CHAPTER II

FUNCTIONING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

Expected Role of PR in Agricultural Development:

Panchayati Raj Institutions are working at the field level along with the administrative system, independent agencies and institutions. These PR bodies have a wide range of rural development functions. They are mainly expected to execute different programmes of agricultural development. Above district level, the State Government possesses the central and key position. Therefore, legislation for agriculture is the responsibility of State legislature. At the apex there is a Central Government which plays considerable role through the Ministry of Agriculture while financing particular schemes of the States. The Planning Commission of India is also concerned with the general targets and finances for agricultural production.

"This basic concept", as Ramdas Maldipur observes, "behind elected bodies (PRIs) is to create rural local agencies responsible for discharging select functions pertaining to development." To him "it is not merely an agent of the State Government but an institution which can mobilise its own resources - both human and material - so that development can be

* General functioning and performance of PR in India has been dealt with in details in the first chapter of this Thesis, please see pp . Here concentration has been made on PR and agricultural development.
energized and local leadership can be built up. Thus as a democratic and modern institution PR distincts itself in terms of broad and specific goals from the other agencies and institutions working in rural areas for agricultural development.

Beneath the abstract ideas about democracy and development through PR, there was a more definite and limited aim to produce new leaders at local level. These newly elected leaders were supposed to replace the traditional leaders and also to play the role of catalysts - agents in rural development. So far as agricultural development was concerned the specific aim of PRIs at all the levels was to 'increase agricultural production'.

It is clear from the fact that in early 60's the third plan considered 'Agricultural Production' as the farmost responsibility of PR in India. Not only that it was considered as one of the ten 'acid tests' to assess the performance of PR.

Performance of PR in Agricultural Development:

But soon after its inception, it was found that PR in most of the States of India failed to provide new leadership and also to contribute in agricultural production. There started a controversy on the role of PR in agricultural development. On one side there were people like Rudramurti, Rushikesh Maru, Chopra, Dantwala etc. who concluded that PRIs have failed to contribute in agricultural development. There were people like Sahi, G. Ram Reddy, Palwantrai Mehta, K.N. Raj etc. who were of the opinion that PR must be provided sufficient opportunity by the State Governments to fulfill their role.
According to Rudramurti, although the higher level institutions have done a great deal of work in this respect, the village Panchayats have not yet come up to expectation. Commenting on the role of PR in food production, Rushikesh Maru concluded that 'the leadership functioning at the Block and village levels has not shown enough awareness and priority. He suggested the establishment of separate agencies for development functions'. Chopra was of the opinion that 'Panchayati Raj can not handle agricultural production and it can be handled successfully only under a system of single line control and responsibility'. The role of the elected bodies should be restricted to consultation in planning and programming of agricultural production. The programmes Evaluation Organisation of the Planning Commission also pointed out that the PRI s had failed to play the role expected of them. The Dantwala working group expressed its reservation about the role of PR in our plan process in following words:

"Except in a few States there is hardly any worthwhile set up of PRI s. As a matter of fact in several States where these institutions were initially established, they have either withered away or are lying in moribund State". The working group concluded that 'the leadership of the PRI s acts as a 'gate-keeper' and prevents the flow of benefits to the weaker sections of the community'.

An expert committee on the evaluation of IADR observed the role of PR in following terms:
"Involvement of local leadership in agricultural development is no doubt necessary but such leadership has to be functional and trained. The political and group leadership emerging out of Panchayati Raj institution is not always oriented towards agricultural modernization. The committee felt that the popularly elected PRIs were of some help in creating awareness of the need for agricultural practices but in regard to agricultural modernisation, they have not played significant part."\(^7\)

Thus, the picture drawn hitherto by various experts and committees is more or less a story of decline and decay of PRIs in India. The record of their performance since last two decades is quite discouraging at least in the field of agricultural development.

According to Sahi\(^8\) the Panchayati Raj institutions should be given necessary technical competence to discharge their responsibilities efficiently. Ram Reddy\(^9\) also advocates certain reformative measures in the staffing pattern at Block level. Balwantrai Mehta\(^10\) considered that 'agriculture in India for some time to come is going on to remain primarily a problem of better organisations by suppliers and better services rather than any significant structural or institutional changes in the PRIs'. K.N. Raj\(^11\) expressed the view that Panchayati Raj institutions were not fully involved in activities which are directly related to agriculture. He suggested that the States should experiment with planning from below by concentrating initially in the District, Block and village levels and thereby
take full advantage of the existing institutional structure'.

Dr. S.R. Maheshwari has made an alround analysis of the different factors responsible for the failure of PR in agricultural development. He observed that 'PR today, is but a dull echo of its former self. Indeed it may not be very inappropriate to say that India is on way of having a strong rural administration but rural government.' The factors responsible for this state of affairs may be summarised as follows:

1: Increasing tendency on the part of the State governments to justify the existence of PR as an agency to augment agricultural production.

2: Weaker ideological commitment towards PR of the new political leadership in India which emerged around 1966.

3: Mounting food shortage of this period and crop-failure in 1966-67 forced to leave comprehensive concept of rural development and led to emphasis only on agricultural production.

4: Establishment of direct in roads in the forms of separate agencies under the direct control of central government to carry out new agricultural programmes supported by the new agricultural technology.

As a result number of new agencies and institutions began to compete with PRIs in rural areas. Following among them are worth mentioning.
Over and above these agencies there are certain institutions which have come forward to take up the work of agricultural development. "The co-operative structure deals with credit and marketing. The land development bank finances and the agricultural Refinance Development Corporation (ARDC) refinances long term funds for agricultural development. Agro-Industries Corporation has been formed rendering services and supplies in machinery and other inputs. The commercial banks are coming up in big way to support short, medium and long term credit."  

Thus political climate of 60's and 70's supplemented with pressing demands of food shortages and scarcity led to the negligible role of PR in agricultural development. The agricultural breakthrough generated by the new agricultural technology demanded more efficient and quick administration with which PR failed to cope up. Ashoka Mehta Committee describes the situation in following words:  

"The tempo of development administration in seed supplies, fertilizers distribution, promotion of minor irrigation or enforcement of the civil supplies regulations, procurement of foodgrains, or performance of other welfare functions required such an intensive effort the year round that all the available staff at lower levels had almost to be requisitioned back by the parent departments. It is the vastness and growing
complexity of developmental programmes that has sometimes been used as an excuse for by-passing the PRIs in the name of their structural inadequacies without PRIs being entrusted with these challenging tasks."

