ten villages but, in fact, this is rarely the case. Each circle is in charge of a Village Level Worker (called a *Gram Sevak*).

**PANCHAYATS**

Finally, there are village panchayats in rural areas of districts. A panchayat is an elective, statutory body representing one or several villages. The average number of villages per panchayat varies significantly from State to State. The average population per Panchayat also varies.

It is on the basis of this framework that the main components of the District Administration organise their work. The law, order and land revenue components
are organized in the main on a district – sub-division-tahsil-village basis; the community development and Panchayati Raj components are organized on a district-block-panchayat basis.

Thus, it can be said that the general structure of administration in the district is in a series of tiers, usually three, sometimes four tiers. There will be one level which comprehends the whole district within its jurisdiction. Secondly, there is usually an intermediate territorial level. Sometimes there are two intermediate levels in the larger district. Then at the ground level, in the so-called grass roots level, the village provides a convenient territorial jurisdiction. Thus one observes a certain common pattern of departmental and functional jurisdictions, normally at three and sometimes at four levels of the District Administration.

MUNICIPAL AND CIVIC SYSTEM

Apart from the formal District Administrative structure formulated by the colonial master, India has a long tradition of municipal and civic administration from time immemorial. A brief resume of the municipal and civic system in India is being presented in the succeeding paragraphs.

The urban local government institutions in India, as it exists today, is a British innovation. The rudiments of modern municipal government took its shape and was heralded for the first time in the presidency town of Madras (1639). The 1726 Municipal Charter emphasised the setting up of Municipal Corporations in residency towns of Bombay and Calcutta and also reconstitution of the Madras Corporation. In 1842, steps were taken to introduce municipal government also to small and far flung towns in the provinces by enacting the Bengal Act of 1842. This was applicable to Bengal only. Another attempt was made again in 1850, this time on the all India basis by enacting a new Act. With the Resolution of 1864, municipal authorities were set up in almost all the important towns of India.

13 Government of India (Ministry of Health), Report of the Local Finance Enquiry Committee, Manager of Publication, Delhi, 1951, p. 7
However, they were still not conforming to the spirit of ‘local-government’ as the District Magistrate enjoyed overwhelming powers of control over municipal authorities.\textsuperscript{15} In the presidency towns, new legislations were enacted in 1884 in Madras and in 1888 in Bombay and Calcutta. The 1888 Bombay Act was the most important and progressive Act. This formed the model for municipal governments in big cities and it continues to be the model even today. The feature of this Act is that it bifurcates the deliberative and executive functions.

Presently, five types of municipal authorities exist in different types of cities and towns. There are: (1) Municipal Corporations, (2) Municipalities, (3) Notified Area Committees, and (5) Cantonment Boards. The Cantonment Boards are set up only in the cantonment areas and they are partially elected and partially nominated. It is only the civil areas annexed with the military cantt. which send elected representatives to the Cantonment Board. The other four types of local authorities are constituted in the urban areas only.

Municipal Corporation is set up only in the Metropolitan Cities and other larger cities and towns purely at the discretion of the State Governments. However, in a few states the criteria for constituting it are laid down in the Act itself based on population basis. The elected Council, the Standing Committee and the Municipal Commissioner who is an administrator appointed by the State Government constitute the basic organs of the Municipal Corporation. The deliberative functions have been separated from the executive functions of the corporation. The corporation is under the direct control and supervision of the State Governments.

Municipalities have lesser autonomy, smaller jurisdiction and have to deal with the state government through the state Directorate of Local Self-Government or through the Divisional Commissioner. They are subject to comparatively detailed supervisory control and guidance by the State government. In all the

States Municipality consists of an elected council, executive / finance committee, the chairman (also called President in some states) and the Chief Executive Officer.

Notified Area Committees (NACs) are set up in growing towns not yet fit to have a municipality. NACs are governed by a special provision in the State Municipal Acts. This committee is an entirely nominated body.

The Town Area Committee is constituted in small town having pronounced rural attributes. This committee is governed under special State enactments with membership: (a) either wholly elected, (b) wholly nominated, or (c) with a combination of both of these elements, and severely restricted powers.

Lord Ripon who was perhaps alone in his liberalism looked at the problem of local self-government in distinctly different light. He thought that political education and administrative efficiency should be put into perspective. He regarded local self-governing institutions as instruments of political and popular education.

