CHAPTER - II

REFORMS IN THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Democracy can flourish only when it is nurtured in indigenous soil. It must grow its roots firmly in the village. It can be nourished by the people themselves though, they have to become the masters of their own destiny, conscious of their obligations and anxious to exert their rights. Only then they can infuse their lives into democracy and bring the best out of themselves.

After the Independence, the elected representatives of the Constituent Assembly framed the Indian Constitution. The country was declared as a Republic, as mentioned in Article 40 of the Indian Constitution “the State had been taken steps to organize Village Panchayats and endowed them with such powers and activity which found out as necessary to enable the Indian Government as a self-government.”

The Panchayat should be a decentralized unit of administration with adequate resources and sufficient powers to work out a progressive socio-economic programme for the community. So, the Panchayat was associated with the various social activities of man, the parliament and the State Legislatures. Though they have given a good account of the working of democratic consciousness over the years, it has not percolated down to the huge masse of rural population.

Moreover, people in the new set-up, depended too much on the Government. Self-help and self-reliance, which alone could make the Panchayat effective, were sadly missing. People looked to the officials for patronage rather than coming forward and joining hands to tackle their own problems. Another cause of failure was that the local self-government units-Panchayat, local boards or district boards, were not linked up with one another as an organic whole. There was no guidance and supervision from the higher

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1 Madras Information, Volume: XV, No: 10, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, October, 1960, p.7.
bodies. Each one looked after its own field, quite unconcerned about the activities of others.

After the advent of Swaraj, however, the lost ground was being regained by paying special attention to the villages treating them as the primary units of a Welfare State. In supersession of the various Panchayat Regulations and Acts, right from the Local Fund Act, 1871, down to the Local Boards Act XI of 1930, Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950 (Act X of 1950) was brought into force. It conferred on the Panchayat several additional powers and functions, besides making the levy of taxes mandatory so as to find funds for their growing needs. But a good many of the Panchayats could not function, because of the lack of technical and trained personnel to assist and guide them and of the funds required to provide their growing civic needs, such as sanitation, water-supply, village roads, lighting.

PANCHAYAT RAJ - PANCHAYAT UNIONS AND PANCHAYAT ACTS

Ever since Independence, it has become the nation’s gigantic task to build a new India by formulating and implementing successive Five-Year Plans in order to achieve a balanced development of the country in all spheres of activity and to give a better life to everyone by raising the standard of living of the common people. Panchayat Raj, remained the dream of the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhiji, which would make the rural people to develop self-reliance in social and economic spheres of activity, to promote enthusiasm for participating in all activities for the welfare of the country and to help in harnessing human and other resources in the march towards prosperity. The main aims that have guided the planned development are the building up by democratic means of a rapidly expanding and technologically progressive economy and the ushering in of a social order based on justice offering equal opportunity to every citizen. Everyone in the

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2 Ibid., p.8.
3 Ibid., p.8.
nation is both a witness to, and a partner in, the great revolution that is taking place in every field of human endeavour. Apart from establishing basic industries and undertaking large scale projects, high priority has been given to agricultural production with a view to achieving not only self-sufficiency, but also much higher production in order to meet the demands even during years of unfavourable seasonal conditions.

The targets in agricultural production have to keep pace with the growth of population and meet the increasing demands for more food and better food. It is necessary to rouse the consciousness of the peasants and cultivators and enlist their willing and active co-operation in the matter of reaching the targets of food production and also in the matter of controlling the rapid growth of population. It has been increasingly felt, that these can be achieved only by a major change not only in the organizational structure of local administration, but also in the entrustment of functions and resources there for. Thus, the scheme of progressive democratic decentralization has taken shape and the Panchayat has become the self-governing unit of local administration, which can play a very important role in the implementation of the vital sectors of the National Five-Year Plan.⁴

Indian Constitution laid down as one of the directive principles of State policy that the State Government should take steps to organize Village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as might be necessary to enable them to function as units of Self-Government.⁵ There were enactments for the organizations of Village Panchayats. The Madras Village Panchayats Act, 1950, was passed shortly after the Constitution came into force and gave effect to the intention underlying this provision in the constitution.⁶ It casts an obligation on the State Government to set up Panchayats for every village and groups of small village and it envisages complete coverage of the

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⁶ Ibid., p.2.
entire State with Village Panchayats within a reasonable time. It allotted a considerable number of additional functions and powers to Village Panchayats.

Though Panchayats had been constituted in large numbers; they were very far from achieving complete coverage. Furthermore, the expectation that they would take over and perform large new functions had not been realized. There were, indeed, a good many Panchayats of which it couldn’t be said that they were performing even the pre-1950 functions satisfactorily. The reason mainly is that the Village Panchayats created for small areas with very limited population were unable to employ trained personnel as full-time managerial staff, nor did they possess adequate resources for maintaining needed technical service. Again, as each Panchayat covered a small area, there were far too many of them in every taluk and district. It was very difficult for Government to provide the service of experienced officers who could advise them and guide them. Also there was a question arose whether the Panchayat would be a genuine representative and if the intimate needs of the village in respect of such matters as sanitation, water supply, lighting and so forth would be properly attended so that the village people themselves might recognize the Panchayat as the natural unit. But if the Panchayat wanted to look after anything more, and wished to provide any other services efficiently, it had to be formed for a distinctly larger unit. It seemed impossible to remove these difficulties unless Panchayats were constituted with a large territorial jurisdiction, so as to have at least as large a population as a medium sized Municipality.

**The Provision of Panchayat Act 1950**

It so happened that the way out of this difficulty is indicated in the 1950 Act itself. The Act provided for the constitution of Statutory Joint Committees for contiguous Panchayats. The Madras District Boards Act also provided for the district board joining

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with Panchayats in performing the functions in which both the Panchayats and the District Board are jointly interested. The 1950 Act, also provided for the establishment and maintenance by two or more Panchayats with common institutions like dispensaries, child-welfare centres, etc and for the appointment of the same officer to exercise the powers and discharge duties of a similar nature in respect of all of them. The principle underlying these provisions of law offered a way out of the difficulties mentioned. The individuality of the Village Panchayat and its organic contact with the village people whom it represented could remain and continued to be maintained. But it need not undertake to perform any function other than those which it was specially fitted to perform satisfactorily.

**Organization for the village development**

For other functions, Panchayats of contiguous villages could come together and set up a common organization for a larger area. Those services which could not be provided to the village people by each Panchayat individually could be provided in common, by a Co-operative union of all of them. Thus the idea of a ‘Panchayat Union’ was formulated. In strict legal terminology, Panchayat Union can be merely Statutory Joint Committees of all the Village Panchayats concerned, as well as of the District Board.

A committee headed by the Chief Minister K.Kamaraj met on 25th April 1957 decided to deal with future progress of Village Panchayat. Hence, a special committee was constituted with four important Ministers, named Lourdhammal Simon, Minister for Local Administration, M.Bhaktavatsalam, Minister for Home, C.Subramanian, Minister for Finance, and P.Kakkan, Minister for Work to consider the ‘Future of Local Administration’ including the Madras Corporation. The committee had met four times

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in the year 1957. The first meeting was held on 8th May 1957, Second Meeting was held on 14th June 1957, third meeting held on 12th July 1957, and fourth meeting held on 16th October 1957. The committee recommended, among a number of major changes, the setting up of Panchayat Unions at the development block level. The process of democratic decentralization became the subject-matter of study by a team, appointed by the Committee on Plan Projects set up by the Planning Commission, which discussed with the State Government its conclusions regarding the future pattern on local administration in the State. The need for a vigorous democratic institution to take charge of all aspects of development work in rural areas was keenly felt. There was a large measure of agreement between the conclusions of the Study Team and those of the Cabinet Committee. To achieve the objective (Future of Local Administration) Minister Lourdhammal Simon being one of the members in the special committee she had worked very judiciously till the aim was achieved. Thus there was proper set-up in the Local Administration Department, till the first half of 1957.

**THE NATIONAL EXTENSION SERVICE SCHEME**

It was also essential to mobilize public participation in the development programmes under the Five-Year Plans in an integrated manner along with the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development. The need for an organization of this nature was at the same time, pressed upon the attention of Government from a different direction. The National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development, India’s greatest experiment in the organization of Rural Development had got under way and came to stay. The decision had been taken to extend the Scheme from year to year according to a phased programme by which all the Villages of the State would be covered by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period. It was an essential

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feature of the ideas underlying the scheme that the village people should themselves take part in the formulation and execution of the various improvements undertaken under the Scheme. Every village was to become a participant in successive Five-Year Plans by which the nation as a whole is marching in step to achieve the aims embodied in the Constitution. The Government of India observed that the progress achieved in respect of active participation by the village people was inadequate. The Ad hoc Committee which had been formed in order to advise the local agencies of Government indeed did useful work, but they did not suffice to make the people feel that useful work was their own.

**Development of Village Panchayats**

As in all other spheres, so in the sphere of village development there was great enthusiasm among the rural folk. The National Extension Service Scheme and Local Development works undertaken by the Government had given an impetus to the Panchayats to avail in full the opportunity afforded to them to improve the villages in all directions.

The need for the development of Village Panchayat was to maintain mutual communication among government and people. The gradual development of Village Panchayat would be reached through to all the people eventually. By and by to attain the need for the development of Village Panchayat, under the Madras Village Panchayats Act, 1950, gathered momentum under the guidance of Minister Lourdhammal Simon. Under this Act, a Panchayat has to be formed for each village with a population of not less than 500, though however, to enable the Panchayat to function as a viable economic

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13 A committee formed Ad hoc to deal with the issue or concerned or dealing with a specific subject, purpose, or end: The Ad hoc committee disbanded after making its final report.

unit, if it is constituted for parts of villages, population of at least 1,000 is adopted as the basis. There were 269 Class I and 315 Class II Panchayats in the State with 301 whole time paid Executive Officers working in them.\textsuperscript{15} Class I Panchayats were formed for semi-urban areas with a population of not less than 5,000 and annual income of not less than Rs. 10,000 while the remaining Panchayats came to be known as Class II Panchayats. Class I Panchayats which gained importance and became urban in character were eventually converted into municipalities, on their satisfying the conditions for such conversion.

The Planning Commission had been emphasizing the need for developing Village Panchayats as the agency for village planning and development and thus constructing a solid foundation for the entire system of National Planning. It was recommended that Village Panchayat should be organically linked with popular organizations at a higher level and that democratic bodies should take over the entire general administration other, than administration of justice and certain functions pertaining to revenue administration.

\textbf{WHITE PAPER ON LOCAL ADMINISTRATION}

It was in the light of All-India policy set out in these terms that the proposals for the reorganization of Panchayats were reviewed by the Government. In 1957, the government of Madras placed White Paper on the \textit{“Reforms of Local Administration”} which was discussed in the Legislative Assembly on 4 and 5 November 1957 and in the Legislative Council on 6-7 November 1957.\textsuperscript{16} The Government arrived at provisional conclusions and embodied them in a \textit{“White-Paper on Local Administration”} which was placed before the legislature. The proposal in the White paper entirely aimed at community development throughout the state. The main elements of the White Paper were:

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, Volume: XV, No: 10, October, 1960, p.8.

(1) A Panchayat Union should be constituted for every development block and the constitution of the Panchayat Union should be so devised that it would represent a co-operative association of the Panchayats of all villages situated in that Block.

(2) District Boards should be abolished with their functions being undertaken by Panchayat Unions.

(3) District Development Council should be formed in each development district for establishing an advisory association between representatives of the local people and departmental agencies of the state government.

(4) Creation of Panchayat Unions coterminous with the Development Blocks.

(5) Creation of District Development Council as advisory body.

(6) The Panchayat Unions and Village Panchayats were entrusted with a large number of development and social welfare functions.¹⁷

Lourdhammal Simon had demanded that by the end of the Second Five-Year Plan period, all the above elements should be attained all over the state without exception.¹⁸ These Committees should be provided with funds and executive staff, technical and administrative guidance.¹⁹

The proposals in the White-Paper were reviewed and re-examined by the Minister of Local Administration and Fisheries Lourdhammal Simon.²⁰ Lourdhammal Simon, as the Minister for Local Administration, had moved the White Paper on the reforms of Local Administration in Madras State including the Madras City Corporation and they were taken into consideration at 9 A.M on Monday, 4th November, 1957.²¹ With these remarks, Government on the Reform of Local Administration including the Madras

City Corporation went for the consideration of the house.22 So far as Panchayat Unions were concerned, the Government decided to proceed with the provisional conclusions already reached in order to ascertain in all the administrative, financial and technical implications. Also they decided to organize a Panchayat Union in one selected Development Block. The White Paper was scrutinised by a House Committee and on the basis of its recommendations, the Madras Panchayat Act 1958 and The Madras District Development Council Act 1958 were enacted.23

**FUTURE OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION**

After submitting the White Paper on Reforms of Local Administration in the Legislative Assembly by Lourdhammal Simon, Chief Minister K.Kamaraj had appointed a committee. It consisted of nearly twenty members to draft Bills for the Future of Local Administration. Among these, twenty members Lourdhammal Simon was a highly noticeable person her duty was considerable one for drafting the Bills. The committee had met in different occasions to discuss about various subjects related to Local Administration and its reforms.