The discussion hitherto explains the gap between the role-perception and role-performance in relation to PR in India. Although it is not directly responsible for agricultural development, it is not allowed by certain forces to play even its limited role to increase agricultural production. The situation was so worsened in later part of 70's that Government of India appointed a committee on PRIs to recommend its future role in rural development. The disfunctioning of PRIs in majority of States is a sorry affairs so far as democratic spirit is concerned. They have failed not only in agriculture but also in other spheres of rural development. The main causes for their failure in overall performance may be summed up as follows:

"Increasing tendency on the part of the State and central government to take away rather than to devolve the development functions and power of PRIs," structural inadequacies, non-co-operative attitude of the bureaucracy, lack of political will at the higher levels, lack of conceptual clarity, dominance of PRIs of economically or socially privileged sections of the society, political functionalism, corruption, inefficiency, scant regard for procedures, political interference in day to day administration, parochial loyalties,
motivated actions, power concentration instead of service consciousness." \(^1\)

Ashok Mehta Committee does not share the pessimistic view regarding the future role of PR in rural development. The anti-democratic forces are reflected everywhere in our political system. Therefore, it is not proper to blame PR for this present situation. Ashok Mehta Committee concludes in following words: \(^2\)

"We can say, it will be wrong to think that Panchayati Raj should be viewed as God that has failed. It has many achievements to its credit.....socio-culturally speaking, it generated a new leadership which was not merely relatively young in age but also modernistic and pro-social change in outlooks.....Looked at from the developmental angle, it helped rural people cultivate a developmental psyche."

Thus Ashok Mehta Committee shares the views with other advocates of PR in India that at least an opportunity must be provided to these institutions to play their meaningful role in rural development. They echo the words of Gandhiji who forcefully declared that 'in the true democracy of India, the Unit was the village. Even if one village wanted Panchayati Raj, which was called republic in English, no one could stop it. True democracy could not be worked by twenty men sitting at the Centre. It has to be worked from below by the people of every village." \(^3\)
Institutional Foundation: PR has a latter entry in Gujarat as compared to the other States of the country. The present territory of this State was a part of the then bilingual Bombay State. Immediately after the bifurcation of Bombay State (on the 1st May 1960) the new State Government of Gujarat appointed a "Democratic Decentralisation Committee" on the 15th July 1960 under the Chairmanship of Late Shri Rasiklal Parikh, the then Revenue Minister. As a result of the recommendations of this Committee the Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961, was passed by the Legislative Assembly. Due to the Chinese aggression on our borders the implementation of the Act was postponed upto the 1st April 1963.

According to Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961, a three-tier system of PR has been introduced in the State. The pattern of PR in Gujarat as observed by F.D. Vakil, "combines several features of the Maharashtra and Rajasthan system, however, it draws more from the Maharashtra system". The new Act created three organically linked, autonomous bodies at the village, taluka and district level. It provided for the establishment of gramsabhas and gram Nagar Panchayats at village level, Taluka Panchayats at the Taluke level and District Panchayats at the district level. Today there are 12,663 gram panchayats, 59 Nagar Panchayats, 182 Taluka Panchayats and 19 Zilla Panchayats working in the State. The Gram Panchayats cover in their fold 18,697 villages and 195.35 population (in lakh).
The distinctive features of PR in Gujarat may be summarized as follows:

1. A single enactment creating organically linked autonomous statutory bodies at the three different levels.
2. The creation of a powerful executive body at the district level.
3. The conferment of a special status on the Educational Committee at the district level.
5. Genuine transfer of powers, functions and duties in the developmental sphere within the district;
6. Liberal transfer of funds along with transfer activities.
7. Transfer of entire development machinery from village to district level to PR bodies;
8. Build in scheme for further devolution of powers and dispersal of authority.
9. Transfer of certain regulatory revenue functions to the PR bodies.
10. Making available the services of an officer of the Collector's status to function as a Chief Executive authority for District Panchayats.
11. Constitution of a service selection Board at the State
level and District Selection Committees at the District level for recruitment and advice in service matters;

12. Constitution of the cadre of Talati-cum-Gram Panchayat Secretaries responsible for land revenue collection and Panchayat administration;

13. Statutory assignment of 100 per cent revenue functions to the Panchayati Raj bodies.

14. Creation of non-lapsable fund for assisting weaker areas; encouraging taxation efforts and financing developmental activities; and,

15. Setting up of Development Commissioner's organisation at the State level for guiding, supervision and controlling the Panchayati Raj institutions.  

**Functions of Village Panchayat/Nagar Panchayats in the Field of Agriculture:**

According to section 88 of Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961, they are assigned following duties:  

a) Planned improvement of agriculture;

b) Securing minimum standards of cultivation in the gram or nagar as the case may be with a view to increasing agricultural production;

c) establishment and management of model agricultural farm;

d) the establishment and maintenance of granaries;

e) bringing under cultivation waste and fallow lands vested by the State Government in the Panchayats;
f) ensuring conservation of manurial resources; preparing composts and sale of manure;
g) production of improved seeds, the establishing nurseries of improved seeds and promoting the use of imported seeds;
h) promoting the use of improved agricultural implements and making such implements easily available;
i) the promotion of co-operative farming;
j) crop protection and crop-experiments;
k) major irrigation, construction and maintenance of field channels and distribution of water;
l) raising preservation and improvement of village, forest, pastures and orchards;
m) taking steps against harmful animals with a view to protection of crops.

Functions of Taluka Panchayats in Agriculture:

Taluka Panchayats are assigned the following functions in the sphere of agriculture and irrigation under Section 117 of the Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961.22

a) Planning for agricultural improvement in the taluka;
b) Use of land and water resources and propagation of improved agricultural methods, according to the latest researchers;
c) Construction and maintenance of irrigation works in the talukas;
d) Reclamation and conservation of agricultural land in the taluka;
e) maintenance of seed multiplication farms, assisting registered seed producers and distribution of seeds in the taluka;

f) raising the production of fruits and vegetables;

g) conservation of manurial resources, preparing compost manure organic manure and mixture and to arrange for making them easily available;

h) promoting the use of improved agricultural implements and arranging to make them easily available;

i) the protection of crops, fruit trees and plants against diseases;

j) establishment and management of model agricultural farms;

k) providing credit and other facilities for irrigation and agricultural development;

l) increasing the area of land under irrigation by construction and repairs of wells, digging and repairs of private ponds by undertaking minor irrigation works and by supervision of field channels;

m) increasing the use of sub-soil water by boring wells and giving assistance in regard to such wells;

n) providing for the timely and equitable distribution and full use of water available under irrigation schemes.