The next landmark is the Report of the Decentralization Commission which was set up in 1907 to enquire into the financial and administrative relations of the Government of India and the provincial governments and of ‘authorities subordinate to them’ and to report ‘whether by measure of decentralisation or otherwise’ the system of government could be ‘simplified and improved.’ It submitted its Report in 1909. Their recommendations were sound but cautious, conceived in terms of administrative improvement, rather than of national political aspirations.

The Centralisation Commission emphasised the importance of village organization, insisted on universal establishment of taluka and tehsil boards as the ‘principle agencies of local governments’, suggested measures to strengthen financial resources of rural boards, favoured continuance of District Magistrates as Chairmen of District Boards and various other measures.
These recommendations were whittled down in process of transmission into the Resolution of 1915. By the time this Resolution was issued the proposals became out of date in view of the state of national political aspirations. The Government of India set to work to evolve an advanced policy which came to be embodied in the Resolution of 1918.

After Independence, almost all states of the country enacted their municipal and panchayat acts realising the need for decentralisation in development and popular participation. However, these municipal and civic bodies got stepmotherly treatment both at the hands of the state government and bureaucracy. As a result, the entire thrust of decentralisation and popular participation bewildered.

However, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts 1992 give these bodies constitutional status with both deliberative and executive powers. And now it is hoped that given the complete freedom they may prove to be the real vehicle of popular participation, decision-making and effective implementing agencies of various development programmes.

**DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION : THE ADMINISTRATIVE SETUP**

Before the launching of the Community Development Programmes (CDP) in the early fifties, the serving Ministries / Departments carried on their activities in rural areas through their own functionaries at the state, district and village levels independently and in isolation of each other. As there were not many developmental activities the Ministries and Departments were able to carry on some minimal development works touching a few aspects, covering only a small section of the rural population. It was mostly the vocal and influential persons of the village community who derived the benefits of these activities.

The Grow More Food Enquiry Committee Report, 1952, and the First Five Year Plan suggested a common extension machinery on behalf of the principal development departments of the Government. Thus in 1952, the Community Development Programme was experimented in developmental administration in
which “the emphasis was on popular effort organised under the leadership of a specially selected hand of officers receiving cooperation from normal official agencies.”

With the inception of the CDP in the country, for the first time an attempt was made at a systematic integrated rural development. The basic intention of the programme was to serve the rural people and to reach as large a number of them as possible. The concept of making one multipurpose functionary responsible at the grass-root level of all rural development activities, particularly in the field of agricultural development, was conceived and put into operation in order to meet the requirements of reaching the rural households, specially farming households, with an integrated package of services. Thus for the first time the idea of the Village Level Worker (VLW) supported at the block level by a team of subject-matter specialists in the field of agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperatives, panchayats, social education, public health programme for women and children, etc. was implemented. Unparalleled in the history of any developing country, it was an epoch-making step.

Every district in India has most of its rural area under block administration. When blocks are opened each year, they begin a ‘life’ of eleven years. They receive funds and have a complement of personnel depending on their ‘stage’ of development. There are three stages: a Pre-Extension Stage in the first year, Stage I in the following five years and Stage II in the final five years. Thus, every block in India at any given time is either Pre-Extension, or Stage I, or Stage II.

During the Pre-Extension stage, a few of the personnel are assigned to the block to do initial survey work and start agricultural demonstrations in the villages. When the Block enters stage I, a period of intensive development census; the principal aim of the full complement of community development personnel is

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16 U.L. Goswami, The Structure of the Development Administration, IJPA, Vol- 1, No- 2, April-June 1955, P- 110
17 David C. Potter, Government in Rural India: An Intd. To Contemporary District Administration, G.Bell and Sons Ltd, London, 1964, P-32
to ensure that panchayats, village schools, village co-operatives, and statutory organisations at the block and district levels are established and begin to function well. During stage II, a post-intensive stage of five years, the responsibility for rural development is to be entrusted gradually to these organisations so that central financial assistance can be withdrawn.\textsuperscript{18}

Each stage I and stage II block is provided with community development funds according to the provisions of a schematic budget prescribed from New Delhi. Each stage I block works within a maximum of Rs. 1,200,000 for the five years period; stage II blocks each have a maximum of 500,000 rupees for a similar period.\textsuperscript{19}

The full complement of block personnel is supposed to be posted to every stage I and stage II block. The only distinction is that whereas in stage I the medical personnel are paid from block funds, in stage II their cost is borne by the Public Health Department in each stage. The full complement consists of the following: (i) One Block Development Officer, (ii) Eight Extension Officers, one each for agriculture, animal husbandry, rural engineering, social education, programme for women and children, co-operation, rural industries, and panchayats, (iii) Ten Village Level Workers, (iv) Two Women Village Level Workers, and (v) Other supporting staff (progress assistants, clerks, jeep drivers, etc.).\textsuperscript{20}

There is also a Medical Officer for the Primary Health Centre, with supporting medical personnel. Each block has a primary Health Centre usually located at block headquarters.