Accordingly, on 17th and 18th February 195824 Legislative Committee on Local Administration held a meeting in the old Legislator’s Hostel, Government Estate, Mount Road, Madras. And the subjects in the agenda for the meeting were recording the allocation of different functions between the Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. The themes in the Panchayats and Panchayat Unions were related to some of the following functions. They were construction and maintenance of roads and bridges, lighting of public roads and public places, planting and preservation of trees on the sight of roads, local health services including of cleansing of streets, improvement of sanitary

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conditions of villages, supply of water of drinking, construction of drains and disposal of drainage water, provision of public latrines, opening and maintenance of burial and burning grounds, vaccination, establishment and maintenance of maternity, child welfare centers, hospitals, dispensaries, elementary schools, registration of births and deaths.\textsuperscript{25}

Legislative Committee on Local Administration was held another meeting on 15\textsuperscript{th} and 17\textsuperscript{th} March 1958 in the old Legislator’s Hostel, Government Estate, Mount Road, Madras. In this meeting the agenda was mainly consisting of Madras Corporation and its functions. Effective participation of Lourdhammal Simon in the meeting following subjects related to Madras City Corporation were discussed. And subjects were postponement of elections to Madras City Corporation and district municipalities, territorial divisions of Madras City Corporation, revision of electoral roll and elections, preparations of Panchayat Bill and amendments to the Madras City Municipal Act 1919 suggested by the corporation.\textsuperscript{26}

The next meeting of the Legislative Committee on Local Administration was held on 23\textsuperscript{rd} and 24\textsuperscript{th} May 1958 at Old Council Hall, Stone House Hill, Ootacamund. In this meeting the subject discussed was amendment to the Madras City Municipal Act 1919 proposed by the Corporation of Madras.\textsuperscript{27} And another meeting of the Legislative Committee on Local Administration was held on 1\textsuperscript{st} July 1958 at Legislature Committee Room, Fort.St.George, Madras. At this meeting the role of Lourdhammal Simon was quite important and the committee had decided to bring certain amendments in the Madras District Municipality Act 1920, Madras City Municipal Act 1919, and Madras District Development Council Act 1958.\textsuperscript{28} Subsequently, the next meeting of the Legislative Committee on Local Administration was held on 21\textsuperscript{st} Monday July 1958 in

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., G.O. Ms. No. 1763, dated 3\textsuperscript{rd} December 1958.  
\textsuperscript{27} Ibid., G.O. Ms. No. 1775, dated 6\textsuperscript{th} December 1958.  
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., G.O. Ms. No. 1782, dated 8\textsuperscript{th} December 1958.
the Legislature Committee Room of the Secretariat Fort.St.Georage, Madras. In this meeting the committee discussed about the perspective budget of Panchayat Administration and local education including Primary Education, Higher Elementary Education, Social Education and its expenditure.29

Then another meeting of the Legislative Committee on Local Administration was held on 11th and 12th August 1958 in the Legislature Committee Room of the Secretariat Fort.St.Georage, Madras. At this meeting the committee had decided to bring out some amendments in the Madras Village Panchayat Bill 1958. The amendments suggested by the committee included replacing of certain terms like “the Panchayat” for “the Panchayat Union Council”, “Panchayat Fund” for the “Panchayat Union Council Fund”, “district markets”, for “Panchayat Union Markets” and “play-grounds” for “Parks”.30

Being an eminent Minister Lourdhammal Simon had done her service genuinely under the guidance of Chief Minister K.Kamaraj. She was highly concerned with the welfare of the people of Madras State. Through her greatest responsibility and sincerity she had organised the special committees to discuss the future of Local Administration.

THE MADRAS PANCHAYATS ACT, 1958

All the Acts related to the Local Administration Department were re-considered and amendments were made by Minister Lourdhammal Simon.31 The Madras Panchayat Act 1958 was the first step initiated by Lourdhammal Simon for the development of villages, Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. The Madras Panchayats Act, 1958 (Act XXXV of 1958) was passed during the year of 1958,32 though it came into effect only in January 1960 in all the areas of the state excluding the transferred areas. The Madras Panchayats Act was possible only because of Lourdhammal Simon and her duty

consciousness. The Act authorized the formation of Panchayat Union Councils in three batches, the first batch from 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1960, the second batch from 14\textsuperscript{th} April 1961 and the third batch from 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1961. The powers and the functions of the district boards were to be transferred to the Panchayat Union Councils as and when constituted. The Madras District Development Councils Act, 1958, came into effect throughout the State on 1\textsuperscript{st} December 1959.\(^{33}\) It enabled a permanent machinery at the district-level for establishing an advisory body of elected representatives of the people and the departmental agencies of the State Government, District Development Councils.

During the year 1950, there was an Act called The Madras Village Panchayat Act, 1950 for the development of villages and Panchayats. There were 273 Class I Panchayats and 11,931 Class II Panchayats functioning during the year 1960. Two Panchayats were superseded, one Panchayat was dissolved and five Presidents of Panchayats were removed from office by the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards, Madras. A sum of Rs. 6,99,112.28 nP\(^{34}\) was authorized for payment towards grants to Panchayats for improvement of village communications. But the Act was not yet achieved its goal and after the rapid development of the Madras Village Panchayat Act, 1958 obviously the new set-up was made in Local Administration. Being the Minister of Local Administration, Lourdhammal Simon succeeded to implement the Act effectively.\(^{35}\)

The Act provided \textit{inter alia}\(^{36}\) for the constitution of the Panchayat Unions at Development Block Level and for the allocation of functions between Panchayat and Panchayat Unions. The jurisdiction of each district board was progressively diminished

\(^{33}\) \textit{Madras Information}, Volume: XIV, No: 1, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, January, 1960, p.8.


\(^{36}\) Among other things.
and then Panchayat Unions were constituted for development block enclosed under the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development.\textsuperscript{37}

**MADRAS DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS ACT, 1958**

Lourdhammal Simon wanted to make some remarkable changes in the Local Administration to enable development in Panchayats throughout the Madras State. Hence, just like the Madras Panchayat Act 1958 also she had moved Memorandum of the Madras District Development Council Bill, 1958\textsuperscript{38} to the Cabinet. Minutes of the meeting of the Council of Ministers (K. Kamaraj, M.Bhaktavasalam, C.Subramaniam, M.A.Manickavelu, R.Venkataraman, P.Kakkan, V.Ramiah, Lourdhammal Simon) held on Thursday, 14\textsuperscript{th} August 1958, at 12 noon in the Cabinet room, Fort St.George under the Chief Minister K. Kamaraj.\textsuperscript{39}

The Cabinet approved the proposals regarding the constitution of District Development Councils as revised by the Legislature Committee on Local Administration. Health, Education and Local Administration Department should proceed further with the Draft Bill. After the completion of Draft Bill it was sent by Lourdhammal Simon, Minister for Local Administration, for the communication of the Health, Education and Local Administration and Law Departments. Consequently, the decision of the Legislative Council on the Bill was communicated to the Health, Education and Local Administration and Law Departments.

She introduced the Madras District Development Council Bill, 1958\textsuperscript{40} with statement of objects and reasons to the Legislative Assembly for the further consideration. She was well aware of the development of the state and so except Chengleput, Nilgris and Kanyakumari all the other 12 Revenue districts were advised to


\textsuperscript{38} G.O. No. 262, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 28th August 1958.


\textsuperscript{40} *The Fort ST.George Gazette*, Part IV-A, Extraordinary, No.26, Government of Madras, Madras, dated 30\textsuperscript{th} August 1958, p.287.
delimit into 21 Development District on the basis of the advice of the District Development Council. The administrative functions of the District Development Council were formulated into different levels. Though, she emphasized that it was extremely necessary for the proper functioning of the council.

Lourdhammal Simon, Minister for Local Administration introduced the Madras District Development Councils Bill, 1958 in the Legislative Council\textsuperscript{41} and it passed by the Legislative Assembly on 12.09.1958.\textsuperscript{42} It was one of the greatest achievements of Lourdhammal Simon. The enactment of the Act enabled the people in all over villages in the state issues related education, health and implement of new laws. Thus, the Madras Panchayat Act 1958 and the Madras District Development Councils Act 1958\textsuperscript{43} were the greatest achievements of Lourdhammal Simon.

**MADRAS CITY MUNICIPAL (AMENDMENT) ACT (1958)**

The Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1958\textsuperscript{44} was moved by Minister Lourdhammal Simon. The Bill consisted of certain objects and reasons for the reforms of Local Administration. Mainly, it dealt with following accepts. The terms of office of the existing councilors and aldermen of the Corporation of Madras expired at noon on 1st November 1958 by efflux of time. Normally, the ordinary elections to the Corporation Council had to be conducted during August and September 1958. But, it is considered desirable to overhaul thoroughly the present electoral system which was devised long before the introduction of adult suffrage and to draft a revised Constitution in order to bring about simplification and larger and more equal representation of the people living in different parts of the city. It is accordingly proposed:

\textsuperscript{41} G.O. Ms. No. 1434, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 27th September 1958.
\textsuperscript{43} G.O. No. 286, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 20th September 1958.
\textsuperscript{44} The Fort ST.George Gazette, Part IV-A, Extraordinary, No.26, Government of Madras, Madras, dated 30th August 1958, p.279.
1. to increase the number of territorial divisions from 50 to 100, each territorial division being a single-member constituency returning one divisional councilor,
2. to consider each Assembly Constituency as a unit (the Perambur constituency being considered as two units) and to divide each unit into ten divisions, and
3. to abolish all special constituencies and the system of aldermen.

In order to carry out the above proposals, Lourdhammal Simon considered that it was necessary to amend the Madras City Municipal Act, 1919. It was also considered desirable to carry out the reforms outlined in the above paragraph and then conduct the elections to the Corporation of Madras. On account of this, it was not possible to hold the elections on the due dates. It was therefore, proposed to postpone the elections by six months but this six months period was only an outer limit and election would be held within that period having regard to factors like administrative convenience. As there was no provision in the Madras City Municipal Act, 1919, for the postponement of elections to the Corporation of Madras, legislation was necessary for the purpose.

On 10.09.1958, the Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1958 (L.A.Bill No.28 of 1958) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly by Lourdhammal Simon. It was contemplated in the White Paper fell under three broad heads:

a) Reform of the composition of the Council and Council constituencies
b) Reorganization of the Standing Committees and Resettlement of their functions
c) Reform of the system of appointment to key-posts in the service of the Corporation.

The Legislature Committee on Local Administration scrutinised the proposals in the White Paper including the amendments to the Madras City Municipal Act proposed by the Corporation of Madras, examined by the Secretariat Departments and appended to

45 G.O. Ms. No. 1489, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 08th October 1958.
the White Paper with their comments. The Committee has accepted the major reforms proposed by the Government namely:

1) Increasing the number of territorial divisions from 50 to 100, each as a single member constituency and grouping them so as to form 10 City Municipal circles;

2) Abolition of special constituencies and reserved seats other than those intended for special representation for women and scheduled caste;

3) Abolition of system of Aldermen;

4) Reorganization of standing committee and Resettlement of their functions;

5) Reform of the system of appointment to key-posts in the service of the Corporation.

It did not accept the proposal to extend the term of office of members from three years to five years. As regards representation of women and schedule castes the proposal in the White Paper was that all the divisional councilors of every circle should elect one woman councilor and one scheduled caste councilor if there is no women and scheduled caste councillor. The Legislature Committee has, however, recommended that six Harijans and six women councillors might be elected as members by means of single transferrable vote on proportional representation by the whole Council, irrespective of the number of Harijans and women already elected to the Council by the electorate.

The ordinary elections to the Corporation of Madras were due on or before 1st November 1958 by efflux of time. Under section 55-A of the Madras City Municipal Act, 1919, elections would have to be conducted during the months of August and September, 1958. The changes in the constituencies and composition of the Council of the Corporation proposed in the White Paper and accepted by the Legislature Committee could be effected only by legislation. If election is to be conducted on the usual dates, it could be done under the changed system. In order to conduct the elections under the new
proposals, the Legislature Committee recommended that the elections might be postponed by six months, that this six months period should be only an outer limit and that elections should be held within that period having due regard to the requirements of administrative convenience.

The Bill embodied the proposals contained in the White Paper so far as they related to constituencies and the composition of the Council of the Corporation and as approved by the Legislature Committee on Local Administration, except in regard to the representation for Harijans and women. As regards the representation for scheduled caste and women, the Government have considered that it is sufficient to provide for the co-operation of 10 members of scheduled castes by the Divisional councilors, the number of councillors to be so co-opted being reduced by the number of members of scheduled castes already elected. The Government had also taken the view that no seats need be reserved for women on the Council. Except for the changes, the Bill was approved by the Legislature Committee.

The Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1958, was taken into consideration at once. The decision of the Legislative Council on the Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Bill 1958 (L.A.Bill No.28 of 1958) was passed by the Madras Legislative Assembly and was carried in the council on 18.09.1958. This Madras city Municipal (Amendment) Act 1958 was one of the greatest achievements of Lourdhammal Simon.

The Act mainly aimed at increasing the territorial division from 50 to 100, and women belonged to Harijans and Scheduled Castes should given priority in the elections. Minister Lourdhammal Simon wanted that every people of the state had to be benefited

without favouritism as well as they had to participate in the field of local administration and its works. Thus, she was very much concerned for the village and municipal developments.

**THE MADRAS DISTRICT MUNICIPALITIES (AMENDMENT) ACT 1958**

The Madras District Municipalities Act 1920 was amended by Minister Lourdhammal Simon for the betterment of Local Administration. This Act is known as Madras District Municipalities (Amendment) Act 1958. Extension of term of office of councillors of municipalities, date of elections and term of office of councilors and power to remove difficulties were the major amendments. Finally the Act was passed successfully in the Legislative Council.\(^{48}\)

**THE MADRAS VILLAGE PANCHAYAT (AMENDMENT) ACT 1958**

The Madras Village Panchayat Act of 1950 underwent several amendments under Minister Lourdhammal Simon. It provided the following provisions: (1) The Act is intended to secure the welfare of the inhabitance in the state, to provide social and cultural opportunities and to raise the standard of their living and improve the public health. (2) All the functions of the district board would be transferred to the Panchayat Union Council. (3) To make a verbal amendment altering the words ‘District Board’ into ‘Panchayat Union Council’. (4) Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman, appointment of Commissioners, officers, servants and their qualifications of Panchayat Union Councils.\(^{49}\) (5) Duties of Panchayats such as the constructions, repair and maintenance of public roads in the village, (6) Lighting of public roads, (7) Construction of drains and cleansing of streets, establishment and maintenance of common dispensaries, child welfare centers (8) Every Panchayat Union would have two funds, one the Panchayat Union (general) fund, and the other the Panchayat Union (Education)


fund, every Town Panchayat would have a Town Panchayat fund and every Village Panchayat would have a Village Panchayat Fund.\textsuperscript{50}

**THE MADRAS (TRANSFERRED TERRITORY) EXTENSION OF TERM OF OFFICE OF MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS ACT, 1958**

The Madras (Transferred Territory) Extension of term of office of Municipal Bill, 1958 (L.C.Bill No.9 of 1958) was introduced by Lourdhammal Simon in the Legislative Assembly.\textsuperscript{51} It was proposed for conducting the elections in the Municipalities in the transferred areas of the Kanyakumari Districts and Shencottah municipalities in the Tirunelveli District which were once governed by the Travancore Municipalities (Travancore Act XXIII of 1116). Though, the state government was asked to conduct the election in these transferred territories for this purpose the Bill was introduced and successfully passed by Legislative Assembly on 05\textsuperscript{th} November 1958.