Functions of District Panchayats:

According to Section 137 of Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961, the district Panchayats are assigned the following functions in the sphere of agriculture.
a) Undertaking intensive pioneering schemes relating to paddy, wheat, bajara, jowar, groundnut and cotton;
b) construction and maintenance of buildings for seeds distribution centres;
c) implementation of schemes of urban manner;
d) promoting the plantation of coconut plant;
e) arranging for the purchase and sale of necessary equipments for protection of plants;
f) arranging for the purpose and sale of insecticides;
g) establishment and maintenance of model agricultural farms;
h) procuring and distributing improved seeds;
i) implementing schemes relating to agricultural production and agricultural development;
j) arranging exhibitions as competitions and other programmes in connection with agricultural development and cattle breeding.

Overall Performance of PR in Gujarat:

This provision of specific allocation of functions among the three tiers of PR with substantial financial and administrative powers had led to the success of PR in Gujarat. It has helped them to achieve the objective of planning and to perform their role in different spheres of rural development. According to Haripad R. Subramaniam the success of PR in Gujarat (and Maharashtra) is due to the following reasons:

\[24\]
(1) PR bodies have been given a sound basic political structure, a strong and active administrative machinery at the district level and a large measure of devolution of powers and functions and adequate financial resources.

(2) The Government has complete faith in the scheme of democratic decentralisation;

(3) Sound political support and leadership;

(4) The Zilla Parishad is the basic unit for planning and execution, and for this purpose invested with complete administrative machinery, adequate powers and authority and the administrative structure, a miniature of State Government. All the development departments work under the Zilla Parishad...... District Collector is completely outside of the PR set-up.

(5) There is a complete integration between C.D. and PR in the sense that the rural development and welfare programmes along with the administrative and technical personnel as well as financial resources are devolved in PR bodies.

(6) The lowest tier, namely the village Panchayat enjoy maximum freedom in the day to day administration of their allocated spheres of activities and have shouldered greater responsibilities; and

(7) Competent leadership of both officials and non-officials at the district level.

PR in Gujarat has remarkably done its job within the role assigned to it in all the spheres of rural development including
agriculture. Few more points must be added in the list of factors responsible for this situation:

1. Constant observation and evaluation of the working of these bodies by the study groups of high power committees appointed by the Gujarat Government from time to time. (Round about 10 since its inception).

2. Sincere efforts of the Gujarat Government to implement the recommendations made by the different study groups and committees.

3. Regular periodical elections of the PRIs.

4. Emergence of new and young PR leadership with development orientation.

5. Less interference of State Government, in comparison to other States, in the day to day working of PR bodies.

6. Traditions established by the top leaders to take the decisions without considering party politics.

7. Increasing involvement and participation of the downtrodden masses in the activities of PRIs.

Foregoing discussion should not create an impression that PR in Gujarat has been successful in all respects and there are no problems faced by it at present. Its working is satisfactory and performance is good in comparison to PR in other States of India. According to high power committee, there are six problems of PR in Gujarat which require earliest solutions to make it more effective. They are as follows:
1. Increasing party politics in the working of PR;
2. versioning relations between officials and non-officials as a result of the latest ordinances;
3. encroachment on the functions and powers of the PR by the State Government;
4. increasing tensions between Panchayats and backward classes;
5. Panchayats and time-bound programmes;
6. problems of transfers in PR administration.

Role of Committed Leadership in PRIs

It is a co-incidence that all the three visionaries of PRIs in India were belonged to Gujarat. It was Gandhiji who evolved the basic philosophy and conceptual frame for rural development and PR. Second one was Balwantrai Mehta, a Staunch follower or of Gandhiji, who tried to institutionalise the Gandhian thought when he was provided an opportunity to work as the Chairman of Study Team. The third one was Ashok Mehta who laboured hard to revamp these dedaying institutions as the Chairman of the Committee on PRIs. He tried his best to restore faith in PRIs and allow them to play their role in rural development. Therefore, PR has been looked upon in Gujarat as one of the important programmes as recommended by Gandhiji for rural reconstruction. Naturally, PR has got a very high position in the hearts of Gujarati people. It has helped the process of legitimisation of these new and modern institutions in rural areas.
PR in Gujarat is also fortunate enough to get some committed and dedicated leadership atleast in its initial stage. Most of them were trained or influenced either by Gandhiji, Sardar Patel, Vinoba or Jayprakash Narayan. These social workers were interested in constructive works to uplift the rural society. They took the opportunity to utilize this new, democratic and modern institutions to serve the rural people. Their service oriented leadership provided a sound foundation to PR in Gujarat.

Mention must be made of the following few leaders who established healthy traditions for the effective working of PRIs.

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<th>Name</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Region/Part</th>
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<tr>
<td>Madhavlal Shah</td>
<td>Kheda</td>
<td>Central Gujarat</td>
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<td>Gordhambhai S. Patel</td>
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<td>Ishwarbhai Chavda</td>
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<td>Maneklal Gandhi</td>
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<td>Rikhavdas S. Shah</td>
<td>Mehsana</td>
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<td>Trikamlal Patel</td>
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<td>Ratansinh Mahida</td>
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<td>Zinabhai Darji</td>
<td>Surat</td>
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<td>Vallabhbhai Patel</td>
<td>Rajkot</td>
<td>Saurashtra</td>
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P. N. Sheth is of the opinion that their effective role performance in PR has helped the rural areas hitherto ignored by the higher levels of political system to get prominence in State level politics. In otherwords they have been able to establish linkages between rural areas and State level party politics. Not only that the support of PR leaders has been
sought by the party in power at a time of crisis created by
cross flouring in the legislative assembly. Later on, some of
the PR leaders were elevated to the position of a minister of
President of the major parties in the State. This situation
led to the less interference on the part of State Government in
the working of PRIs. 27

P.D. Vakil has tried to assess the status of PR leaders in
following words: "since the Panchayats are vested with substantial,
financial and administrative powers and enjoy high prestige, the
institutions are able to attract dynamic leadership. To
illustrate the point, it can be said that the post of Taluka
Panchayat President is regarded as being equivalent to that of
M.L.A., in the scales of values of non-officials. Similarly, in
all probability, an aspiring leader would prefer being the
President of District Panchayat to being a member of the
Parliament." 28

The picture of PR leadership as depicted above is true only
with regard to few district Panchayats presidents and also
related with the first phase of PR (1963-1969). It should not
create an impression that throughout the period of its existence
of two decades, PR in Gujarat has got such leadership to cover
all the 12,663 gram panchayats, 182 taluka panchayats and 19
Zilla panchayats. Due to emergence of two factions of Indian
National Congress in 1969, party politics began to purcolate
from the State level to district, taluka and even village level.
The process has wiped out the ethos of public life which was
created by the dedicated leadership of PR in its initial stage. 29
Functioning of PR in Gujarat as Evaluated by Academics

1) Politics of Participation: Among the empirical studies conducted so far in this area of study, the investigation of P.N. Sheth requires special mention because of two reasons. Firstly it is a pioneering work in the field and also covers the area to which the present study is related.