The Community Development Block was made a unit of planning and development for the population of about one lakh and an area covering one hundred villages. For all the rural development programmes at the block level and

\textsuperscript{18} See Report of Ministry of Community Development and Cooperation, Deptt. Of Community Development, 1960-61
\textsuperscript{19} David C. Potter, Op.Cit, P-32
\textsuperscript{20} IbId.,P-33.
for the block level functionaries, the Block Development Officer was supposed to act as a coordinator. The District Collector remained the coordinator at District Level and the Development Commissioner coordinated the activities of all the concerned departments at the state level. At the national level, the Department of Rural Development (then known as Department of Community Development) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation coordinated and supported by Community Development Programmes.

The three-tier Panchayati Raj Institution and structure followed the CDP launched in 1952. Though the Community Development Block organization has covered the entire country, the three-tier Panchayati Raj structure with full delegation of authority is yet to be established in many states. For quite some time the CDP has come under a lot of criticism all of which is not entirely unjustified. However, it cannot be denied that it has made a positive contribution in the field of rural development. In the rural areas a viable infrastructure has been established right from the village level up to the District and State levels with a happy mix of government paid block organization and elected Panchayati Raj institutions in most of the states. The block as an effective unit of administration in the countryside has come to stay. It has also played a significant role in the implementation of various development programmes including the spread of modern agricultural technology and High Yielding Varieties Programme. The basic aim of the CDP was to generate community effort and unite the same with the efforts of the government towards bringing about improvement in the economic, social and cultural level of the rural community. However, it was not an easy task to bring about improvement in the economic and social transformation of the vast rural masses most of whom were illiterate and living in a tradition-ridden society. This very complex factor resulted in another distortion: the rural elite quickly came forward and derived the maximum advantage from the CDP and the so-called “Green-Revolution”. Thus, the benefits of Community Development could not reach the poor masses and as such their lot more or less remained the
same. This was realised during the Fourth Plan period and as a result, an effort was made to take up various programmes specially designed for the weaker sections of rural India.

**SPECIAL PROGRAMMES FOR WEAKER SECTIONS**

Some of the special programmes taken up in the Fourth and Fifth Five Year Plans, at a glance, are:

**SFDA / MFAL**

The problem of the small and marginal farmers is enormous. The All India Rural Credit Review Committee in its report published in 1969 brought out the immediate need to undertake pilot projects designed to help small farmers (having holdings between one and two hectares) who are potentially viable. To find institutional solutions to the problems of the small farmers who are potentially viable, the Government of India introduced during the Fourth Plan, the Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) project as a pilot experiment. Soon after, another pilot project, Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency (MFAL), was also launched to draw up suitable programmes for them, locate institutional support, arrange extension in services and provide supervision for the adoption and implementation of the programme including the farm plans. The Government of India provided rupees one and half-lakhs for each agency during the Fourth Plan period. The grants and subsidies available to the participants along with the institutional support were meant to mobilize institutional credit of a substantial order. During the Fifth Plan, this was extended to 160 projects.\(^{21}\) The Programme of SFDA/MFAL have been amalgamated and now there is a package programme for the small and marginal farmers to be covered by one agency in the project area. The evaluation made so far by the Reserve Bank of India, Plan evaluations organization of the Planning Commission

and some autonomous academic institutions prove that the project was by and large successful.

**Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP)**

Drought has been a permanent feature in India agriculture. The mechanics till the beginning of the seventies has, by the large, been to provide large sums of money for immediate relief through rural work to provide employment. Sincere and concerted attention has not been paid in the past to minimise the impact of drought and insulate areas drought. The DPAP is a sincere attempt in his direction. It is an area development programme with a thrust on development of irrigation sources, soil and moisture conservation, forestation, livestock development and development of sound dry land farming practices and their adoption. The DPAP covers 74 districts in 13 states. A central outlay of Rs. 187 crores has been provided in the Fifth Plan for the DPAP as against Rs. 100 crores in the Fourth Plan.\(^{22}\) There is a matching contribution from the State Governments also. The programmes has special importance as it relates to vast areas which are subject to a very risky and hazardous agriculture.

**Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP)**

Tribal development is yet another important aspect of Indian planning. In recent years, it has drawn special attention of the Government of India. The tribal areas has been delimited into about 500 Tribal Development Blocks in which special programmes aiming at total development of the tribals have been taken up.

**Hill Area Development (HAD)**

Hill areas have problems of their own. They present special problems of socio-economic transformation. Pilot projects for the integrated development based on area approach have been taken up in selected area in the hill regions of Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Manipur. These pilot projects were expected to give valuable information and data for formulation of new programmes and projects for the hill areas.

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\(^{22}\) Ibid., P-90.
Whole Village Development Scheme (WVDS)

A Whole Village Development Scheme based on the equitable distribution of the benefits of development has been conceived. It is based on the recommendations of the National Commission on Agriculture. The main theme of this scheme is the concentration on the entire multi-faceted development endeavour around the village community as a whole. A special feature of the scheme was to entrust the programme to a suitable voluntary agency if there be one in the area. The programme elements include land reforms and consolidation of holdings, land development including soil and water management, maximising irrigation support and cropping programme for the village as a whole, aiming at maximized use of resources. To start with, it was proposed to take up five pilot projects in four states.

Command Area Development (CAD)

Command Area Development is one of the important steps taken by the Government to provide irrigational facilities to our farmers. An integrated command area development programme in 52 selected irrigation commands covering an area of about 13.1 million hectares has been implemented under the Fifth Plan. At present, thirty CAD authorities are functioning in 41 irrigation commands in 10 States. For the year 1975-76, there was a provision of rupees sixteen crores in the Central Sector (the total outlay during the Fifth Plan being rupees one hundred twenty crores) for providing assistance to the concerned states for the implementation of the programme.23 IBRD/IDA assistance has also been obtained for this programme in a few selected command areas. At the national level a decision has been taken that all future irrigation projects will have an in-built component for the development of the command.

23 S.N.Mishra, Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Concept Publishing Co. New Delhi, p- 89
**Organization and Management**

A good administrative structure has two basic components namely, organization and management. One of the primary prerequisites in development effort of this kind is a strong administrative structure which cannot only coordinate efforts but should also provide the necessary thrust, drive and initiative in furthering the objectives. Therefore, new management structures are on experiment in breaking away from a traditional administrative hierarch which is so far used to working in closed circuits and compartments. Whatever be the form of the organization established under these programmes, the main purpose remains common and that is an adequate delegation of administrative and financial powers for an effective and successful implementation of the programme and extending the benefits of those for whom the programmes are basically meant, i.e. the “rural poor” and the “rural weak”.

In connection with the development of Small and Marginal Farmers, it was probably for the first time that a departure from a traditional system was made. Special agencies under the Registration of Societies Act were established in all the districts where the programme was launched. The main purpose of these societies was to ensure that the needs of the Small and Marginal Farmers were specially catered to by a separate organization charged with the responsibility of ensuring development of these weaker sections. The Collector / Deputy Commissioner and in few cases the Divisional Commissioners usually heads an agency in the district. The members of the governing body of the agency are the district level officers of various development departments, representatives of the Government of India, representatives of the co-operative institutions, representatives of the lead bank and two non-officials from the participating farmers who have necessarily to be small/marginal farmers. The agency operates through the existing district organisations and has a small nuclear staff of one project officer and three assistance project officers to administer and coordinate programmes drawn up for the small and marginal farmers. At the state level, a coordination committee with
the Agricultural Production Commissioner/ Development Commissioner/ Chief Secretary as the Chairman has been established, having heads of all the concerned departments as members.

In the case of the DPAP, the State Governments were requested to set up separate organizations in whatever form they prefer as long as organizations of the district level had sufficient financial and administrative delegation of authority. Most of the states have established separate agencies, registered under the Registration of Societies Act, for implementation of DPAP. Maharashtra has adopted a different form. A District Planning Board has been established for each district which implements the DPAP under a separate Project Director. In Karnataka, the State Government has established an authority for the DPAP districts by a resolution of the State Government with the Divisional Commissioner as Chairman. Tamil Nadu has set up a District Development Corporation for the two districts under the programme.

The TADP has also a similar administrative structure like the SFDA. A Tribal Development Agency has been constituted under the Societies Registration Act for each of the Project areas. The Agency is headed by the District Collector as the Chairman, the other district level officers, legislators and members of Parliament as members of the Government Body. To support the Agency in its functioning, a whole-time Project Officer of the rank of Additional District Magistrate has been appointed supported by three Assistant Project Officers.