**THE MADRAS DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS AND PANCHAYATS (EXTENSION TO ADDED TERRITORY) ACT 1961**

One of the notable features of Lourdhammal Simon tenure as minister was the enactment of the Madras District Development Councils and Panchayats (Extension to Added Territory) Act 1961 on 31 August and 1\textsuperscript{st} September 1961 respectively in the Legislative Assembly. The Act brought into force on 2\textsuperscript{nd} October 1961. Accordingly, the Madras District Development Councils Act 1958 and the Madras Panchayats Act 1958, the provisions of these Acts should be extended in the transferred territory (Kanyakumari and Shencottai Taluk of the Tirunelveli District). To enable the provisions of these Acts the Madras District Development Councils and Panchayats (Extension to Added

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid., G.O. Ps. No. 1226, dated 9\textsuperscript{th} August 1958.

Territory) Act 1961 was passed and the Act was effectively implemented in the both districts.\(^{52}\)

**THE MADRAS CITY MUNICIPAL (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1961**

Lourdhammal Simon had moved the Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Bill, 1961 (L.A. Bill No. 35/1961) into consideration of Madras Legislative Assembly on 14\(^{th}\) November 1961. It is proposed to amend certain provisions of the Madras City Municipal Act, 1919 (Madras Act IV of 1919).

The White Paper on Reform of Local Administration in Madras State included also proposals for the Madras City Municipal Administration. The changes contemplated in the White Paper in regard to the Corporation of Madras can be classified into three heads namely:

1) Reform of the Corporation of the Council and the Council constituencies
2) Reorganisation of Standing Committees and re-settlement of their functions
3) Reform of the system of appointment to key posts in the service of Corporation.

The Legislation Committee consisting of honourable members of both Houses of legislature was constituted to advice the minister for Local Administration in finalizing the White Paper proposals and in pursuance of the decision taken by the Legislature Committee regarding the reform of the composition of the council and the council constituencies, the Madras City Municipal (Amendment) Act 1958, was enacted. In 1961 it was proposed to give effect to the decision of the Legislature Committee regarding the other recommendations. The important changes proposed to be provided are:

1) Division of the Madras City into two parts called North Madras and South Madras

\(^{52}\) G.O. No. 2683, Rural Development and Local Administration Department, dated 30\(^{th}\) September 1961.
2) Constitution of Central Committee and Circle Committee on a territory basis in the place of the existing five functional standing committees besides continuing the existing account committee (renamed as Corporation Accounts Committee) and consisting a contracts committee to deal with appeals against orders passed under the licensing provisions, etc.

3) Appointment of two assistant commissioners, one to be in charge of North Madras and the other of South Madras, subject to general superintendence, direction and control of Commissioner.

4) Appointment of a personal assistant to the Commissioner to assist to Commissioner in the performance of his duties.

5) Reorganization of the establishments under the Corporation by classifying the officers into four classes.

In order to carry out the above proposals, it became necessary to amend certain sections of the Madras City Municipal Act, 1919 (Madras Act IV 1919). The Bill sought to achieve the above objects through the intervention of Lourdhammal Simon.

**ORGANIZATION OF FIRST PANCHAYAT UNION**

At first the North Madurai Panchayat Union was organized in the state, which consisted of five revenue firkas (villages) of Kunnathur, Koolapandi, Othakadai, Arumbanur and Samayanallur. There were 172 revenue villages with a population of a little over one lakh. The union area was divided into six Panchayat Union Circles, at the rate of one Circle for every firka except in the case of the Samayanallur firka which has a large population and which has there-fore been divided into two Panchayat Union Circles. There were 39 Panchayats constituted for 105 revenue villages. They were

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54 Madras Information, Volume: XI, No: 10, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, October, 1957, p.4.
therefore, grouped into 30 Villages Panchayats. Thus the six Panchayat Union Circles included 39 old and 30 new Panchayat Villages or 69 in all. Under the old rule, the number of Panchayatdars to be elected as representatives of one Village Panchayat could not exceed seven. In order to diminish unhealthy competition for membership and in order to facilitate participation by the natural leaders of different social and economic groups in the village, the strength of newly formed Panchayats was re-fixed at the rate of one member for every 100 people for the first 500 population and one member for every 200 people in excess of 500 subject to the maximum of 15 laid down in the Act. A memorandum outlining detailed proposals was prepared. The proposals were explained to the villagers and the members of the Panchayats in the Block. They welcomed the idea, which was therefore put into effect.

The North Madurai Panchayat Union was inaugurated in the third week of September, 1957 at Arambanur by the then Chief Minister, K. Kamaraj, and Lourdhammal Simon, Minister for Local Administration, presided over the function.

Appointment of Village Councillors and their role

By the recommendation of the Government, the Panchayat Union was then formed with councillors chosen by the Panchayats of each of these sixty nine Village Panchayats. The scale of representation was fixed at the rate of one Councillor for every Village Panchayat having a population of not less than 1,000 and not more than 3,000. A few villages having a population exceeding 3,000 returned 2 councillors each. On the other hand, Village Panchayats which had a population of less than 1,000 were grouped in pairs; and they sent one Councillor to represent each Village Panchayat in alternate years. In the opinion of the Government, it was especially important that every Councillor of the Panchayat Union should be a representative of one Village Panchayat

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55 Ibid., p.4.
56 Ibid., p.3.
or another. The Panchayat Union was a Co-operative Union or federation of the Panchayats, it was not an external authority created on a different basis altogether. The new rules provided that the Councillors should be chosen by the respective Panchayats on the basis of the principle near-unanimity favoured by the Government of India.\(^57\) The Panchayats Union Council consisted in addition to these elected representatives of Panchayats, a few other members of the Madurai District Board representing the district board circles of Madurai-cum-Samayanallur, Koolapandi-cum-Kannathur as the representatives of the district board on the Council.

The Member of the Legislative Assembly representing the Melur General Constituency was an ex-officio member of the Council. There was a Chairman of the Council, who was also a member of it. All the members of the Council other than the ex-officio members were elected. There was six Circle Committee of the Union, one for each of the six Panchayat Union Circles and the representatives of the Village Panchayats of that circle constituted the Circle Committee. Provision had been made for ensuring that there was atleast one Harijan\(^58\) member on every Circle Committee,\(^59\) by co-option, if necessary. The members of every Circle Committee elected one member as a Vice-Chairman of the Panchayat Union Council among themselves and he was the Presiding Officer of the Circle Committee concerned. All the six Vice-Chairmen of the Council took rank by seniority reckoned according to age. The Block Development Officer, who was already said, was an ex-officio member of the Union was the executive authority of the Union. In that capacity, he designated as the Panchayat Union Commissioner; and his relationship to the Panchayat Union was the same as that of a Municipal Commissioner to a Municipality.


\(^{58}\) *Harijan* is a term popularized by Indian revolutionary leader Mahatma Gandhi for referring to Dalits, traditionally considered to be Untouchable.

\(^{59}\) *Madras Information*, Volume: XI, No: 10, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, October, 1957, p.4.
**Elementary needs of the Village**

Lourdhammal Simon was very keen regarding the elementary needs of the village. The Village Panchayats needed to attend the elementary needs of the village which were essentially the pre-1950 functions, namely, construction and maintenance of roads and streets in the village, lighting of such roads and streets, cleansing of streets, provision of drinking water-supply and drain and provision of latrines and cleansing them. For raising fund of these purposes, they had the power to levy house-tax, professional-tax, vehicle tax and a land cess\(^{60}\) of 3 pies in the rupees of land revenue.\(^{61}\) The Panchayat Union performed all functions, vested in the Village Panchayats under the 1950 Act other than those mentioned above as well as the functions performed by the District Board in the Union area. Therefore, all the other district roads and village roads under the control of the District Board were transferred to the Panchayat Union for maintenance. The buildings connected with the institutions transferred to the Panchayat Union were transferred from the District Board to the Union. The schemes of road development included in the Second Five-Year Plan so far as they related to the District Board and lay within the Panchayat Union area were executed through the Panchayat Union. As all elementary schools and Maternity Child Welfare Centres maintained by the District Board in the Union area were transferred to the Panchayat Union, it was the duty of the Panchayat Union to maintain and develop them.\(^{62}\) The development of primary education was one of the most important actions taken by her, among the purposes intended to be secured by the constitution of the Panchayat Union. The duty of bringing about the planned development of primary education was laid on the Panchayat Union.

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\(^{60}\) The term was formerly particularly applied to local taxation. In colonial India it was applied, with a qualifying prefix, to any taxation, such as irrigation-cess, educational-cess, and the like. They are collectively referred to as "cesses" in government censuses, e.g. "land revenue and cesses".


Union. The planned development of maternity and Child Welfare Centres included in the Second Five-Year Plan was also executed through the Panchayat Union. For rendering all these services, the services of the personnel of the National Extension Service Scheme was placed at the disposal of the Panchayat Union and Village Panchayats free of cost. The pattern of financial assistance normally rendered by the Government to local bodies was liberalized and resettled in its application to the Panchayat Union in such a way as to enable it to play its part effectively as a participant in the National Five-Year Plan.

**Panchayat Jurisdiction**

The jurisdiction of a Panchayat generally extended over a revenue village and in some cases over a group of contiguous villages or parts thereof. The strength of members of Panchayats (both Class I and Class II) ranged from five to fifteen with reference to population, the maximum number of seats being allotted to Panchayats with a population of 2,500 and above. The President and Vice-President were elected from among the members.

Every person included in the electoral roll of the Legislative Assembly constituency relating to the village portion thereof within the Panchayat, was entitled to be included in the electoral roll of the Panchayat, to vote and stand for election to the Panchayat. The election to both Class I and Class II Panchayats was by secret ballot, to the former by the method of marking on the ballot paper and to the latter by the multiple box system.

The system of secret ballot was introduced in the first time in the State in respect of all Class II Panchayats with effect from the ordinary elections held in April 1958. It was a happy augury that in these elections, about 5,000 Village Panchayats so far held,

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nearly 63% of them were uncontested which was a healthy sign of unity among village people and eschewing party politics in local administration.

From 1st November 1956, the areas comprised in the Kanyakumari district and in the Shencottai taluk of the erstwhile Travancore-Cochin State had been merged in the Madras State. Fifty one Panchayats were merged in this manner without classified as Class I and Class II. The elections to these Panchayats too were held by a secret ballot.

**MUNICIPALITIES DURING THE YEARS (1957-1962)**

During the period of Lourdhammal Simon, (1957-58) there were eleven District Boards in the state one in each district except Madras and Kanyakumari. The number of Municipalities in the state increased from fifty-nine to sixty-three consequent on the constitution of the following four municipalities with effect from 1st October 1958: (1) Arkonam (North Arcot), (2) Kurichi (Coimbatore), (3) Cumbam and (4) Tiruvottiyur (Chengleput). There were also three townships, Bhavanisagar, Courtallam and Mettur.

During the periods of 1958-59, there were eleven District Boards in the State. The number of District Municipalities in the State increased from 63 to 66 consequent on the constitution of the Municipalities of Arcot, Ranipet and Ramanathapuram with effect from 1st April 1959. There were the Special Officers (District Collectors) continued to be in the charge of the administration of the District Boards. Special Officers were appointed for the three newly constituted municipalities to carry on the administration till elections to the councils could be completed. Elections to the four municipalities of Arkonam, Cumbam, Kurichi, and Tiruvottiyur were not held and these municipalities continued to be in charge of Special Officers.

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In 1959-1960, there were eleven District Boards and sixty four Municipalities in the State. The Kurichi Municipality was abolished and the Kodaikanal Municipal Council was converted into a Township all with effect from 1st October 1960. There were four Townships functioning at Courtallam, Mettur, Bhavanisagar and Kodaikanal.

**ELECTIONS AMONG PANCHAYATS (1957-1962)**

In general, elections are considered as a visa for selecting people’s representative to fulfil their needs. Elections for all the Panchayats were held without any fails and corruption. Lourdhammal Simon was the first Minister, to conduct elections for all Panchayats effectively and strictly. The ordinary election to District Boards which was to be held in 1957. Special Officers (District Collectors) were appointed to each District Board to exercise the powers, discharge the duties and perform the functions of the District Board and its president. And also they had to look after for four newly constituted municipalities to perform the functions of the municipal councils. The term of the councillors of municipal councils constituted under the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920, which had expired on 1st November 1958 was extended up to 1st April 1959 on account of administrative difficulties in holding ordinary elections. Ordinary elections to Panchayats commenced from April 1958 and they expected to be completed by June 1959. And also secondly ordinary elections were held in 53 Municipalities in March 1959 and the newly elected councilors assumed office on 1st April 1959. Elections were also held to the five municipalities in the transferred areas in October 1959. Elections to the Kodaikanal Municipal Council were not held, because pending the question of converting the municipality into a township. Elections to almost all the existing Panchayats in the State including elections to 52 Panchayats in the transferred territories were completed. Ordinary elections to 2,750 Panchayats were also

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conducted during the year of 1959. The newly elected members of the Panchayats in the transferred territory assumed office on 31st December 1959. Ordinary elections were held to the newly constituted Municipalities at Arcot, Ramanathapuram, Cumbam, Arkonam and Ranipet. Ordinary elections to the Tiruvottiyur Municipality were carried on by the Special Officer. Seventy-Five Panchayat Union Councils, in the first batch, were constituted with effect from 2nd October 1960 and the Panchayat Administration was introduced in these areas.