As P.N. Sheth observes "The traditional informal social structure and modern, formal Panchayati Structure have begun to interact and influence one another in a massive and significant way and created a new conditions of change in the rural society." Are following observations and conclusions made by Sheth in his study:

1: Interest in Panchayati Raj and local politics in Anand Taluka was largely confined to the two agricultural communities - the Patidars and the Baraiyas. Though the former caste had remained the traditional dominant caste, the Baraiyas had also become aware of their impact potential in the Panchayati elections. This had been accompanied by the growing articulation of their interest and their increasing capacity for the skillful bargaining and useful alignment with one or other factions of the Patidars.

2. There is 'a considerable increase in the members of the present Panchayats who perceived that their leadership depends on what we consider the modern factors and corresponding
decrease in the number of those who perceived the traditional factors as the basis of that leadership. These facts may be interpreted as signs of the modernistic trends in a traditional society.33

As a result of the participation crisis in PRIs as observed by the author in village panchayats under study, he examines certain probabilistic projects for future and finally concludes as follows:

"The PR has not just provided only disruptive factionalism or caste antagonisms. In fact the pattern of participation is based on accommodation, bargain, co-operation as well as conflict. In many cases the Panchayats have become institutional apparatus conceived as comprising a net work of interaction among castes wherein conflict and cohesion overlap. Both the social groups are articulate about their interest and status but conscious of their interdependence."

The study was mainly centred round to focus on emerging pattern of PR leadership particularly in relation to two major castes of the area. Hence it does not provide a picture of performance of PR or role of leadership in rural development. However, it throws light on the pattern of PR leadership of mid sixties which has got tremendous changes at the end of seventies.
(2) Changing Pattern of PR Leadership:

Dr. H.J. Pandya has made the study \(^{34}\) of the pattern of PR leadership within a broader framework than the previous one. Also his comparative approach in developed v.s. Backward scenario of all the three levels of PR in two districts of Saurashtra provides a new dimension to the study and also present a picture of the different region of Gujarat. The important observation and conclusions of the study in relation to PR leadership are as follow:

1. "Our study of leaders in Panchayati Raj in this district, four talukas and forty villages show, at the outset, that development of areas has nothing to do with the pattern of leadership functioning in the area. Overlooking the development factor, we notice that leadership is more in the hands of young and modestly educated in both developed and not-so-developed areas." \(^{35}\)

2. "It is the middle caste, which is numerically dominant, has more positions and membership in Panchayati Raj. But if one goes by proportion between membership and position in PR, still members of high castes (Brahmins, Rajputs) are found having positions disproportionately more of their membership." \(^{36}\)

3. "It can be said that only numerical strength of caste does not serve as a decisive factor but along with it requires land holding and income."
4. The pattern that emerges, then, is that position holders in Panchayati Raj are males, young, belong to middle caste, are modestly educated (upto primary), have more land, report moderate income (between Rs. 3000 and Rs. 7000 annually) and are engaged in agricultural occupation.

5. Their political ambitions are low and moderate. They seem to be well contacted in the Panchayati Raj system in which they are operating.

6. "They are mostly influenced by local level politician than national level personalities...."

7. "Their (position holder of PR) party commitment is very high, they are wholly against defection and are not blind followers of leaders in the party."

(3) **Leadership and Agricultural Development**

An empirical study made by P.R.R. Mehta and S.P. Jain provides a comparative picture of Panchayati Raj and Agricultural Development in relation to four States namely, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. The study is broad based in terms of area and sample in comparison to the previous two studies but at the same time it is more specific which throws light on one of the many aspects of rural development. Following observations and conclusions are worth noting in relation to PR in Gujarat.
1. A comparison of the socio-economic background of the farmers and the elected leaders reveals considerable differences between the two, particularly with respect to level of education and size of land holdings. While the majority of farmers were illiterates, most of the elected leaders had some education. Similarly, the leaders tended to own more land than the farmers.41

2. The farmers did not have a high expectation of assistance from the Panchayati Raj Institutions with respect to technical aspects of agricultural development. Their contributions have been recognised in municipal functions such as schools, drinking water, street lighting, roads, radio-sets and Harijan welfare etc.42

3. These institutions have been found to help the farmers in securing timely and adequate supply of inputs, allocation of agricultural development schemes, in assisting the technical personnel, in selection of demonstration farms, and facilitating acceptance and adoption of agricultural innovations.43

4. The PRIs have a significant role to play in furthering the cause of agricultural development.44

5. The local leaders have been playing an important role as communicators of agricultural innovations, legitimisers of new messages, and facilitators of agricultural programmes.
6. The study did not provide any direct evidence for negative roles in the local leadership in respect of agricultural development.45

7. These institutions still continue to be under the influence of the people of higher socio-economic categories for all practical purposes. Dominant role of vested interests and party politics in the allocation of certain developmental schemes has been revealed.46

8. The PRIs to some extent have failed to instil in their executives and members the absolute necessity of distributing social and economic justice.47

9. The study did not provide any evidence of the use of political affiliations for influencing a particular programme from the State Government. Nevertheless, influence of district level politics could not be altogether ruled out. Allocation of a particular scheme of importance also found to be dependent on the political atmosphere of district. If the atmosphere of a certain district was opposed to the programmes and policies of the ruling party of the State, its claims for various schemes might be relegated into the background.48

The studies hitherto presented reveal before us the picture of emerging pattern of PR leadership, changes occurring in the present pattern of PR leadership and the role of PR and its leadership in rural development with special reference to agricultural
sector. By and large they cover in their fold the central and northern parts of Gujarat which are considered as more developed in comparison to other parts of the State.

(4) Experience of a Backward Taluka in South Gujarat

An empirical study of Dr. Vyas computes the picture in the sense that it gives the account of the problems of development of Dharampur taluka situated in the Southern part of Gujarat. A two volume report of the Action Plan titled "Rural Development for Rural Poor - Dharampur Project" demonstrates before us a unique experience of the researchers. It is unique because of the reason that they surveyed the area in their own, prepared the programme for rural development and implemented the programme by the help of the State Government, administrative and institutional machinery available in the areas as supplemented by the voluntary agencies. The major thrust of the implementation strategy, was on generating pressure from top, from below and also from public opinion. The results of the programme were encouraging but it has little to say about the role of PRIs and their leadership in carrying out the programme. Mostly it was implemented by the bureaucratic structure available in the taluka under the direct control supervision of project officer who was senior class I officer. However, it provided a different model not only in Gujarat but also in the whole country.
Some village based studies require special mention for the reason that they provide an all-round and indepth picture of the functioning of PRIs at grass-roots level. Among them the study of Dr. B.C. Shah gives the complete picture of the working PRIs in Mogri village of Anand taluka in Kheda district. His following conclusions are still relevant with respect to PR and its leadership:

1. There is no doubt that the PR has proved to be a major institutional break-through at the grass-roots level and unlike many other State-sponsored schemes it has greatly attracted the attention of rural masses and created a new power structure which has turned out to be a new booster of rural leadership.