In case of the CAD Programme also, similar authorities have usually been created under the Registration of Societies Act.

**Monitoring and Concurrent Evaluation**

Monitoring is a process or a strategy to keep a close watch on the progress of implementation of a project so as to ensure the timely completion of its various components with the sanctioned outlay by studying the difficulties and bottlenecks which are thrown up in the execution of projects and taking corrective action wherever necessary. It also determines whether the stated objectives of the project...
were being achieved. It has to be a built-in system as part of the project itself. Sometimes monitoring is defined as “concurrent evaluation” as it determines the short-term impact of the programme. After the completion of the scheme, the long-term evaluation or post-implementation evaluation is carried out. The implementation-agency itself carries out the monitoring of programmes. While the long evaluation is entrusted to a competent and independent agency after the programme is completed, or after it has run for sometimes, say, three or five years or so.

The Department of Rural Development, Government of India, has taken steps to develop monitoring and concurrent evaluation system both at the Centre and the State levels in respect of most of the programmes such as the DPAP, TAD, HAD, TRYSEM, etc. The Central Government is providing the necessary guidance to the states in this matter. However, this effort can be successful only when there is a matching mechanism at the state and project levels.

**Training in Management**

One of the lacunas in the rural development programmes so far has been that each department has viewed sectoral responsibilities as their main concern whereas by the very nature of rural development no sector is independent of other rural sectors in the district. Since a comprehensive area development is being aimed to in the various programmes, the need for a fresh look to achieve inter-sectoral linkages and coordination becomes essential. New management tools for an optional and symbolic use of resources and an assessment of the returns from investments, i.e. the cost-benefit ratios and opportunity cost becomes a major responsibility of the project administration. Keeping this point in view, a series of training programmes are being organized by the Union Department of Rural Development. In August 1974, a programme for training the Collectors of DPAP districts was organised at Hyderabad. Here the officers were given a comprehensive exposure to the usual needs of DPAP district, the methodology of making an inventory of resources, and then building up an Integrated Area
Development Programme. Similarly, a three-week training course was given to the technical officers of the DPAP districts in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Hebbal, Bangalore, in collaboration with the Institute of Management, Bangalore, for an in-depth training on planning methodology, management skills, and implementation system.

The training programme to give an insight into sectoral programme management will be taken down to the lowest operational levels in the project districts. Similarly the heads of the concerned departments in various states are also being given opportunities to view their role vis-a-vis Integrated Rural Development through a series of workshops and seminars being organized. It is hoped that through these training programmes, functionaries at various levels will have a broader perspective of their roles leading to better coordination and best possible use of the scarce resources. The present programme also is to be viewed in this context and, therefore, is a very welcome one.

**People’s Participation**

For the successful implementation of any rural development programme, people’s active involvement and participation is very important. This has to be supported with technical know-how and guidance by the experts and project administering personnel. This aspect has been realised more and more of late and the conference of Ministers-in-charge of Rural Development, Community Development and Panchayati Raj in the states and Union Territories convened by the Union Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation on 8 May, 1975 also very much emphasized the need for greater involvement of the people in various programmes implemented for improving the quality of life in rural areas.

The sub-committee of the Ministry concerned felt that as regards the organizational structure, a single model for the entire country would not be advisable. Probably a set of models would have to be tried which should itself be a part of action research programme. There will be a steering committee at the state level and a national level Committee on Integrated Rural Development. It was also
felt that the block organization will be fully utilized for implementation of the programme at block level.

**Resource Mobilization**

As regards rural development, it is needless to repeat that financial resources are limited. As the present situation is, some funds come from the Government of India through centrally sponsored and Central Sector Schemes, a major chunk comes as a part of the State Plan (which has its even mix of Central and State funds), and lastly the funds from local resources. Apart from certain areas, there has not been any significant mobilization of resources. Probably, no serious attempt has been made. But the scope is there. For this an environment has to be created to attract these funds and then a mechanism has to be worked out to mop up these resources and utilize them in such a manner as would give sense of full satisfaction to the people to be willing to contribute towards building up of these funds. In this connection, the role which the financial institutions both corporate and cooperative can play has not been fully exploited. To remedy the situation, many corrective measures have been taken by the Government in quick succession. The public sector banks are being urged to improve their performance in the rural sector at a very fast pace. A new type of institution in the banking system has also been introduced, namely, the Rural Banks. Likewise in the cooperative sector, new institutions are being set up such as Farmers Service Societies (FSS) and in tribal areas Large Sized Multi-Purpose Societies (LAMPS). The project administrators have to be fully equipped so as to able to mobilise resources for their programmes to the maximum possible extent.