During the same year, 275 Panchayats were constituted. One Panchayat was superseded and nine Panchayats were dissolved for reconstitution. In three cases the presidents were removed from office for abusing their powers or failing to discharge their duties properly. At the end of the year, there were 269 Class I and 9,588 Class II Panchayats.

**Panchayat Members**

As per the order of the Lourdhammal Simon, the affairs of the Panchayats were carried on by the President and members, the former exercising the executive functions also when there was no Executive Officer for the Panchayat. Adequate provision had been made in the Act to check and prevent the abuse of powers, if any, by the President or Vice-President or members of the Panchayat. There was also a provision-empowering the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards for dissolving the Panchayat, if any default was found or proved any incompetence to run the administration properly or for removing its President, Vice-President or any members in case of any default or abuse of powers. It was suggested that the Panchayat had to meet at least once in a month to transact its business and the meetings were conducted in its own office with

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strict regard to the prescribed procedure. In cases of urgency or for special reasons, the Panchayat could also meet at shorter intervals. The Panchayats carried out functions expressly provided for under the Act (subject to the rules framed there under) classified as obligatory and discretionary.

The following were the constituents of a Panchayat,

President, Vice-President, Members, ranging from 5 to 15 based on the population of the Panchayat, Executive Officer in the case of a notified Panchayat functioning as executive authority.\(^\text{72}\)

**Reservation of Seats**

Provision had also been made for reservation of seats to the Scheduled Castes in the Panchayats not exceeding one-fifth of the total strength, if their population was not more than half the total population of the Panchayat. The Panchayat was divided into wards for the purpose of electing its members. The Class I Panchayat was divided into not less than five wards, and the Class II Panchayat into not less than two and not more than five wards. The minimum and maximum number of members for a ward of a Class II Panchayat was two and five respectively, while in usually exceed two members. The term of members of a Panchayat which was three years had been raised to five years as per the Amendment Act, 1957.\(^\text{73}\)

**Duties of the President and the Vice-President**

The President had the right to make arrangements for the election of Vice-President; he was the person to convene and preside over the meetings of the Panchayat and discharge all the duties and powers specifically imposed or conferred on the President by the Act. When the office of the President was vacant, the Vice-President had to exercise the functions of the President until a new president was declared elected.


\(^{\text{73}}\) Ibid., p.9.
and assumed office. In the absence of a President he could also function as a President, and exercise the powers delegated to him. When the offices of both the President and Vice-President were vacant or when both were incapacitated or absent, a temporary President was appointed by the District Panchayat Officer from among the members, and he functioned as the President during such a period. No remuneration was given to the President, Vice-President and members. The members had got right to move resolutions and put questions to the President on matters of administration subject to the rules prescribed.

A whole-time Executive Officer was appointed by the Inspector for such Panchayats by the Government. All the Class I Panchayats had Executive Officers, besides a few Class II Panchayats. If there was no Executive Officer, the President of the Panchayat himself should perform all the executive functions and these functions as Executive Authority. The Executive Officer was paid from the Panchayat Funds, his salary and allowances as fixed by Government. The resolutions of the Panchayat were carried out by the Executive Authority.

**MOMENTOUS STEPS**

Even though the Act became law in January 1959, it took another 32 months to complete the task, entrusted to the Government by the Legislature. The task of bringing into existence in an orderly fashion, 373 Panchayat Unions involved a considerable amount of reformation of procedures and re-orientation of thinking and approach at all levels. The completion of that reform was phased into three stages over a period of one year.

As Gandhi said, Panchyat Raj represents a true democratic country. He respected village and agriculture. He realized the fact that if village perishes; India would perish

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74 Ibid., p.9.
too. To respect his ideas in Gandhi on Gandhi Jayanthi Day 1960, seventy-five Community Development Blocks were formed into Panchayat Unions; on the Tamil New Year’s Day 1961, one hundred and twenty-nine Community Development blocks were constituted into Panchayat Unions and on the Gandhi Jayanthi Day in 1961, the rest of the Blocks numbering one hundred and sixty-nine were transformed into Panchayat Unions. It must be remembered that the process of entrustment of the work of Community Development to participate in the planned development of the country in their own right as local self-governing institutions under the Panchayats Act, is of great significance.

THE NEW SET-UP FOR LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

For the development of local self government Lourdhammal Simon had taken several effective steps. With the introduction of the new Act, it was expected that the Panchayats were not only be the nurseries of local administration at the village level, but they should also serve as effective links for all the developmental activities of the State conferring the maximum benefits on the villagers. The functioned include improvement of agricultural production, implementation of programmes relating to village industries as well as the expansion of normal civic services, the universalization of primary education, development of a comprehensive service of maternity assistance and childcare, assurance of protected water-supply and development of village roads and other similar tasks in the fields of culture and welfare and Lourdhammal Simon took meticulous care for its effective implementation. The Panchayats and Panchayat Unions being in direct touch with the rural people had thus became administrative units for planning and development of all schemes which could be planned and implemented at Block and Village level. A Panchayat Development Schematic Budget had been prepared which served as a financial framework and the funds earmarked in different
plan schemes had been pooled and along with local resources the share of the Plan funds and matching grants for the successful implementation of all schemes had been indicated.

**Enlarged functions**

The proposal for the abolition of District Boards and the setting up of Panchayat Unions at Block level were embodied in a revised White Paper and placed before the Legislature, which set up a Joint Committee of both the Houses of the Legislature with adequate representation to all parties. A Draft Bill embodying the proposals after detailed discussion was approved by the Committee, and was passed by both the Houses of the Legislature by active support from all political parties. Thus emerged the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, and Madras is the first State to enact the Panchayat reform on the basis of the new concepts arising out of the recommendations of the Committee on Plan Projects which were adopted by the National Development Council in 1958.

The Madras District Development Councils Act, 1958, had to give effect to as the first among the preparatory measures preceding the implementation of the Madras Panchayat Act, 1958. The Government had decided to bring the Madras District Development Councils Act into force from 1st December 1959. The Government proposed to introduce the provisions of this Act stage by stage in the entire State and at any rate before 2nd October 1961. The significant features of this new Act are the following:

The District Board was replaced by 374 Panchayat Unions which was formed at the rate of one for each Development Block delimited under National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development. The entire State was covered by Panchayats within a stipulated time. In the new set-up, the Panchayats were classified as town and village

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Panchayats instead of Class I and Class II Panchayats on the basis of their population and income,\textsuperscript{76}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Panchayats</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Town Panchayats</td>
<td>Not less than 5,000.</td>
<td>Not less than Rs. 10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Panchayats</td>
<td>Less than 5,000 and not less than 500.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The expansion of rural development activities had reached a stage at which the need has arisen for constituting areas smaller in extent than the revenue district immediately for purpose of rural development. The Act provided for representation of every Municipal Town and every Block in the district, including Blocks in which the National Extension Service Scheme has not yet been introduced. Further, the Council would include all the Members of the State and the Central Legislature of the district together with the Gazetted Officers of the Government connected with planning and development. If a District Development Council is constituted on this basis for a whole revenue district, it would have an unduly large and unwieldy body. It is therefore, necessary that a compact local area within a revenue district has to be delimited as a Development District for the purpose of the Act. The City of Madras is unaffected by the Act. The three revenue districts of Chengleput, Kanyakumari and Nilgiris are declared to be Development Districts under the Act.\textsuperscript{77} The remaining nine districts have been delimited into eighteen Development Districts at the rate of two for every revenue district.


\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., Volume: XV, No: 10, October, 1960, p.9.

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid., Volume: XIV, No: 1, January, 1960, p.8.
Tiruchirappalli, (19) South Tiruchirappalli, (20) North Tirunelveli, (21) South Tirunelveli. A notification required under section 3 (2) of the Act for this purpose was published in the Extraordinary issue of the Fort St. George Gazette.\textsuperscript{78}

**Districts Development Council**

The division of the Revenue District into Development Districts had effect only in relation to the working of development schemes in the district. The Revenue District was continued to be the territorial unit for purposes of land revenue and general administration as at present. The headquarters of the revenue district was the common headquarters of both the District Development Councils. Under section 4 (1), (c) of the Act, all Chairmen of Panchayat Union Council in the district were members of District Development Councils.\textsuperscript{79} Until Panchayat Union Councils were established, the Act provided that a person chosen by the Presidents of Panchayats in a local area would be a member of the District Development Council. One representative for every development block was chosen by the Presidents of Panchayats in that block, if Panchayat unions were not been constituted. Statutory rules relating to the procedure for choosing Block representatives on the District Development Councils were also published in the extraordinary issue of the Fort St. George Gazette.\textsuperscript{80}

Under section 4 (3) (b) of the Act, a Member of Parliament and a Member of the State Legislative chosen to represent a constituency comprises or which relates to a district or any portion thereof other than a district in which he has his residence should intimate his decision as to the district in which he desires to serve as a Member of the District Development Council to the District Collector concerned within a prescribed

\textsuperscript{78}The Fort St. George Gazette, Extraordinary, Government of Madras, Madras, dated the 30\textsuperscript{th} November 1959.

\textsuperscript{79}Madras Information, Volume: XIV, No: 1, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, January, 1960, p.8.

\textsuperscript{80}The Fort St. George Gazette, Extraordinary, Government of Madras, Madras, dated the 30\textsuperscript{th} November 1959.
period. A rule prescribing 15 days as the period under this provision was also issued in the extraordinary issue of the Fort St. George Gazette.\(^{81}\) The Government had fixed 1\(^{st}\) January 1960, the statutory date on which District Development Councils should be formally brought into existence.\(^{82}\) The notification necessary for this purpose under section 4 (1) of the Act has been published in the Fort St. George Gazette.

**Three Main Operations**

The Government had decided that the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, should be brought into force in all the area of the State except the transferred territory (Kanyakumari district and Shencottah taluk of Tirunelveli district), with effect from 1\(^{st}\) January 1960.\(^{83}\) The implementation of the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, involved three main administrative operations which might be distinguished from one another as, Completion of Panchayat Coverage, Panchayat Union Constitution, Rural Development Devolution.

The first operation, namely, “Completion of Panchayat Coverage” was commenced on 1\(^{st}\) January 1960 in all blocks and expected to be completed on or before the 31\(^{st}\) December 1960. With the completion of this operation, all the rural areas of the State were covered with Panchayats.\(^{84}\)

The second administration operation referred to as “Panchayat Union Constitution” was proposed to be constituted when a preliminary notification was published by Government under sub-section (1) section 7 of the Act, specifying the blocks. An intermediate stage of this operation was reached when statutory objections, if any, were heard and the territorial limits of the notified blocks were finalized by an intermediate notification under sub-section (3) of section 7 of the Act. The Block then

\(^{81}\)Ibid.

\(^{82}\)Madras Information, Volume: XIV, No: 1, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, January, 1960, p.8.

\(^{83}\)Ibid., p.8.

\(^{84}\)Ibid., p.9.
acquired statutory status as a “Panchayat Development Block”. Thereafter the members of “Panchayat Union Councils” were to be chosen including co-opted members, wherever necessary. A final notification was issued under section 11 (1) of the Act, constituting a Panchayat Union Council for every Panchayat Development Block.

**Phases of the Programme**

With the experience gained in the field of Panchayat administration and to provide for more resources and scope for the Panchayats, Lourdhammal Simon wanted to make development among communities. So, she also made some slight changes in the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development. Further, she proposed to divide all the Development Blocks and the States delimited under the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development into three batches so that a phased programme of constitution of Panchayat Unions could be put through within the time-limit, namely 2nd October 1961, specified under the Act. According to the Act the first batch comprised of 75 select blocks which were a little over one-third of the total number of blocks where the National Extension Service Scheme had already been introduced. The third batch comprised of all the other blocks of the State (i.e., Blocks where the National Extension Service Scheme had not yet been introduced).

The calendar of dates for the publication of the preliminary notification under section 7 (1), intermediate notification under section 7 (3) and final notification under section 11 (1) of the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958,\(^\text{85}\) of each of the three batches has been fixed as follows:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blocks</th>
<th>Date of preliminary notification under section 7(1) of the Act.</th>
<th>Date of intermediate notification under section 7(3) of the Act.</th>
<th>Date of final notification under section 11(1) of the Act.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Batch Blocks</td>
<td>1st January 1960</td>
<td>14th April 1960</td>
<td>2nd October 1960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Batch Blocks</td>
<td>1st July 1960</td>
<td>2nd October 1960</td>
<td>14th April 1961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Batch Blocks</td>
<td>14th April 1961</td>
<td>1st July 1961</td>
<td>2nd October 1961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is necessary that the Panchayats should be actively associated with all the measures taken to implement the new Panchayats Act, and bring Panchayat Union into existence in accordance with the phased programme. The Government had, therefore decided that the committees already constituted under the National Existence Service Scheme should be enlarged to include all the Panchayat Presidents of the Block. The similar committees were also be constituted in all the other blocks in which the National Extension Service Scheme had not been introduced.

The functions of these Block Advisory Committees are as follows:

(i) All functions at present performed by the Block Advisory Committees under the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development.

(ii) Advising the Panchayats in the Block as well as all the official agencies concerned, in respect of the implementation of the Madras Panchayats Act, 1958.\textsuperscript{86}

Local Administration was once considered to be a necessary preliminary training ground for self Government, and local administrative units were devised and guided with the avowed intention of giving a chance to local leaders to train themselves in the art of Government. Though this conception of local bodies holds good, even today, yet with the attainment of independence there has been a shift in the emphasis. These bodies cannot merely serve as training grounds but they are expected to be parts of a vast

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid., p.9.
democratic apparatus working for the welfare of the people.\textsuperscript{87} Municipalities were encouraged by the Local Administration Minister Lourdhammal Simon to do their duties sincerely and effectively.