2. Mogri has been passing through a transitional period. The old leadership is giving place to the new leadership. But pace of emerging leadership is rather slow. It obviously faces many limitations inherent in the initial stages of democratic modernisation.

3. "We also find elitist perception in the decision making process, e.g. disregard for the basic needs of the people like urinals, latrines or negligence for agricultural activities helpful to the poor farmers or high priority given to the projects required for the upper class. Many leaders look upon the Panchayat as a centre of politics rather than an instrument of service to the people."
Dr. Somaji was interested in the interaction between the new institution and caste system in a village near Baroda. He concludes that the chances of democracy in this village are relatively optimistic. In conjunction with PR a new consciousness has born among the inhabitants of the village in regard to social and political rights. To him still caste factor plays the great role in the working of PR.

Dr. Anil Bhatt gives the three different examples of clash, co-operation and public initiative in relation to three different cases. The distribution of subsidy to the adivasis is a case study of clash between the Taluka President and District Panchayat President. The location of health centre in the Kekarwada is a case study of the distortion of the decision making process in PR by political consideration. Reclamation of Khar land is a case study of the initiative taken by the people in co-operation of the officials to achieve positive results.

(6) Solution Oriented Study:

D.N. Pathak and P.N. Sheth reviewed the working of PR in Gujarat and made some suggestions to improve it. They are as follows:

1. As far as possible all the government agencies functioning in the area where PRIs are operating should be under the jurisdiction of the respective democratic bodies;
of rural development. It is a fact that not a single study has
drawn the pessimistic and bleak future of PR with a suggestion
to replace them by other institutions. Most of them have
expressed faith in newly emerging leadership of PR with some
precautions to alarm the concerning people to improve the
conditions for their better functioning. The problem is to
change the potentialities into actualities of PR and its
leadership.

The above picture mostly drawn in latter part of 60's and
early 70's is applicable to PR in Gujarat as well as in Kheda
district. But many qualitative and quantitative changes have
occurred in later part of seventies which require the reassess­
ment of the situation particularly in Kheda district.

Emerging Pattern of PR Leadership in Kheda District:

The studies of P.N. Sheth, P.R.R. Mehta and S.P. Jain,
B.C. Shah, etc. have proved that old leadership in PR of Kheda
district is giving way to new leadership. According to caste
composition of the district it can be said in other words that
Baraiyas hitherto remained in the lower ladder of the traditional
society are replacing the old traditional leaders of Patidars
from village level to district level.

Implementation of Bombay Tenancy and Agricultural Act, 1948,
with improvements, and the Gujarat Agricultural Lands Ceiling
Act, 1960, have helped the process of change of leadership in
Kheda district. "The Baraiyas who were generally tenants of
in 63 project areas in the country. The National Demonstra-
tion Programme of 1965 was applied to 50 districts. In 1966, the special programme for oil seeds development in certain specified areas covered by different crops. In the same year a programme on High-yielding Varieties, the farmers training and Educational Programme (for 80 districts), programme to form Audio forums and functional literacy (for 102 districts out of 397 districts in the country) were implemented.

In 1967, multiple cropping programme, a special programme for tobacco cultivation, programmes for commercial crops etc. were introduced. In 1970, the Integrated Dry Land Farming Development Scheme was implemented and extended to 24 areas and 13 States.

In 1971, the intensive cotton development programme, the Small Farmers Development Agency, projects for Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers and Intensive Jute Development Programme were implemented. In 1973, the Hill Area Development Project was prepared and implemented.

In 1975, the whole village development programme in 23 districts of Bihar, six of Orissa, four of Tamil Nadu and 5 of Uttar Pradesh was implemented with a view to develop the village from all sides. In the following year the irrigation command area development, crash scheme for rural employment, pilot intensive Rural Employment Programme, the Integrated Rural Development Programme were adopted through out the country.
Thus during the different plan periods the development activity in rural India is becoming more purposive, programme oriented, specific and scientific. It has also made some achievements that are observed by Ashok Mehta Committee in following words:

"In the short span of 15-16 years since 1960-61, the total food grains production rose from about 82.00 million tones in 1960-61 to 121.00 million tonnes in 1975-76. Wheat production going up from 11 million tonnes to 28.8 million tonnes (162 per cent), Bajara from 3.3 million tonnes to 5.7 million tonnes (73 per cent) and maize from 4.1 million tonnes to 7.3 million tonnes (78 per cent)."

In this context, it is important to note that the very term 'agriculture' has undergone a great change in terms of its meaning. It covers not only non-food crops, horticulture and market grading, but also such non-farming activities as animal husbandry, farm, social forestry, marine and inland fisheries, piggery and poultry, agriculture and sericulture etc. Thus agriculture as merely an activity of farming and production of crops has become the matter of past history. It is also supported and accompanied by the increasing stream of supply and demand for technological inputs for agriculture - like fertilizers, irrigation facilities, area of cultivation, agricultural implements etc. It has tremendously transformed the rural life not only in agricultural sector but also in other sectors.
Taking note of this healthy trend of agricultural growth, the National Commission on Agriculture makes the following remarks:

"The objective of agricultural development should be to not merely raise agricultural production and productivity but also to create conditions for economic, social and cultural improvement through equality of opportunity and more equitable distribution of income and wealth.... Despite the measures for development of agriculture during the last 25 years, no appreciable dent has been made on poverty and disparities. Low per capita income and highly skewed income distribution continue."

due to vast differences in soils, topography, climate, irrigation facilities, cropping pattern, farm practices etc. there is no uniformity in performance of agriculture in India. Moreover, recent production-oriented programmes have resulted into an extremely uneven distribution of the gains from improved technology. It has widened the existing disparities in incomes and levels of living.

According to the report of the Commission on Agriculture:.... "the current agricultural situation in the country neither evokes pessimism nor optimism. There is no denying the fact that as a result of more than two decades of planning significant advances have been made in all the fields of agriculture." Since
agriculture is a state subject it is essential to be implemented by different States in a good spirit and zeal through the appropriate agencies, institutions and infrastructure required for their success.

Some Problems of Agricultural Development:

There are certain problems of agriculture which require due consideration.