**New Challenges**

What has been said in the preceding pages clearly brings out that the rural development management of today is a much more challenging job than it was in the pre-colonial rule or even in the days of the CDP. To meet the situation, necessary structural and institutional changes have obviously become necessary. A
uniform organizational structure or a single model for the entire country cannot be workable. The structure has to emerge from the local genius so that it may meet the local situations. Probably a set of models would have to be tried for some time which should itself be a part of an action research programme under the Integrated Rural Development.

Keeping in view the successful implementation of Integrated Rural Development Programme in 1981, a major step was taken with the amalgamation of the different programmes into a single ‘District Rural Development Agency’ (DRDA). New DRDAs were created in areas where no agencies existed earlier.

**Organisational Structure of DRDA**

The DRDA is a registered society under the Registration of Societies Act XXI of 1860. It has a Governing Body which is chaired by the District Collector/Deputy Commissioner. According to the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Rural Development, broadly, it should have other members as follows:

i. All MPs and MLAs of the District;
ii. Head of the Central Cooperative Bank;
iii. Chairman of Regional Rural Bank;
iv. Chairman of Zilla Parishad or his representative;
v. General Manager of the District Industries Centre;
vi. District Officer-in-Charge of Family Welfare Programme;
vii. District Employment Officer;
viii. Project Officer, Integrated Tribal Development Programme (ITDP);
ix. Regional / District Officer, Scheduled Caste Finance Corporation;
x. One representative of District Milk Union;
xii. Two representatives of the Weaker Sections; one of them to be drawn from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Such representatives may be from amongst the beneficiaries of the programme;
xiii. One representative of Rural Women; and
xiv. Project Officer/Director, DRDA as Member Secretary.
Since the membership of the Governing Body is likely to be large, therefore, the Chairman of the DRDA has been empowered to nominate the Executive Committee consisting of the Chairman, Project Officer and all the district level officers and any other officer whose services are considered necessary for planning and implementation of the programmes. It should meet at least once a month so as to look into the various programmes intensively and take necessary decisions. The Governing Body has to meet once a quarter. However, an emergent meeting may take place to discuss and consider important matters. As far as possible, adequate notice will have to be given to enabling the members to attend the regular meeting. Generally, it has been observed by various studies that the Governing Body in all the districts does not meet regularly.

**Staffing Pattern**

A staffing pattern has been laid down for the DRDAs and up to ten per cent of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) outlays per district can be spent on establishment expenses. The DRDA has a full time Executive Officer preferably, a senior scale IAS Officer or an equivalent officer of the state services. He is appointed by the State Government and works as an Additional Deputy Commissioner-cum-Chief Executive Officer of DRDA. The remaining staff of agency works under his administrative control. As per the staffing pattern approved for the DRDAs, the Project Officer is assisted 2-3 Assistant Project Officers (subject matter specialists) may be from agriculture, animal husbandry, development etc. plus Assistant Project Officer (Women). All these officers are responsible for planning, project formulation as well as implementation in their respective sectors. Besides, provision has been made for a monitoring cell under an Assistant Project Officer, and additional staff has been provided on the accounts side.

The Assistant Project Officer (APO) industries is also supposed to look after TRYSEM. In addition, instructions have been issued that DICs would act as the technical advisor to the DRDA and perform functions relating to identification
of investment opportunities, proportion of bankable projects, provision of expert services to beneficiaries, designing of training programmes and identification of training centres.

APO (Development) is from Rural Development Department and has been assigned with the job of implementation of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana. APO (Agriculture) being specialist in agricultural development will look after agricultural development schemes including minor irrigation and land development. APO (Animal Husbandry) is responsible for live-stock problems and implementation of other animal husbandry schemes of the DRDA.

For the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), initially one post of an officer of the rank of an Assistant Engineer with a supporting post of an accountant had been approved. With the launching of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), however, it was felt that this would not be enough and further strengthening would be required on the engineering side. The form of this could vary from state to state in view of the fact that for RLEGP, the states have been expressively permitted to take up works directly through the time departments. Keeping this fact in view, the guidelines for the NREP/RLEGP now permit the utilization of up to 50 per cent of the total allocation for appropriate staff strengthening at different levels.