**SPEECH OF SRIMATHI LOURDHAMMAL SIMON**

Naturally Lourdhammal Simon had umpteen abilities within herself like a way, she had the ability of speaking; especially she was well-versed in English language. She had fascinated the Legislative Assembly through her speeches. She was not only the greatest speaker but also the genius in administration. Her presidential speech at the Eighth Annual Conference of the Chamber of Municipal Chairman, Madras State at Madras on 25\textsuperscript{th} April 1960 manifested her vision on local administration.\textsuperscript{88} Her effective caliber, dedication, and sincerity on her service were proved by her authentic speeches. She spoke under the themes, responsibilities of Municipalities, chairman’s influences, shaping the policies, need for enhancing taxes, town-planning schemes and duties of the council and executive officers.

**Beneficial Influence of Chairman**

“Efficient local administration is of vital importance to a country”. It became a reality during the time of Lourdhammal Simon. During the period the local bodies were modified into the representative democratic institutions which supplied the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money on local objects conformed to the needs and wishes of the local area. The importance of local administration bodies in the evolution of an efficient democracy couldn’t be over-emphasized, and touching as they did the life of every single citizen most intimately. Throughout the life, they must be carefully fostered and wisely guided so as to render the greatest service to the people. They had the privilege and honour to play an important

\textsuperscript{87} Ibid., p.11.
\textsuperscript{88} Ibid., Volume: XIV, No: 5, May, 1960, p.11.
role. She also stressed that the Chairman as the pivot of the Municipal Council had a responsibility to guide its activities on beneficent lines, conduct its deliberations in a smooth and dignified manner and help it to arrive at correct decisions and secure the efficient co-operation of the executive.\textsuperscript{89} As progress in civic life can be ensured only by the creation of a healthy public opinion and the inculcation of a sense of duty and responsibility the Chairman could exert a beneficial influence. She emphasized the position of the Chairman that it was of great importance in the eyes of the public, he had been clothed with certain powers and functions under the Municipal Act which he should exercise wisely and impartially.

\textbf{Qualities of Local Administration}

The White Paper on Local Administration placed before the Legislature in October 1957 contemplated the devolution of certain powers to the Chairman. It was proposed to amend the Madras District Municipalities Act, 1920, in order to implement the main proposals in the White Paper so far as they related to Municipalities and also for the purpose of removing difficulties noticed in the administration of the Act. Opportunity was taken in that connection to define specifically the responsibilities of the Chairman in formulating the general policy of the Council. The proposed amendments were placed before the Joint Committee of the Legislature already constituted for the purpose of its consideration and views. With a view of improving the standard of administration in the local bodies, the purely executive functions continued to be separated from the deliberative or policy-making functions.\textsuperscript{90} The latter category of functions should appropriately be the sphere of the elected body of the local bodies.

Once policies and decisions have been adopted, their implementation and execution should be left to the principal executive officer who should be made primarily

\textsuperscript{89} ibid., p.11.
\textsuperscript{90} ibid., p.11.
and directly responsible for it. These healthy principles were recognized and put in practice even as early as from 1933. The service of Local Administration Department under the supervision of Lourdhammal Simon did their work well enough and rendering satisfactory service to the people. It was proposed to constitute Panchayat Unions on the municipal model for groups of contiguous Panchayats to look after the rural population and they functioned more or less as rural Municipalities that had a great responsibility to set good examples.

**Shaping the Policy**

The main function of a Municipal Council was to lay down the policy, control the raising and spending of funds and determine the rates of taxation. The council led by its Chairman had to play a prominent part in shaping the policy of administration, taking responsibility for the consequences of its decisions and sharing the credit for the benevolent results flowing there. The tax-paying public were dependent on the local authority for good sanitation, water-supply, elementary education, hospitals, dispensaries, roads and various community services and the success of any local body were judged largely by its ability to provide and maintain these services at a decent standard.\(^91\) If persons imbued with a sense of public service, ability, ample common sense and integrity are at the helm of affairs the administration would doubtless be a complete success.

The Madras District Municipalities Act was amended for the purpose of declaring any municipality, or any specified area therein, to be a Township, if it is an industrial, labour, or institutional colony or a health resort.\(^92\) It had been considered necessary for the development of special areas as health resorts and tourist centres that required the constitution of an organization on a pattern different from the ordinary

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pattern of Municipal organization, i.e., by a committee consisting of a small number of officials and non-officials appointed by the Government rather than a Municipal Council consisting of only elected members resident in the area. The Government and the Lourdhammal Simon’s committee had proposed to constitute a Township Committee for Kodaikanal Municipality\(^93\) under this new provision. It was considered as the best example of shaping the policy during her period.

**Need for Enhancing Taxes**

Being one among the people, Lourdhammal Simon knew certain needs essential for the people. For that, she made some adequate changes in municipal laws. Especially she turned her attention to reform the system of taxation. Every Municipal Officer tried their best to follow the proposals recommended by Lourdhammal Simon effectively. Though the sources of municipal revenue were rather inelastic, yet in some municipalities the rate of taxation was comparatively low and these municipalities were well advised to consider the question of raising the rate of tax to meet growing expenditure. Some of the municipalities were to abolish or reduce drastically minor items of taxation like the cycle tax\(^94\). It might be liked as a popularity measure but hardly justified in the case of deficit municipalities as such tax revenues could be utilized for other welfare schemes to the citizens. In particular adequate water-supply, satisfactory drainage and good roads are essential requirements for the health and comfort of the taxpayers. The Government supported the Municipal Councils to the utmost extend by grant of loans in the Five-Year Plan for provision of protected water-supply and drainage facilities, for town-planning schemes and for remunerative enterprises. A sum of about


Rs. 10 lakhs was given as grant every year to Municipal Councils for dustless surfacing of roads.\textsuperscript{95} And this scheme continued in the Third Plan also.

One of the usual demands repeatedly made by Municipal Councils is for an increase in the amount of compensation payable to them for loss of income from toll and licence fees under the Madras Motor Vehicle Taxation Act, 1931. The Government proposed to examine this as a general question afresh. But the Motor Vehicle Tax has now become part and parcel of State revenues and Government themselves are hard put to finance the Plan Schemes with the limited resources.

**TOWN-PLANNING SCHEMES**

One aspect of municipal administration which hardly received attention was Town Planning Schemes. At first in 1920, under the provisions of the Madras Town-Planning Act steps were taken but it did not achieve its goal. And after a long period, since 1921, Lourdhammal Simon was the only Local Administration Minister, who recommended and re-kindled about Town-Planning in the Legislature and she was the only one Minister who introduced Town-planning scheme successfully. And she had an intention of modernized Madras city and for that she took effective steps. She recommended her officers to design the diagram for the formation of roads. And the officers also did their work hopefully and consecutively.

During her period, with the rapid increase in urban populations, there was a danger in municipal towns and they were becoming ill-developed and slovenly and unhealthy. So, keeping this dangerous situation in her mind, Lourdhammal Simon recommended the Government that, Town-Planning Schemes should be framed quickly and executed without further delay.\textsuperscript{96} The provision made by Government for assistance of municipalities was not fully utilized and extensions of time had to be given to almost

\textsuperscript{95} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., p.12.
every municipality to formulate the schemes and for the retention of loans sanctioned to them for the town-planning schemes. It also advised that encroachments should be systematically and impartially dealt with, but in many municipalities, that had become a colossal problem. Town-planning Scheme which to separate marketing areas, bus-stands, was the rational solution to that problem. Good parks, shade-giving avenue trees, flowers and fountains are not costly at all but they make life even for the humblest more pleasant.

A few instances have come to the notice of Government where party factions have come into undue play and hampered the smooth working of municipal administration. This is rather unfortunate. It is of course not possible to divorce party politics completely but as far as possible public interests should be placed first and party next only, and the discharge of statutory responsibilities laid on the Council by the Act should on no account suffer by lapses or irresponsibility. The Government was no doubt armed with adequate power to ensure that the civic activities of a municipality are carried on without any interruption even if deadlocks are created but no Government would feel happy to exercise such powers if it could be avoided. It is to be expected that the Chairmen by their impartiality and mature wisdom would be able to carry the cooperation of the entire council and that the councilors would give due regard to his leadership and advice.

**Healthy Amenities**

A welfare scheme (Town-Planning) under the Madras Panchayat Act 1958, provided all amenities needed for healthy and comfortable living. It specified with reference to town-planning principles separate areas for housing, industry, commerce, recreational and other essential amenities. Advantage is taken of these provisions to plan

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out and develop in the first instance all outlying and developing areas in towns. A
scheme normally has an extent of 150 acres, but there are special schemes which have an
extent of even 600 acres. There are in all 367 detailed Town-Planning Schemes
operation all over the State which covers 52,000 acres of urban land which is almost 25
per cent of the entire urban area of the State.\textsuperscript{98} The entire operation is carried out by the
local bodies but they are guided, assisted and controlled in this work by the Directorate
of Town-Planning established by Lourdhammal Simon’s Ministry.

**Local Authorities**

The local authorities, however, could not make such headway with Town-
Planning and Town Development till 1945, due to want of finance and lack of technical
personnel. It was only with the commencement of the Second Five-Year Plan that
Government could grant financial assistance for Town-Planning and Town Development
and a provision of Rs. 75.73 lakhs\textsuperscript{99} was made available for this in the Second Five-Year
Plan. This assistance was intended to grant loans to the Local Bodies for the preparation
of Town-Planning Schemes and for the execution of sanctioned Town-Planning
Schemes. At the beginning of the Plan there were 80 sanctioned scheme\textsuperscript{100} and 170
notified schemes for which preparatory work had been held up. The Plan target for the
whole Plan proposed is for preparation of 257 detailed Town-Planning Schemes and to
complete the execution of 54 schemes pending execution at the beginning of Second-
Five-Year Plan period.

**New Schemes**

By the end of the fourth year of the Five-Year Plan, 205 schemes had been
prepared and the 54 schemes were under execution.\textsuperscript{101} An amount of Rs. 48.57 lakhs

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid., Volume: XIV, No: 9, September, 1960, p.20.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., p.20.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., p.20.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid., p.20.
had also been granted as loans to the Local Bodies during the four years for preparation and execution of Town-Planning Schemes. Fifty-three Draft Schemes were furnished to Local Bodies during the year 1959-60 and a loan of Rs. 15.9 lakhs was sanctioned during the year.

The benefits conferred by the programme are great. An area of 5,400 acres of land developed to fifty-two thousand acres of urban land had been brought under planning control. About 6,000 acres of land were reserved and protected for housing poor class families only. About 1,000 acres of land were reserved for controlled industrial development and amenities were provided fully in these areas and also special amenities such as play and recreation fields, major marketing centres and educational centres were introduced.

**Master Plan**

Although the need for the preparation of Master Plans for all the towns in the State was recognized as early as in the year 1920 when the Madras Town-Planning Act was enacted, no appreciable headway could be made in this work. This is mainly due to the fact that the work is a highly complicated one requiring a considerable number of trained and experienced technical personnel. As persons with sound background of Town and Country Planning knowledge were not adequately available so far, no progress could be achieved. However, some of the major municipal towns in the State had collected the data required in connection with preparation of Master Plans. With the advent of the Second Five-year Plan the department could secure a few persons trained in Town and Country Planning and the Government had also sanctioned a special skeleton staff for taking up the works connected with the preparation of Master Plans for towns in the State. It was expected that the preparation of preliminary outline development plans for the more important towns in this State would be commenced and
it was expected that good progress would be made in the coming years. And the dream of the Government also came into real.

**Technical Advice**

In the matter of Housing the Slum Clearance Schemes under the Second Five-Year Plan, the Town-Planning Department rendered technical advice to the Local Bodies including various departments of Government industrialists and other housing authorities in matters connected with selection of sites, the proper laying out of the land, provision of amenities, house designs. During the year 1959-60 the Town-Planning Department furnished layouts in respect of the following schemes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Particulars</th>
<th>Number of Schemes</th>
<th>Number of house-sites provided</th>
<th>Total area in acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Low-income Group Housing</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1,137</td>
<td>96.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Co-operative Housing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,823</td>
<td>240.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Subsidised Industrial Labour Housing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>62.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Slum Clearance</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3,888</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Harijan Colonisation Scheme</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>7,557</td>
<td>582.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Under the Harijan Colonisation Schemes, the Government provided houses for the houseless and landless Harijan families.

In all these schemes the Development Plan for the land was furnished by the Director of Town-Planning. These Colonisation Schemes were planned according to Town-Planning principles.

Zoning of land for residential and industrial uses were done under the Madras Public Health Act and Madras Municipalities Act, respectively. Zoning of land for various uses were done by the Local Authorities concerned with the Director of Town-Planning and Director of Public Health. The Town-Planning Department had secured proper utilisation of land in urban centres, so those residential amenities of these centres were not affected.

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102 Ibid., p.21.
103 Ibid., p.21.
Land Utilisation

The zoning of residential areas prohibited development of industries within such areas and at the same time zoning of areas for industrial purposes secured for the industries suitable areas for industrial development in the towns. These regulations under the control of the Town-Planning Department had secured proper land utilisation in urban centres and had avoided haphazard growth of industries and residences to a great extent which would have resulted in unhealthy living conditions and wasteful land utilisation.

The Department of Local Administration had been rendering technical advice to Local Authorities in their projects of civic buildings and remunerative enterprises by evolving suitable designs for such buildings and also advising them for the proper laying out of the land wherein such buildings proposed to be the department furnished to the Local Authorities designs for the following civic buildings: 104

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Road and designs</th>
<th>22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Office buildings</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hospital and dispensaries</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Markets and shops</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the several effective steps taken by Lourdhammal Simon for Town-Planning Schemes totally changed Chennai city into modernized city.