1-Low Productivity:

It is a matter of fact that the average productivity of almost all agricultural commodities in India is one of the lowest when compared with averages of other countries. It is true even in the case of comparison with developing countries. Table III-1 shows the extent to which we in India lag behind in the matter of achieving even reasonable levels of productivity. This situation hampers our target of self-sufficiency in food.

2. Problem of Small Land Holdings:

Table III-2 shows the number of households who possess less than one hectare of land in different States of India and Union territories. They can not sustain themselves through such a small holdings. Table III-3 presents before us the overall picture of India as follows.
### Table III-1
Average Productivity Per Hectare. (in kg.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Paddy</th>
<th>Sorghum</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Millet</th>
<th>Gram</th>
<th>Pulses</th>
<th>Barely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2941</td>
<td>1339</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China (main land)</td>
<td>1276</td>
<td>3274</td>
<td>2333</td>
<td>2938</td>
<td>789</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>955</td>
<td>1523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>3447</td>
<td>4898</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3835</td>
<td>4127</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>2097</td>
<td>3061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2682</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korea (DRP)</td>
<td>1643</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>923</td>
<td>2222</td>
<td>937</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>3553</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2308</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1061</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>1736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1703</td>
<td>4651</td>
<td>2143</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Community Development & Panchayati Raj Digest, Vol. 8, April 1977, p. 199.
## Table III-2
### Distribution of Land Holdings Below 1.00 Hectare in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Holdings 0-0.5 hect.</th>
<th>Holdings 0.5-1.0 hect.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>7310561</td>
<td>1574883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>3526901</td>
<td>865225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>683369</td>
<td>163368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>1557696</td>
<td>380501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>1540462</td>
<td>386794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>1972439</td>
<td>486806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>1024166</td>
<td>240443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnatak</td>
<td>527015</td>
<td>136753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>283957</td>
<td>79403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>480957</td>
<td>124646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>731668</td>
<td>217040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1512315</td>
<td>280981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>651992</td>
<td>169486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>310049</td>
<td>77100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>132049</td>
<td>36228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>483224</td>
<td>121399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>237930</td>
<td>50093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>114846</td>
<td>27114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>9203</td>
<td>2558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>2487</td>
<td>1018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mithalaya</td>
<td>21000</td>
<td>8302</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table III-2 Contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Holdings 0-0.5 ha.</th>
<th>Holdings 0.5-1.00 ha.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Territories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.Delhi</td>
<td>8678</td>
<td>2350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.Goa</td>
<td>28145</td>
<td>7281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.Pondicherry</td>
<td>16483</td>
<td>3866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.Arunachal Pradesh</td>
<td>2350</td>
<td>675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.Chandigarh</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.Mizoram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.Andaman &amp; Nicobar</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.Dadra</td>
<td>3213</td>
<td>760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.Lacoadive</td>
<td>3450</td>
<td>484</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1000</th>
<th>1000</th>
<th>1000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23178</td>
<td>5446</td>
<td>12504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of Total</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holding size</th>
<th>Holding No. in '000</th>
<th>% to total</th>
<th>Area in Hect.</th>
<th>% to Total</th>
<th>Average per holding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5 - 1.00</td>
<td>35682</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14545</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 - 5.00</td>
<td>25797</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>61210</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 5.00</td>
<td>8014</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>86369</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>70493</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>162124</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It reveals that the total number of holdings below one hectare is 356,82,00 and the area is 1,45,000 giving an average of 0.51 hectare per holding. In other words the total number of agricultural holdings in India was 70.49 million out of which as many as 35.89 million are holdings below one hectares. Fifty one per cent of holdings are of the submarginal size but the total area of the land occupied by them constitutes 9 per cent of the holding area in the country.

Thus it is proved that large number of farmers are living below poverty line. They cannot sustain themselves due to non-viable holding. Their economic condition does not permit them to raise necessary capital to purchase inputs required for better farming. As a result they can produce one third or one fourth of what they should normally be. One of the main functions of development of agriculture in rural areas is to
help people in this class to raise their holdings to the marginal size.

3: Problem of Land Ceiling and Distribution of Surplus Land:

Almost every state in India has passed laws for the purpose of imposition of ceilings on land. There are no uniform standards and principles among the states with regard to land ceiling. In the case of U.P. for instance the range was 16 to 26, Rajasthan 12 to 72, Tamil Nadu 10 to 49, Andhra Pradesh 11 to 31 hectares and so on. The laws were revised generally between 1970 and 1974 and new lower ceilings were imposed. (See Table III-4).

It has been estimated that if ceiling laws were to be applied about 22 million hectares of land would be available as surplus. On the other hand, we need about 21 million hectares of land in order to render uneconomic into economic holding. From the point of view of social justice it is also proposed to distribute the surplus land among 48 million landless labourers. If this policy will be pursued it will multiply the uneconomic holdings in the country.

However, in actual practice States have registered very low performance in getting surplus land. The note prepared by the Ministry of Labour describes the failure of States in following words:
# Table III-4
Range of Ceilings fixed by the Different States of India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Year of enactment of second round of ceiling laws</th>
<th>The new range of ceilings rounded to nearest hectares</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uttar Pradesh</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>7 to 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bihar</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>7 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>3 to 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>4 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>4 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>5 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>4 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>4 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>7 to 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>4 to 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>2 to 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>7 to 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>11 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>7 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>5 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Himachal Pradesh</td>
<td>1972</td>
<td>4 to 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripura</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>4 to 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>6 to 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondicherry</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>6 to 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dadra</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>7 to 16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Community Development & Panchayati Raj Digest, Vol.8, 1977, p. 201.
"The welfare measures intended for the rural poor have not adequately percolated to them. Even basic land reform measures have not made much headway. According to information of the Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation, of the 68.60 lakh acres of estimated surplus land up to 1978, only 45 lakh acres have so far been declared surplus. The area taken possession of so far is only 2331 lakh acres out of which only 1576 lakh acres have so far been distributed to the landless poor."

To put this figures in more simple way, it can be said that in more than 5 lakh of villages only 15.76 lakh acres have so far been distributed amongst the landless labourers. It comes to hardly one hectare per village. Only 1.5 million is distributed which means hardly one acre among 225 persons. This situation may lead to agrarian tensions in near future.

4 : Problem of Agricultural Labourers and Agrarian Movements:

According to the preliminary results of the Rural Labour Inquiry, 1974-75, the estimated number of rural labour households increased from 70.4 millions in 1964-65 to 82.1 million in 1974-75. Out of them 86 per cent form agricultural labour households. The total population covered in the category of agricultural labour is 335 million and nearly half of that figure would constitute the wage earners.