For the DPAP/ Desert Development Programme (DDP), it has been provided on the basis of the recommendations of the Task Force on the DPAP and DDP set up by Ministry of Rural Development in June 1980 that funds upto 18 per cent of the allocation can be spent, both on the DPAP component of staff in the DRDA, as well as for strengthening of line agencies.

For the Small and Marginal Farmers Assistance Programme, the breakup for per block outlays is Rs. 3.00 lakhs for minor irrigation; Rs. 1.00 lakh for farm forestry; and Rs. 1.00 lakh for minikits, land development and staff. The guidelines do not prescribe and fixed ceiling for expenditure on staff and do not indicate the level at which such staff could be appointed.
However, there is no uniformity in the actual staffing pattern at the DRDA level and an overall picture of staff in position under IRDP, NREP or DPAP and the Small and Marginal Farmer Assistance Programme is not available. Provisions have also been made in certain other schemes such as Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), scheme for Rural Godowns etc. for strengthening of staff.

No doubt, each DRDA has been endowed with a technical team yet it is hardly in a position to ensure the success of rural development programmes because the resource persons are mostly drawn from Government Departments and lack the requisite skills in project formulation. Not only this, frequent transfers of DRDA personnel is another problem.

Besides the provision with respect to staff in relation to the special programme of Rural Development it would be pertinent to mention that there are two other schemes for providing staff and institutional support at the district level, namely, (a) the Planning Commission Scheme to provide a planning team at the district level comprising a Chief Planning Officer and five specialists in different disciplines including one for specific programmes, and (b) District Manpower Planning and Employment Generation Councils (DMPEGCs) have been set up for work relating to district employment, budgeting, identification of opportunities for self-employment and providing assistance to work seekers. The relationship of both these schemes with DRDA has not been speltout.

**Block Level**

For the Block level, a central scheme for strengthening of staff is in operation, which generally aims at restoring the earlier Community Development staffing pattern by filling up the gaps created by transfer of extension officers / Village Level Workers (VLWs) to line departments, with provision for an additional post of an extension officer, credit.

The scheme of DRDA are implemented by the block development administration. The Block Development Officer (BDO), according to the
guidelines issued by the Government of India, is required to perform the role of the Chief Coordinator in the block. He is to ensure that plans are prepared in time and implemented effectively. The states have been asked to post senior officer as BDOs. Each BDO should be assisted by the such number of Extension Officers as can be determined by keeping in view the need of the area. Generally, there has to be an Extension Officer each for every core discipline. It should also include women programmes. If the population of a Block exceeds one lakh, one post of a Joint BDO may be created. Thus, to assist the BDO, there should be seven Extension Officers and ten VLWs.

The foregoing review shows that while efforts have been made to strengthen the delivery system for Rural Development Programme, the earlier tendency to have programmewise staff, if not structures, continues, if anything, on a large scale then earlier. A quantification of the provisions for staff provided in this way may indeed show staggering results. Moreover, in such a situation there is every possibility of administrative costs rising, while vital gaps may still remain and there may be a substantial element of overlap and duplication instead of integration in the total system.

**Major Weaknesses**

On the other hand, following deficiencies and gaps are noticeable at the district level:

i. The Programme Evaluation Organisation (PEO) 1985 has brought that in most of the DRDAs, the requisite planning teams had not been organised and efforts did not seem to have been made to develop the capability for planning and formulation of viable schemes. Some of the posts of the Project Officers and APOs were lying vacant. The statewise review showed that full sanctioned team was not in position in many areas. There was general reluctance on the part of deputationists to make up the assignments in the DRDAs as they were not entitled to the normal, perquisites enjoyed by them in their own department. Moreover, there is tendency on the part of
the sectoral departments to lay off their less competent personnel by sending them to DRDAs. In the absence of any deputation allowance such personnel lacked the keenness and motivation to work in the DRDAs.

ii. Frequent changes in the incumbents of posts of project officers and APOs, greatly impaired the efficiency and effectiveness of the DRDAs.

iii. Another weakness pertains to the problem of coordination. There are no coordination mechanisms at the district level whereby the DRDA can actually discharge the note suggested by the nomenclature and probably intended by the originators of the concept. Its role is presently more or less confined to channelising finance for one, and in some cases, two programmes, particularly the IRDP, has been relatively limited because of the absence of infrastructural support which was expected to be provided through the sectoral programmes, an expectation which has been almost totally belied.