The Council and the Executive

Lourdhammal Simon was most responsible in her duties and advised her subordinates to be responsible and sincere in their duties. Lourdhammal Simon’s expectations were, in particular, there should not be any unnecessary interference with the executive authorities and subordinates of the municipalities and it should be everyone’s endeavour to get the best out of them and maintain discipline and efficiency at the highest level as well as, root out corruption. She advised her officials that they

104 Ibid., p.21.
should be correct in duties, they shouldn’t take sides in Municipal politics and shouldn’t give room for complaints but should give their best services for the good future of the citizens whom they had to serve. The Government would not hesitate to deal adequately with any executive officer who fail in his duty and who withholds co-operation or respect but it would not be in the best interest to transfer such officers frequently on unsubstantial grounds. For administrative purpose, the Government provincialized the services of Executive Officers of Panchayats with effect from 1st October 1960 in order to facilitate the interchange of the posts of Executive Officers of Panchayats within the Panchayat Development Administration. The Government had appointed a Joint Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards\textsuperscript{105} \textit{inter alia}, more attention to municipalities in view of the increase in work relating to Panchayat reorganization. It was calculated to ensure more systematic inspection of municipalities that would afford clearing ground and ensure smooth working of municipalities. She stressed that it was the duty and responsibility of the municipality to arouse and cultivate a sound civic sense in the citizen and instill in them an abiding respect for municipal law and a true sense of corporate life.

**CONVERSION OF PANCHAYATS**

As Minister Lourdhammal Simon succeeded to frame specific provisions for the conversion of Panchayats into townships and municipalities. She constituted Panchayat Union Councils for each Panchayat Union and for its administration. Every Panchayat and township Committee within the Panchayat Union elected a person to the Union Council among the members. Among them if there were no women or Scheduled Caste were elected or if their numbership was less than three, Union Council would co-opt

such number of women or Scheduled Caste members to ensure that the council could include not less than three women and three Scheduled Caste members.

A member of the State Legislative Assembly representing a constituency comprising the whole or any part of the Panchayat Development Block and any member of the State Legislative Council residing in the Block area could be entitled to take part in the proceedings of the council but the member had no provision to vote or to be elected as chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Council.

**Activities of Panchayats**

The tenure of the Panchayat Union Council as of the Panchayat was five years.\(^{106}\)

There was a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman for every Panchayat Union Council to be elected from among its members. A Commissioner was appointed by the Government for each Panchayat Union Council (he being ordinarily the Block Development Officer concerned) to be paid exclusively from the Funds, to perform the executive function of the Union. The Union Council had to meet at least once in sixty days. A copy of the minutes of the proceedings at every meeting of the Panchayat Union Council as well as all minutes of dissent should be submitted by the Chairman to the Inspector within three days of the date of the meetings.

**Planning Authority**

As an essential feature of participation in the Third Five-Year Plan, the Government intended to stimulate it to general guidance and co-ordination by the Panchayat Union at block level. Every Panchayat should function as the planning authority for the area in its charge; annually framed an agricultural production programme with specific targets and took all steps within its power to ensure that the targets were attained with the area in its charge. In order to facilitate the working of

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Panchayats and Panchayat Unions in securing the development of agricultural production, the Government had issued orders transferring to Panchayats the control and management of almost all *poramboke* and waste lands\(^{107}\) (other than certain limited categories). Panchayats had also been empowered to take over and discharge the liability of rights for the maintenance of *Kudimaramat* works. The maintenance of minor irrigation works were vested with the Panchayat Unions.

**Appointment Committee**

There was an Appointment Committee for every Panchayat Union consisting of the Chairman, the Commissioner and one member elected annually by the Council. Appointments to all posts of the Union (paid from Union Funds) were made with the prior approval of the Committee. There was an Education Committee and a General Purposes Committee in every Panchayat Union. The Panchayat Union had a provision to appoint such other Committees, necessary for the efficient performance of its duties and functions under this Act. Every Panchayat had been submitted a report on its administration for each year before the prescribed date\(^ {108}\) to the Panchayat Union Council.

Every Panchayat Union Council submitted a consolidated report on its administration and on the administration of all Panchayats within the Union for each year before the prescribed date to the Collector and the Collector would prepare a general report on the administration of the Panchayat Union Councils and Panchayats in the district, place it before the District Development Council and submit the same to the Government with the copy of the resolution of the District Development Council. In respect of Panchayat Union Councils, the Government had the powers to fix or alter the

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number, as well as designation of the staff. In respect of Panchayats alone Inspector would exercise the said powers.

**Union Council**

The following functions and powers hitherto exercised by the Panchayats or the District Boards were carried out exclusively by the Union Council:

1) Construction, repair and maintenance of all public roads (classified as Panchayat Union roads) and of all bridges, culverts, roads, dams and causeways on such roads.

2) The establishment and maintenance of dispensaries, maternity and child-welfare centres.

3) Opening, maintenance and expansion or improvement of elementary schools including payment of grants to private managements in respect of elementary schools.

4) Preventive and remedial measures connected with malaria.

5) Maintenance of statistics relating to births and deaths.

6) Maintenance of common institutions for a group of Panchayats.

7) Opening of new public markets or closing of existing ones with the prior permission of the Inspect.

8) Control of fairs and festivals classified by the Panchayat Union Council as those reserved for control by it.

9) Promotion and encouragement of cottage industries.

10) Control and maintenance of market classified as Panchayat Union markets.

11) Improvement of agriculture, agricultural stock and the holding of agricultural shows.

12) Notifying with the approval of the prescribed authority that no places within the limits or any Panchayat village or villages within the Union, shall be used for any dangerous and offensive trades specified by Government except with necessary License.

13) Grant of permission for construction or factories, installation of machinery in Panchayat villages.\(^{109}\)

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Statutory entrustment

The Panchayat Union Councils were statutorily entrusted with the execution of the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development including in particular all matters relating to the development of agriculture, animal husbandry and village industries, organized on an individual or co-operative basis subject to prescribed conditions and restrictions. A local cess was levied from every Panchayat Development Block at 45 nP\textsuperscript{110} on every Rupee of land revenue payable to Government in respect of any land for every fasli.\textsuperscript{111}

Out of the above proceeds, four-ninths were credited to the Panchayat Union (Education) Fund. Out of the proceeds of the local cess\textsuperscript{112} collected from Panchayat town in the Panchayat Development Block, a sum representing two-ninths were credited to the Town Panchayat Funds.

Proceeds of local cess

Out of the balance of the proceeds of the local cess collected in every Panchayat Development Block, such percentage as the Union Council fixed, was credited to the Village Panchayat Fund subject to the limit that the total income derived by all Village Panchayats in the Panchayat Union would not fall of Rs. 0.20 nP, for each individual of the village population in the Panchayat Union. Balance, if any, collected in the Panchayat Development Block was credited to the funds of the Panchayat Union Council.

Every Panchayat Union Council could levy on every person liable to pay land revenue surcharge at such rate as might be considered suitable but subject to the maximum to be prescribed by the Government. The Government had to pay to each

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{110} *Ibid.*, Volume: XV, No: 10, October, 1960, p.11.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Fasli Calendar or Fasli era, (Fasli = Harvest) it is an Arabic word Imported to Urdu language. Fasli year means period of 12 months from July to June.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Cess is a tax.
\end{itemize}}
Panchayat Union Council a sum representing Rs. 1 for each individual of the population of the Panchayat Development Block concerned, from out of the total land revenue collected in the State during that year. The proceeds of the surcharge on stamp duty collected in the village Panchayats in the entire Block was to be pooled every year and disbursed among the entire Village Panchayats in the block in proportion to the land revenue of the village and those derived in Panchayat town was credited to Town Panchayat Funds. Panchayats continued to levy house tax, professional tax and vehicles tax.

**Grants to Union Council**

The following grants were paid to the Union Council, (1) Local Education Grant, (2) Local Cess Surcharge Matching Grant, (3) Local Boards Grant. A village house-tax matching grant was paid on behalf of each village Panchayat.113

In the case of removal of President or Vice-President of a Panchayat, the Inspector had to issue a notice calling upon the President or Vice-President to offer. Within a specified date, if his explanation would not be satisfactory, he (President or Vice-President) should forward a notice to the Tahsildar of the taluk, for the consideration of the Panchayat. The Tahsildar had to convene a meeting and at that meeting he would read to the Panchayat the notice of the Inspector as well as the explanation. The decision of the Panchayat accepting or rejection the proposal of the Inspector would be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and copy thereof communicated to the Inspector. If the Panchayat would accept the proposal, the Inspector could by notification remove the President.114

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Removal of Chairman

In the case of removal of Chairman or Vice-Chairman of a Panchayat Union Council, Government should have issued the notice to the persons concerned, obtain the explanation and if they deem removal to be necessary, the Government would forward to the Revenue Divisional Officer a copy of the notice and the explanation and the rest of the procedure in the above item had to be followed and Government could notify the removal of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, if only the council would accept the proposal. Thus, the stage had been set for the unfettered progress of the Panchayats so as to fulfill their obligation and to play their part well in all the developmental activities of the villages. One of the main objects of the new Panchayat Act was, to carry out the schemes framed for the villages under the National Extension Service and Community Development Programmes through the Panchayats and the Panchayat Union Councils and to this end, to have the Developmental Blocks concerned completely by Panchayats in the nearest future. Almost all the existing Blocks had been covered by Panchayats and in the few remaining ones the work was speeded up. The total number of villages in the State was 17,371 of which a majority of the villages both in the Block and non-Block areas are covered by 9,582 Panchayats.\textsuperscript{115} Speedy action was being taken to cover the remaining villages with Panchayats under the special care of the Minister Lourdhammal Simon. So far 153 Blocks had been formed in the State. Up to 28\textsuperscript{th} February 1960 8,225 villages in these Blocks had been covered\textsuperscript{116} by Panchayats while 329 villages were yet to be covered.

Village Officers

There was a need, for making adequate arrangement for the performance at village level of administrative duties related to both Panchayats and Panchayat Unions.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p.12.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p.12.
The subject was discussed by the Development Commissioner with Collectors and Revenue Divisional Officers as well as members of the District Development Council who represented the 75 first batches of Blocks where Panchayat Unions were to be established on the 2nd October. In the light of such discussions, the Development Commissioner had proposed as the only satisfactory solution of the problem that definite duties should be assigned to village officers in relation to Panchayat development and that in consideration of their duties extra-remuneration should be provided in the form of ‘Panchayat Development Allowance’.

The proposals had been examined by Government in the context of the general question related to the organization of village revenue establishments. Village officers had been making representations in the past to increase their emoluments, which were fixed and regulated on the basis that they were only part-time employees of the Government.

In view of the need for concentration on the more urgent administrative tasks related to the implementation of the new Panchayats Act and the devolution of developmental responsibilities to Panchayat Unions and Panchayats, the Government considered it desirable to defer reorganization proposals and to continue existing organization of village revenue establishments in its original form for some more time. In the light of this decision, they agreed in principle that some extra remuneration should be sanctioned, this being related to the additional work which the village officers would be required to perform on behalf of Village Panchayats.

**Duties of Village Officers**

The Madras Panchayats Act, 1958, was being implemented throughout the State. The Act provided the creation of Panchayat Unions in addition to Panchayats and laid

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down the responsibilities that were to be entrusted to these local bodies. The Act also provided the payment of certain statutory grants to the local bodies so as to match the collection of certain taxes imposed by these bodies. In addition, section 66 of the Act provided entrustment to the Panchayat Union of the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development, including in particular all local schemes relating the development of agriculture, animal husbandry and village industries.

In effecting such entrustment, Government intended to stipulate that the Panchayat Union constituted for every Panchayat Development Block should (in association with all the Panchayats functioning in such block) actively participate in the execution of the Third Five-Year Plan. And it would be necessary to secure a settled block plan budget for every Block in respect of the Third Plan period; Block Development Programmes were planned and executed effectively within the frame work of the settled block plan budgets.

**Obligatory functions of Village Officers**

The Village Officers were under such obligation to perform duties in respect of various departments of the State Government. The same conditions were applicable to the performance of the Village Officers in relation to Panchayats and Panchayat Unions. The Block Development Officer was responsible for ensuring the duties, whether they were performed satisfactorily. He had the power to issue such instructions to the Village Officers if necessary and also to report to the Revenue Divisional Officer cases, if any, of neglect of duty calling for disciplinary action.

The successful implementation of the new Panchayat Act depended, in no small measure, on the working of the new arrangements. The Government was aware that the smooth working of these arrangements required a reorientation of existing outlook as
well as considerable amount of tact and goodwill on the part of all concerned. They
trusted that these conditions would be fulfilled.

There was an arrangement by which a functionary called clerk-cum-bill collector\textsuperscript{118} was appointed by the Inspector in order to serve a group of contiguous Village Panchayats. In view of certain difficulties in these arrangements, the Government had already directed that no new appointment of that nature should be made. Where that arrangement had been already in force, it might, however, be continued, if all the Panchayats concerned so desire, provided that their work was limited to that of Panchayat Secretary as defined above and the work relating to revenue collection was transferred to Village officers, along with the new items of work relating to development.

Since there was no group clerk at that time, it was open to Village Panchayats, if they so desire, to create the post of a part-time Panchayat Secretary\textsuperscript{119} for the particular Panchayat concerned and to appoint thereto some person other than the Karnam (Village officer), if that was considered preferable to the utilization of the services of the Karnam. In such cases, the Inspector (District Collector) would fix the authorized scale of permissible remuneration with reference to the normal income of the Panchayat concerned. The cost involved would be met from the Panchayat funds.

If the post of Bill Collector, Group clerk, or similar functionary ceases it would be abolished. It should provide the incumbents of such post and alternative employment such as Attender or Clerk, according to their qualifications.