These figures are sufficient enough to demonstrate the volume and vastness of this class of Indian society which still remains unorganised. The main problems of these
agricultural labourers are land to settle, wages, atrocities by landlords, housing and primary needs like education, medicine, roads and light in their localities.

There are very few labour laws passed by the States about the payment of wages, improvement in living conditions and rehabilitation. Practically, there is no law for the conditions of service and other benefits to the agricultural workers. Moreover, there is no law at the national level providing for statutory service conditions in respect of their job security, suspension, dismissal, termination, leave facilities etc. These problems are agitating the minds of agricultural labourers in India of 80's.

Making indepth study of different movement going on in present rural India in relation to future politics D.L. Sheth has made the following concluding remarks:

"The farmers' movements for adequate prices for their product, the movement for adequate minimum wages by agricultural labour and tribal movements for re-establishing rights over forest products and land, although at present seemingly at odds with each other, are a part of the larger contradictions. They represent similar tendencies for struggle against the established economic and political macro structures controlled by the small urban-industrial, bureaucratic and technocratic ruling elite." To him "the process of moving from micro-practice of transformative politics to macro-conception of new politics for the future has just begun."
3: Agricultural Development in Gujarat:

*Broad Features:

The State of Gujarat came into existence on 1st May 1960. During the span of last 20 years it has made commendable progress in agricultural development. It has also prepared a perspective plan covering at least the fifth and sixth five year plans - i.e. from 1974-1984. Self reliance in agriculture is one of the main objectives of different plans and projects undertaken by the State Government.

1. Agricultural programmes including animal husbandry, dairying, afforestation, fisheries and irrigation has been assigned the highest priority in Gujarat. Also special attention has been devoted to the extension of irrigation facilities evolving dry farming practices, expanding areas of multiple cropping, including new cropping patterns and induction of scientific practices.

2. The reform of an antiquated land system, revitalisation of co-operative movement, expansion of basic facilities like irrigation, power and transport are some of the notable features of the planned development of agriculture in the State.

3. The State has completed the programme of legislation for abolition of all inter-mediary land tenures. The objectives of the State Land Policy have been to remove such impediments in the way of achieving increases in agricultural

production from agrarian structure. It also aims to eliminate elements of exploitation and social injustice within the agrarian system.

4. A ceiling has been put on holdings of land so that no person can acquire large areas of land for himself.

5. The small and marginal farmers are being assisted to enable them to improve their economic conditions and make their contribution to agricultural development.

6. Landless labourers are being granted government land in order to enable them to settle on it.

7. Highest priority has been accorded to agricultural programmes and irrigation.

8. Gujarat, however, suffers from several physical limitations to rapid development. The half of the area of the State has been brought under plough and more land is not easily available for cultivation. A large part of the cultivated area suffers from poor soil, undulating terrain and unindendent rain.

9. Irrigation facilities are inadequate and the percentage of forest area is low. Both of them affect adversely an agricultural production.

10. Inspite of all these limiting factors the agricultural production in the State has recorded a substantial increase over the past 20 years. Nearly two thirds of the population depends
upon agriculture in the State. Agriculture sector provides food grains as well as raw materials for industries and thereby plays a crucial role in the economy of the State.

"In fourth-five year plan the agricultural sector was provided total Rs.1350.00 under different headings. It was raised to Rs.6960.00 in Fifth Five Year Plan and Rs.12370.00 in Sixth Five Year Plan."  It sufficiently demonstrates that agricultural development has been given the more and more weightage in the State.

**Agricultural Development in Kheda District; Anand and Vadansinor Talukas:**

Situated in central Gujarat, Kheda district is State's fifth smallest district which was called by English people as Kaira. It lies between 27°-7' and 23°-8' north latitude and 72°-15' and 73°-37' east longitude. Agriculturally, it is one of the prosperous district of Gujarat. Its climate is on the whole temperature and rainfall moderate. Irrigation facilities are fairly, though, not wholly adequate. Wells are numerous. The soils are fertile and the cultivators are progressive. These combinations have brought for the agricultural prosperity of the district. "Its area under tobacco, one of the most important cash crops, is the highest in Gujarat. The district also ranks among the largest producers of cereals. The Amul Dairy at Anand is the largest of its kind in the whole of Asia."
Role of PRIs in Agricultural Development of the District

With the inception of Panchayati Raj in early sixties a popular body namely Kheda district panchayat was created as a powerful executive body at the district level. Government of Gujarat has transferred most of the powers, functions and duties of agricultural development within the district to this new body. It has also transferred the development machinery from village to district level to these PRIs bodies through the district panchayat. This new arrangement of democratic decentralisation has given a booster to the agricultural development in this district. Plan performance by the Panchayats have shown that the institutions are capable of shouldering increasing responsibility of national planning and implementation of plan programmes. Also PRIs are taking great interest in the various programmes of agriculture, Animal husbandry and minor irrigation. Kharif Rabi campaigns are regularly organised. Demonstrations and crop competition have the regular feature in such performance. In the last 20 years PRIs have played a great role in promotional activities prepared for the farmers.

The percentage utilisation of budget provisions of plan schemes implemented by the PR bodies is on constant increase which shows the interest and capacity of these bodies to implement the state programme. Kheda district Panchayat has shown a constant upward trend in its expenditure on agriculture. For example at the time of its formation in 1963-64, it spent only Rs. 128,081 on agriculture which was increased to
Rs. 23,6,585 in 1969-70 and was reached Rs. 13,49,315 in 1982.17

However, expenditure pattern varies with the levels of PR and the development programmes due to the difference in priorities. According to one estimate the gram panchayats of Kheda district spent the amount as shown in Table III-5. It reveals that they spent the largest amount (35.85 per cent) on sanitation and health while only 2.31 per cent on agriculture. In case of taluka panchayats the maximum expenditure (66.92 per cent) was spent on education and culture while only 8.35 per cent on agriculture, sanitation and public works. In case of Kheda District Panchayat, the bulk of expenditure (29.70 per cent) was incurred on public works provisionally transferred by the State. However, it spent the highest (12.68 per cent) among all the three bodies of PR on agriculture.18

The situation has been steadily improved by the co-ordinated efforts made by the office bearers and offices of Panchyati Raj Institutions, the co-operative institutions and government department. As a result the district, as a whole in general and Anand and Vadasonor talukas in particular have made progress in agricultural development.