iv. Even for the specific programmes being dealt with by the DRDA, the provision of one APO each in certain discipline hardly equips it with the wherewithal for planning, project formulation and implementation in their respective sectors.

v. There is a perceptible deficiency on the monitoring side and even the posts sanctioned have not been filled up in many places.

vi. There is no expertise on the side of area development planning, comprehensive watershed planning and technology dissemination which would be the distinctive features for Special Area Development Programmes. What is done is only ad hoc physical coverage under some known activities in drought prone areas, e.g. affore station, soil and water conservation, etc.

vii. The engineering side continues to be woefully weak in terms of the need to have a shelf of project in conformity with approved techno-economic norms and adequate field supervision.
viii. There is virtually no arrangement for identification and registration of those who require employment and monitoring of the actual employment provided. It is astonishing that we have no details about the category of persons who have actually been provided employment under NREP and for how many days. Thus, the impact on overall employment of even such a vast programme is not really known.

ix. The other important institutions that could provide staff and line support to the DRDA in functions directly related to rural development programmes namely, the DIC, the DMPEGCs etc. continue to function under their own separate departments and have at best marginal coordination with DRDAs. At the block level also there are some major deficiencies. As already indicated, there is a major problem of the BDO no longer having effective control over the Extension Officers because of the later’s own line hierarchies. Even if the line of control were to be appropriately corrected, the sheer volume of work and funds now flowing in at the block level would necessitate a second look at the earlier schematic pattern evolved for the CDPs, assuming that even this had been fully restored. As against an amount of Rs. 17 lakhs per block in 10 years then, the financial involvement would now be over Rs. one crore per block, on the average every year, under all the programmes the Centre and States put together. Apart from the massive increase in the sheer volume of work, the intricacy and diversity of efforts and management expertise which is just not there. All this, in turn, has to be viewed in the context of a substantially increased population per block than in the fifties. This fact has also been supported by a number of studies which have highlighted the administrative and other constraints in the implementation of rural development programmes.

The evaluation study undertaken by the PEO has specifically gone into the question of administrative and organizational arrangements made for the planning and implementation of IRDP. This study found that in most of the state there was absence of a strong administrative setup for implementing the programme. The
state level organisations lack the required degree of support of sectoral and subject matter specialists. The study also found lack of proper administrative control of project officers of the DRDAs over the BDOs and lack of inter-sectoral linkages at the block level. Some of the findings of this study as well as studies conducted by Reserve Bank of India and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Institute of Financial and Management Research, Madras also substantiate the pitfalls.

A similar view has been expressed in the Seventh Plan document where it has been stated: “In agriculture and rural development, a large number of new programmes have been started. Along with these programmes, a diversity of organisational and administrative structures have been established, but often the organisational arrangements and the staff for a new programme are put in place with little attention to existing structures and personnel. There is now an elaborate development bureaucracy operating at field level and at higher levels in the administration. There are also local self-government bodies and cooperatives. There is need to re-examine this whole structure, simplify and rationalise it, to reduce duplication and to ensure adequate horizontal coordination at local levels. This is necessary not merely to reduce the burden of expenditure but to improve performance, ensure accountability and make the system more comprehensible to the common man.”

From the foregoing analysis it is quite clear that laudable results in regard to rural development programmes have not been achieved so far in spite of the fact that a huge amount of money has been pumped into it and sizeable structure of the development bureaucracy created. The pitfalls may be attributed to poor organization and management of rural development programmes.

To improve the management system of rural development a fresh look on the administrative organization is the prime need of the time. The Report of the Committee to review the existing administrative arrangements for rural
development and poverty alleviation programme (CAARD) has suggested a new organization for rural development which is shown in charts 1 to 3.

In the preceding page, we have discussed in detail the administrative setup of development administration since Independence and subsequent changes therein. If we peep into the changing face of development administration and administrative structure required therefrom, the emphasis always has been on decentralisation and involvement of the community development activities. However, since eighties more sharper focus has been given to these two problems and new strategies chalked out. The creation of DRDA under the Registration of Societies Act and making the decentralised planning effective based on the recommendations of the Committee on Administrative Arrangements for Rural Development and Hanumantha Rao Committee are some of the steps taken in this direction. Moreover after seventy fourth Constitutional Amendment Act, decentralised planning has got new impetus and direction as it has become a constitutional obligation to set up District Planning Council in each district of the country for rural and urban development boards.