\textbf{Trained Staff available}

In order to help Panchayat Unions and Panchayats to discharge all these important new responsibilities, it was necessary to ensure that the services of trained

\begin{footnotes}
\item[118] \textit{Ibid.}, p.16
\item[119] \textit{Ibid.}, p.16
\end{footnotes}
staff should be made available to them. So far as Panchayat Unions were concerned, there was little difficulty. Since Block Development Officers, Extension Officers, Clerks and Gramasevaks were available under the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development some additions to clerical staff would become available as a result of the abolition of District Boards.\textsuperscript{120} Orders were issued separately in the Rural Development and Local Administration Department specifying the scale of staff to be made available to Panchayat Unions. The cost of this staff continued to be borne by Government and their services were placed at the disposal of Unions free of charge to Panchayat Union Funds.

Such staffs were not always, available for rendering service at village level. It was the duty of all the staff who would have jurisdiction over the entire Block. Though the Gramasevaks had small charges, they were having jurisdiction over a number of contiguous villages. Their duty was to concentrate mainly on agricultural work and according to the requirement they were relieved of part of the clerical work they were attending to at that time. They had no rights to be mingled with routing administrative duties relating to the Panchayats.

**Duties of Village Panchayat Secretary**

The duties of the Village Panchayat Secretary were the maintenance of the minutes of the meetings of the Panchayat and of its prescribed cash accounts and the clerical work relating to its general administration. So far as the town Panchayats were concerned, these duties were attended to by whole-time paid staff and there would therefore no need for the services of the Village Officer being utilized. The problem arose only in relation to Village Panchayats most of which were unable to afford the expense involved in employing a whole-time Panchayat Secretary. Even in respect of

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., p.13.
Village Panchayats, these duties should be on somewhat different footing from those detailed earlier. Whereas in the other cases, the Karnam and headman were (by their experience gained from government work) specially suited for discharging the duties in question efficiently, it was likely that, in many villages, literate persons would be available who could do the duties of the Village Panchayat Secretaries equally well. In some of the larger villages, the balance of convenience might lie in employing such persons as Panchayat Secretaries. Moreover, the relationship between the Panchayat President and the Village Panchayat Secretary was to be very much more intimate than that between the Panchayat President and an officer performing any of the other duties earlier mentioned. For these reasons, it had been proposed that the duties of the Village Panchayat Secretary should be entrusted to the Karnam, if-and only if-the Village Panchayat had expressed a desire that this should be done. In other cases, the Village Panchayat should be free to make such local arrangements for the performance of these duties as it might find to be appropriate, provided, however, that the cost of such arrangements should not be unreasonably higher in relation to the normal income of the Panchayat and should not therefore exceed such limits as might be prescribed by statutory rules.

**Duties of Village Talayari**

Talayari was a person to assist the headman in the performance of all his duties in relation to tax collection for the Panchayat or Panchayat Union. He was also responsible for maintaining watch and ward in respect of Panchayat Union properties and Panchayat properties in the village including all standing trees on public lands in the village. If in any village there was more than one Talayari, the duties should be specifically assigned by the Tahsildar concerned to one of them. Discretion might be

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121 Ibid., p.14
122 Ibid., p.15.
given to the Tahsildars in suitable cases to divide the work and consequently also the remuneration between more than one *Talayari* if the work was satisfactorily divisible on a territorial basis.

**Village Development Planning**

The terms of entrustment of development work to Panchayat Union under section 66 of the new Panchayats Act required the setting up of a proper organization of planning at Village and Block level\(^\text{123}\). Subject to the guidance and co-ordination of the appropriate Panchayat Union Committee, the Village Panchayat functioned as the planning authority at village level. The Village Officers were required to assist the Village Panchayat in the performance of its duties as planning authority. The Panchayat was required to invite the Village Officers to attend the special meetings of the Panchayats. It was declared to be the part of the duties of these Village Officers to attend such meetings and contribute their personal knowledge and experience. And other workers assisted the Panchayat in the performance of its duties. They participated in the discussion and were not permitted to participate in the voting. (This is limited to the meetings of Panchayats specially convened for planning purposes; Village Officers should not be required to attend the ordinary meetings of the Panchayats.)

**Village Development Accounts**

For the purpose of working the National Extension Service Scheme of Community Development, a number of new records and plans had been prescribed for maintenance by the Gramasevak in respect of one group of villages in his charge. This system, in actual working, was not satisfactory and required to be changed. The existing system of maintenance of village accounts were reviewed and revised. The *karnam* was

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made responsible for maintaining all records and registers\textsuperscript{124} needed for development purposes at village level and submitting returns there for.

**Local Revenue Collection**

It was declared to be part of the normal duties of the village headman that he should collect all taxes and fees which might fall due from time to time to the Panchayat Union. It was also be declared to be the normal duties of the village _karnam_ that he should maintain tax assessment registers and such other records as might be prescribed from time to time for facilitating the collection of taxes and fees due to the Panchayat and the Panchayat Union. The above was applicable in full to all Village Panchayats.

Therefore, the nature of the duties to be performed by the Village Officers in respect of revenue collection within the limits of Panchayat towns were determined by the Revenue Divisional Officer concerned with reference to the circumstances of each case. These had been done so as to secure two results, viz.,

(i) He should be required to do such work as he could be expected to do without loss to his Government duties and also to help the Panchayat to economize on its own staff, such economy should be secured.

(ii) He should not be required to undertake house-tax collection work in any Panchayat town, if the work was considerable and likely to interfere with efficient performance of Government duties.\textsuperscript{125}

**Classification of Territorial charges**

The territorial charges of Village Officers differed considerably in size with resulting difference in the volume of work to be done. It was, therefore, desirable for the purpose of fixing the scale and allowances to be sanctioned, that a distinction was drawn between normal charges and light charges. Accordingly, it had been proposed that a

village should be deemed to be a ‘normal’ charge if either the total extent of *patta* land\textsuperscript{126} in such village exceeded one thousand acres; or the land revenue assessment on *patta* lands in the village exceeded two thousand rupees. Any village in which neither of these two conditions was fulfilled should be deemed to be a ‘light’ charge.\textsuperscript{127}

**Panchayat Development Allowance**

The Panchayat development allowance was fixed in respect of the *karnam* of every village included in any Panchayat development block at the rate of rupees 15 per month. If he had a normal charge and if the duties which he was required to perform include those of a Village Panchayat Secretary he should be paid at the rate of rupees 12 per month. If he had a light charge and the duties which he was required to perform included those of a Village Panchayat Secretary or if he had a normal charge, and the duties which he was required to perform did not include those of a Village Panchayat Secretary and at the rate of rupees 10 per month. If he had a light charge and the duties he was required to perform do not include those of a Village Panchayat Secretary.\textsuperscript{128}

The Panchayat development allowance was fixed in respect of headman of every village included in any Panchayat development block at the rate of rupees 7 per month, if he had a normal charge and at the rate of rupees 5 per month if he had a light charge.

**Talayari Allowance**

The Panchayat development allowance was fixed in respect of the *Talayari* of every village included in any Panchayat development block at the rate of rupees three per month if he had a normal charge; or at the rate of rupees two per month if he has a light charge.

\textsuperscript{126} A *Patta* is a legal document issued by the Government in the name of the actual owner of a particular plot of land. It can also be issued for lands having buildings or individual houses etc. constructed on them.

\textsuperscript{127} *Madras Information*, Volume: XV, No: 10, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, October, 1960, p.15.

Panchayat development allowances on the scales set out above should be paid to the Village Officers of every Panchayat Development Block with effect from the first day of the month in which a Panchayat Union was constituted for the Block, or the first day of January 1961, whichever was earlier. With effect from that date, the orders issued by the government would stand cancelled. The allowances payable in accordance with this order were ceased to be payable in the event of reorganization of village revenue establishments.

EDUCATIONAL STATUS

In imparting education to the children who hailed from the villages, irrespective of their caste and status remained the motto of Lourdhammal Simon. Compulsory elementary education was in force in twenty-six municipal areas including the Corporation of Madras. The Municipal Council maintained 711 elementary schools at a cost of Rs. 62.57 lakhs and provided education for 1,79,017 children. They also maintained 69 secondary schools. The Salem Municipal Council continued to maintain a 1st grade college. There were 105 municipal medical institutions which afforded relief to 17,793 in-patients and 45,11,735 out-patients. The Madras Corporation maintained 289 elementary schools providing instruction for 99,283 children. It also maintained two secondary schools. The District Boards maintained 414 secondary schools and 12,846 elementary schools providing education for 1,358,934 pupils. In secondary schools at Elementary Department there were 1,202 pupils, at Secondary Department there were 1,53,666 pupils and in elementary schools there were 1,204,066 pupils educated.

There were 1,022 Panchayat schools at the end of the year 1958. Provision for six additional schools was sanctioned during the period from 1st January 1958 to 31st

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129 G.O. Ms. No. 1125, Local Administration Department, dated the 22nd July 1958.
131 Ibid., p.69.
December 1958. Provision for three schools was withdrawn during the above period. Provision for one additional teacher was sanctioned and provision for two teachers was withdrawn during the above period.

Compulsory elementary education is an essential part of every child’s welfare. It is just like a breath of a human being. How far, a breath is important for an individual, an elementary education is also as important as it. Because it became the first foundation for a child’s career. Compulsory elementary education nourished universal access and enrolment and to bring about substantial improvement in the quality of education to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning. Keeping in mind that education could alone develop the country; Lourdhammal Simon encouraged compulsory education to all the students without any discrimination.

Education should be given and received in peace and healthy atmosphere. Like a way, school buildings are fundamental aspect to impart education. Healthy and hygienic schooling must be freely available to all mainly poor and needy people. Likewise, being a Minister for Local Administration Lourdhammal Simon envisaged the maintenance of school buildings. Hence, she offered numerous elementary, secondary school buildings in number of Municipalities. Many poor and needy people’s of younger generations were benefited during the year of 1960-62. There were 296 elementary schools run by the Madras Corporation during the year 1959-1960.

Against the number of 205,024 school-aged children in the City, the number of children on rolls in the schools was 1,88,892 working out to a percentage of 92.13. Supply of midday meals, books, slates to the poor and deserving children was continued during the year. Besides supply of toilet articles to the children in the schools in the slum areas assumed importance. There were 9 basic schools with the strength of 3,083 children and 4 nursery sections attached to the

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Corporation Schools with the strength of 218. The Corporation maintained two High Schools at Nungambakkam and Saidapet with the strength of 2,003 and 1,142 pupils, respectively, and 36 playgrounds spread over the City.

The Municipal Council maintained 749 elementary schools at a cost of Rs. 70.82 lakhs and 2,02,209 children were studying in these schools. They also maintained 69 secondary schools. There were 110 municipal medical institutions which afforded relief to 18,727 in-patients and 4,762,513 out-patients. The Madras Corporation maintained 296 elementary schools providing education for 1,15,495 children. It also maintained four secondary schools.

The District Boards maintained 456 secondary schools and 14,913 elementary schools. About 1,624,869 pupils were studying in these schools. In Secondary Schools at Elementary Department 88 pupils and Secondary Department 1,85,382 pupils studied. In Elementary Schools there were 1,439,399 pupils. There were 992 Panchayat Schools at the beginning of the year and seventy-one additional schools were sanctioned during the year and provision for 229 additional teachers made during the year.

**ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO VILLAGE PANCHAYATS**

Amount for all the necessities of villages were fulfilled satisfactorily by the Government during the period of Lourdhammal Simon including repair and maintenance of roads, buildings, educational needs, electricity and lighting, water-supply, libraries. An amount of Rs. 7,02,279.78 was sanctioned as grants to Panchayats for improvement of village communications. Loans amounting to Rs. 7,26,800 were sanctioned for various remunerative enterprises taken up under the Second Five Year Plan. The execution of protected water-supply schemes was sanctioned in respect of 14 Panchayats. The Sattur Panchayat took up the execution of a drainage scheme. Electricity was extended to 136

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133 Ibid., p.125.  
134 Ibid., p.126.
Panchayats. A sum of about Rs. 25,00,000 was spent on electric and ordinary kerosene lighting. Out of 844 markets within the jurisdiction of Classes I and II Panchayats, 443 markets were maintained by the Panchayats. There were 1,010 schools maintained by them. An amount of Rs. 14,36,603.08 nP.\textsuperscript{135} was disbursed by the Regional Inspectors of Local Boards as teaching grant and dearness allowance for the maintenance of these schools.

An amount of Rs 6,43,224.07 nP towards teaching grant and Rs. 4,16,446.68 nP. towards dearness allowance and Rs. 1,59,019.62 nP towards special additional pay and enhanced dearness, was disbursed by the Regional Inspectors of Municipal Councils and Local Boards to Panchayat schools during the period from 1\textsuperscript{st} January 1958 to 31\textsuperscript{st} December 1958.\textsuperscript{136} During the year of 1960-62, a total sum Rs. 16,56,371.15 nP\textsuperscript{137} was disbursed by the Regional Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards towards teaching grant, dearness allowance and special additional pay and enhanced dearness allowance for the maintenance of the schools.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO PANCHAYATS AND PANCHAYAT UNION COUNCILS

As far as Panchayats and Panchayat Union Councils were concerned necessary provision had been made in the Madras Pachayat Act, 1958, for allotment of adequate financial resources to meet their obligatory functions. The Government sanctioned a sum of about Rs. 21.5 lakhs towards the payment of village house tax matching grant to Village Panchayats and also a grant of about Rs. 11 lakhs as local roads grants to Panchayat Unions for the maintenance of roads.

Under a revised procedure, which took effect from the date of constitution of the Panchayat Union Council in the Block in which the concerned Panchayats lie, the

\textsuperscript{135} Ibid., 1958-1959, p.64
\textsuperscript{136} Ibid., 1957-1958, p.70.
\textsuperscript{137} Ibid., 1959-1960, p.126.
maintenance of a separate Personal Deposit Account with the Sub-Treasury in respect of Village Panchayats had been abolished and in its place a Village Panchayat Consolidated Fund had been opened to be worked as follows:

A deposit account called the Village Panchayat Consolidated Fund was maintained in a sub-treasury of a taluk in which the Panchayat Union by the Panchayat Union Commissioner. The Panchayat Union Commissioner should maintain a cash chest to enable the constituent Village Panchayats to operate on and obtain their requirements of cash from time to time. He should also maintain separate accounts for each Village Panchayat in his own office. Separate detailed instructions have been issued regarding the procedure for maintenance and operation of the each cash chest and the procedure for remitting into and withdrawing moneys from the cash chest by the Village Panchayats.

**IMPACT**

Minister Lourdhammal Simon also concentrated her attention on health of people and improvement of slums. The Government promoted it by sanctioning loans, introducing new schemes, opening health welfare clinics. With the opening of two new dispensaries at Chetpet and North Mylapore and the total number of dispensaries maintained by the Corporation became 45, besides the 9 Special Clinics giving free medical aid against T.B, Leprosy, Venereal and skin diseases during Lourdhammal Simon’s period. The Corporation was also maintaining the Infections Diseases Hospital in the City which served the patients of the Madras City and the adjoining sub-urban areas and 8,832 patients were treated under report at this Hospital. Besides, the Public Health Laboratory and the Public Analyst Laboratory for examining and testing specimens of blood, urine and samples of food product, a Central Malaria Stores and Laboratory was newly opened in the year under review at the Trevelyn Basin Road in
Chennai. The Ashok Vihar\textsuperscript{138} which provided medical aid and recreational facilities to the poor and slum dwellers in the City continued to function, besides the Special Homes at Krishnampet and Royapuram which received the old, infirm destitute and also the diseased and disabled beggars in the City.

Children are the future citizens of the nation. So, child welfare is considered duly. During Lourdhammal Simon’s period the state maintained several Child Welfare Centres. Likewise, the Corporation maintained 44 Child Welfare Centres and 3 Crèches for the benefit of the working class parents. The number of labour cases looked after by those Welfare Centres was 29,701 with only 19 cases of mortality. Through these centres, cow’s milk was supplied free to 4,154 ill-nourished children and skimmed milk powder received as gift from the UNICEF, was distributed to the mothers in the wards. Besides, the Padupakkam Family Planning Scheme, 5 more similar schemes also were started. Three hundred and twenty-eight cases of salpingectomy\textsuperscript{139} and 134 cases of Vasectomy were conducted. Shark Liver Oil, Calcium Lactate and Yeast Tablets received as free gift were distributed to the under-nourished children in the schools.

**Improvement of Slums**

During 1950\textsuperscript{th} there were more slum areas all over the state. People in those areas were totally illiterate and under backward class. For a developed and healthy country, the slums should be modified. The people were motivated by giving special attention. Lourdhammal Simon was aware that if the slums got developed, poverty, illiteracy

\textsuperscript{138} Ashok Vihar, Wazirpur is a residential neighborhood in the North West district of Delhi. It is small business hub. The area's residents largely comprise of Baniyas, a businessmen class. Best place in north west Delhi.

\textsuperscript{139} Salpingectomy refers to the surgical removal of a Fallopian tube. It is often related to tubal pregnancies and is a procedure that is preferred over its ovarian tube-sparing counterparts due to the high rate of recurrence in said ectopic pregnancies. Salpingectomy is different from a salpingostomy and salpingotomy. The latter two terms are often used interchangeably and refer to creating an opening into the tube (e.g. to remove an ectopic pregnancy), but the tube itself is not removed. Technically, the creation of a new tubal opening (os) by surgery would be a salpingostomy, while the incision into the tube to remove an ectopic is a salpingotomy.
would be wiped away. One of the significant steps in Madras Panchayat Act 1958, was the improvement of slums. Backward class people and women were given importance in Local Panchayat Boards. Through these amendments made in Madras Panchayat Act 1958, Lourdhammal Simon wanted to spread the progressive ideas in Tamilnadu.

To uplift the life of the slum people eleven schemes costing Rs. 69.16 lakhs were endorsed by Lourdhammal Simon. It was sanctioned by the Government during the years 1957-58 and 58-59, to provide housing accommodation for 2,913 families living in the City. Up-to date, 950 plots were developed and 765 families rehabilitated, and 524 tenements were under different stages of construction and about 500 open plots were under development. The total expenditure incurred in the execution of the Slum Improvement Schemes under the Second Five-Year Plan was Rs. 30.99 lakhs against a total subsidy and loan of Rs. 35.09 lakhs.

The Corporation had owned 151 vehicles and 41 trailers and the total expenditure on maintenance of lorries was Rs. 14,61,711.23 nP. The Government sanctioned a loan of Rs. 1.25 lakhs for purchase of more lorries. The total outturn of work at the General Work shop amounted to Rs. 6,92,371.89 nP and the supervision charges worked out to Rs. 1,80,775.03 nP. With the liberalization of facilities to the employees, such as, implementation of Employees Provident Fund benefits with retrospective effect, the expenditure rose up to Rs. 2,15,518.38 nP resulting in a loss of Rs. 34,738.35 nP. The Corporation had installed 620 mercury discharged lamps, thus making a total of 5,789 mercury lamps all over the City. A quantity of about 582,500 tons of waste collected by the Conservancy Department was mainly utilized for raising the level of low-lying areas in the City.

Up to the end of the financial year 1959-60 the total receipts were Rs. 1,69,23,870 and the expenditure incurred was Rs. 94,48,369 leaving a surplus of Rs. 
The Government sanctioned a grant of one lakh of rupees and a loan of another one lakh of rupees to the Corporation for the improvement of the roads in the City. Construction of six school buildings was taken up and work completed in two cases. Staffs were appointed under the Slum Improvement Scheme. The Mc. Nicholas Road over bridge was completed and thrown open to public traffic. The Government also sanctioned a loan of Rs. 5 lakhs under the Low Income Group Housing Scheme. In response to the proposals of Local Administration Department Minister Lourdhammal Simon, the authorities distributed articles to meet the needs of education and to make educational awareness among slum school-aged students. The step was spread all over the slum areas effectively.

**Water supply**

Water plays a vital role in the day-to-day life. For long years people had been suffering to have a proper water supply facility. They had to walk for miles and miles to get water even for drinking. Due to the lack of proper water supply the people faced many problems and became the victims of several diseases. But during Lourdhammal’s era, she took some adequate steps to ensure the proper supply of drinking water. Accordingly, the quantity of water pumped and supplied to the city from the Red Hills Lake was 11,656 million gallons at an average of 31.9 million gallons per day. A supply of 1,44,649 gallons per day on the average was made from the infiltration galleries to the Saidapet and Sembiam areas. The supply was increased by the working of 15 oil-engines and 15 electric pump sets which pumped about 0.76 million gallons of water per day. The distribution system was extended to 51.29 miles of trunk mains and to 513.12 miles of distribution mains. The expenditure on the maintenance of water works was Rs.37.85

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140 G.O. Ms. No. 1663, Health, Education and Local Administration Department, dated 19th November 1957.
lakhs and the revenue derived was Rs. 58.01 lakhs. The Government sanctioned the revised estimate of Rs. 29.57 lakhs for the newly installed Rapid Mechanical Filters at the Kilpakk Water Works. The major portion of the work of laying 33 inches pumping Main for improving the water-supply to North Madras under the Second Five Year Plan was completed and the remaining items of the works were in progress. With the functioning of the pumping station at Nammalwarpet and Cochrane Basin, the overflow of sewage into the Buckingham Canal and Otteri Nullah was minimized. An extend of 225 acres in the Sewage Farm had been brought under cultivation of Fodder Grass, Paddy, Sugarcane and Ragi crops, Masonry storm water drains to the length of 25,781 feet were constructed. The Government also sanctioned a loan of Rs. 2 lakhs for further construction of storm water drains, besides a sum of Rs. 75,000 for providing wells and pump sets to augment water-supply to the existing latrines.

**Panchayat Conference and the Extermination of Insects**

The Island Grounds of Madras faced a big problem of insects called “chironomes” in the year 1961. These insects resembled mosquitoes to the common eye, but are non-biting. While, they are harmless they are of utmost nuisance value. They were found to be breeding in millions in the Cooum River. The Panchayat Conference was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India on 8th October 1961.141 There the Minister Lourdhammal Simon, Local Administration was questioned against the breeding of mosquitoes in the island grounds and the areas around the Loyola, Pachaiappa’s, Queen Mary’s, Presidency Engineering and Teacher Training. Soon the minister ordered the Madras Corporation to take immediate action and the operation was named as “Operation Extermination”. For the orders of Government, measures were immediately commenced and intensive and extensive operations to exterminate the flies,

141 *Madras Information*, Volume: XV, No: 11, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, November, 1961, p.28
mosquitoes and other insects from the areas concerned taken up. A buffer zone was
drawn around each area and the concerned areas were brought under the scope of
control. Quite early during the operations, it was noticed that so far as the Island
Grounds area was concerned the biggest problem was not the extermination of flies and
mosquitoes - which in itself was a large order - but one of exterminating the small insects
called “Chironomes”.

Since the conference was not a conference of Entomologists who could be
expected to say “Oh, Chironomes, they are absolutely harmless”\textsuperscript{142} and since it was
decided as a policy by Government to serve only vegetarian food to the delegates, it was
decided to exterminate them and see that the food did not become non-vegetarian on
account of these insects getting mixed up with the food. The “Operations –
Extermination” was a four – pronged drive: Against flies, Against mosquitoes, Against
Chironomes, Against other insects.

\textbf{Flies} – The control and extermination of the house fly which is all pervading, was
attempted by eliminating dung and garbage heaps and other situations which are the
breeding places of flies. Wherever such breeding places of flies could not be removed or
destroyed, they were sprayed with insecticides to kill all the maggots (stage in the life of
flies from which adult flies emerge). Along with this, killing of all the adult flies already
present was also taken up.

\textbf{Mosquitoes} – By means of extensive and intensive operations, against the larvae
stages and the adult mosquitoes, complete eradication of these was achieved.\textsuperscript{143}

\textbf{Chironomes} – These insects posed the biggest problem since they were there in
millions, and extermination of these had to be achieved in the short time of a week. The
larvae breeding places of these insects were traced and were treated with larvicides to

\textsuperscript{142} \textit{Ibid.}, p.28
\textsuperscript{143} \textit{Ibid.}, p.29.
kill them. The adult chironomes were crafty. They refused to rest in places so they sprayed with D.D.T.\textsuperscript{144} and climbed to the roofs of the thatched sheds; many rested on the ground itself. How to kill them was the problem among the staff. To achieve this, night squads were organized and these night squads were given the work of killing these insects which came flocking around the lights. Work was carried up to 12 o’ clock midnight and further, and the Corporation staff put forth 18 hours of continuous work from early morning every day. In spite of these measures, it did not appear as though the numbers were being diminished. The number of chironomes came down considerably by 4\textsuperscript{th} October.\textsuperscript{145} Coupled with the day and night operations of killing them wherever they rested and flocked. And the anti-larval operations, were made and to reach a comfortable stage by 5\textsuperscript{th}. On 6\textsuperscript{th} a few were noticed. On 7\textsuperscript{th} the entire ground was free of these insects.\textsuperscript{146} All types of other insects, biting and non-biting, spiders were also completely destroyed in the process of carrying out the measures against flies, mosquitoes and chironomes.

This operation was one of the greatest attempts of the Minister of Local Administration Lourdhammal Simon. For its successful operation, the Local Administration Department received a beautiful Bouquet from an unknown person and the person also asked a question that, “There are no flies, no mosquitoes, and no other insects of nuisance also, how did they do it?” It was discussed in one of the conferences held in Legislative Assembly on Local Administration Department. The report of the department was, “A pat on the back is rare, and should not be expected for carrying out one’s allotted duties. All the same, it gives courage and pleasure; more so, when the

\textsuperscript{144} DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane) is a colorless, crystalline, tasteless and almost odorless organochlorine known for its insecticidal properties and environmental impacts. DDT has been formulated in multiple forms, including solutions in xylene or petroleum distillates, emulsifiable concentrates, water-wettable powders, granules, aerosols, smoke candles and charges for vaporizers and lotions.

\textsuperscript{145} Madras Information, Volume: XV, No: 11, Director of Information Publicity, St. George Fort, Madras, November, 1961, p.29.

\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., p.29.
bouquet has been thrown by an unknown person. We grinned happily and felt amply rewarded”. By receiving this kind of rewards, the Department to continued its good deeds with an added spirit of enthusiasm.

The effective administration of Madras Panchayat has to be appreciated that the Panchayats and the Panchayat Unions constituted under the new Act of 1958 are different in conception from the Panchayats, Taluk Boards and District Boards which were in existence. These local boards were originally meant to discharge only what are commonly known as civic or municipal functions such as village sanitation, street lighting, maintenance of village communications, road and transportation facilities, drainage, health and primary education. The introduction of the New Panchayat Act laid down the main purposes of the Panchayat reforms. The increased production of food and other agricultural goods essential for industrial development, from year to year, is of paramount importance as also the control of the growth of population. Such measures promoted the comprehensive programmes designed for rural employment, improvement of rural living conditions, providing cultural and recreational facilities in rural areas and enhancement of the standard of living of the rural people.

It is only because of Minister Lourdhammal Simon, a remarkable revolution happened in Panchayat election. She herself planned and designed the Panchayat Act 1958, and implemented effectively with the wonderful support of the then Chief Minister K.Kamaraj and his cabinet.

The well wishers, politicians and the administrators wished to transform and modernise Chennai into Metropolitan city, but it was beautifully done by Lourdhammal Simon even in 1958 Town-Planning scheme itself. Obviously her vision was highest and all the credits goes to Lourdhammal Simon for her duty consciousness. After the period of Lourdhammal Simon, Panchayats and Panchayat Unions lost their significance.
No one was ready to mould Panchayats and after a long period by the condemnation of Central Government, Panchayat elections were held in the year 1986.