Achievements of the District and Two Talukas:

I: Irrigation:— Before Independence irrigation in Kheda District was carried on chiefly on wells and ponds covering 12.47 per cent of the total cultivated area of the district. This has now increased to 23.81 per cent of the net cropped
Table III-5
Expenditure of Gram Panchayats, Taluka Panchayats and District Panchayats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. Item</th>
<th>Gram Panchayats</th>
<th>Taluka Panchayats</th>
<th>District Panchayats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amount in Rs.</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Amount in Rs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Sanitation and health</td>
<td>46,64,894</td>
<td>35.85</td>
<td>9,28,368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Public Works</td>
<td>32,94,208</td>
<td>25.31</td>
<td>6,78,813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Education and Culture</td>
<td>12,44,864</td>
<td>9.57</td>
<td>2,39,69,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Administration</td>
<td>30,12,027</td>
<td>23.15</td>
<td>33,09,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Welfare and People</td>
<td>1,07,686</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>2,60,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Agriculture, Preservation of</td>
<td>3,00,385</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>13,82,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests &amp; Animal Husbandry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Village &amp; Cottage Industries</td>
<td>1,06,384</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>58,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: Collection of land, revenue and</td>
<td>1,47,547</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>5,42,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maintenance of records</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Village Defence</td>
<td>1,34,448</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>4,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10: Co-operation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Other Miscellaneous</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46,60,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,30,12,443</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,58,15,707</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District Development Officer, District Panchayat, Nadiad, Quoted in Khede District Gazetteer, p. 633.
area. It is a result of the different irrigation schemes and projects implemented by the State Government as well as district and taluka panchayats of the area. Some of them are as follows: 19

1. The Mahi Right Bank Canal Project Stage - I near Vanakbori in Vadasinor taluka.
2. The Kadana Project on the river Mahi in Panchmahals.
3. Meshwo canal system near village Raska;
4. Khari - cut canal system.
5. The Savali Irrigation Tank - Kapadwanj Taluka;
6. The Saiyat Irrigation Tank - Thasara Taluka
7. The Tranga and Nagarama Tanks in Matar taluka.
8. The Gahedia Irrigation Tank - Vadasinor Taluka.
10. The Bhamaria Irrigation Tank - Vadasinor Taluka.
11. The Kaydam Irrigation Tank - Vadasinor Taluka
12. The Jetholi Irrigation Tank - Vadasinor Taluka; and

Table III-6 and III-7 indicate that still wells have dominated as the most important source of irrigation which accounted for 54 per cent of the total irrigated area in the district. Therefore, district panchayat has introduced different schemes to improve the prevailing situation i.e. the scheme for construction of new wells and repairs to old wells, the boring scheme, the Lift Irrigation Scheme, the co-operative irrigation scheme etc.
### Table II-6
**Sources of Water Supply**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. Taluka</th>
<th>Govt. Canals</th>
<th>Tubewells Govt.</th>
<th>Private Govt.</th>
<th>Total Govt.</th>
<th>Private Non-Masonry</th>
<th>Total Non-Masonry</th>
<th>Total Tanks Engines &amp; Electric Motors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>24911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anand</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vadasinor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1373</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(In Numbers)
Table III-7
Gross Area Irrigated by Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Taluka</th>
<th>Govt. Canals</th>
<th>Tanks</th>
<th>Tube-wells</th>
<th>Wells</th>
<th>Other Sources</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>District Total</td>
<td>57194</td>
<td>2238</td>
<td>6333</td>
<td>63797</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>129900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anand</td>
<td>9386</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2648</td>
<td>17788</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>29822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vadasinor</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1192</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of all these efforts made by the Government as well as the district and taluka panchayats, the total area irrigated by different sources has been increased in 60s and 70s from 42200 to 1,29,900 hectares at present. It is six times more than the area irrigated at the time of independence (21,600 hectares), and 3 times more than the area irrigated at the time of inception of PRIs in the district (42,200 hectares).

So far as Anand and Vadasinor talukas are concerned a close look on the Table III-6 and III-7 reveals imbalance in the distribution of sources of water supply between them. Out of total 17 canals in Kheda district, Anand taluka has got the advantage of only one canal and Vadasinor has not got such facility. Out of total 83 tubewells in the district Anand taluka has registered 23 tubewells and Vadasinor taluka has registered nil. So far as wells are concerned both the talukas have got somewhat equal numbers of well. Out of the total 26,774 wells in Kheda district Anand taluka has registered 1,454 wells and Vadasinor taluka 1,678 wells. Out of total 16 tanks in the district Anand taluka has got not a single tank and Vadasinor has registered 2 tanks to its credit.

But in terms of oil engines, Anand taluka is in better position than Vadasinor taluka having 1,184 and 770 oil-engines respectively. Still more close look on the Table III-6 and III-7 brings out: more imbalance between the two talukas with respect to gross area irrigated by different sources. Out of total 129,900 hectares of land irrigated in Kheda
district, Anand taluka has reported 29,822 and Vadasinor only 1,192 hectares. Except land irrigated by tanks the land irrigated by all other sources is much more larger in Anand taluka than its counterpart Vadasinor taluka. This unequal distribution in irrigation facilities has its direct effect on all the aspects of agricultural development of these talukas.

II: Soil: Its Erosion and Conservation:

The soil of Kheda district can be classified into six types: the goradu, black, medium black, black cotton, sandy and rocky types. The goradu (Garden) type is mainly found in Charotar tract where Anand taluka is situated. Because of its fertility and richness in organic matters the fields of this taluka are yielding the choicest crops. Its area under tobacco is the highest in Kheda district and Gujarat State. It also ranks amongst the largest producers of cereals.

There is a small hilly arch in the northern part of Vadasinor taluka. Much of the land lies open and untilled due to its rocky nature. Low depth of soil and hilly terrain also restricts the scope for soil conservation programme in the region.

Kheda District Panchayat has made efforts to prevent soil erosion in the district. The department of Agriculture has also undertaken different soil conservation schemes to preserve the moisture and fertility of the land. Such as; counter bunding, terracing, nala plugging, reclamation of land,
land levelling and field channels. The divisional soil conservation officer is responsible for the administration and execution of the programmes.

By conservation of water and regulation of the run-off, the top soil which is otherwise washed away, is thus retained.

"Uptill now 3,249 hectares of land was brought under counteur bunding at the cost of Rs.4.88 lakhs in the district." So far as Anand taluka is concerned soil conservation is not required because the land surface is even. It is also true in case of Virpur area of Vadasinor taluka. Soil conservation is required for Kyari land of this taluka has been largely completed.

Thus nature of soil is the most important physical factor which leads to imbalance in agricultural development between Anand and Vadasinor talukas.

III: The Crop and Cropping Patterns:

The total of reporting area of the district is 6,79,900 hectares of which about 5,18,30 hectares are under cultivation. About 53,000 hectares are under multiple cropping. The main crops are paddy, bajara, wheat, cotton and tobacco.

The acreage under food grains has slightly increased during the overall two decades of planning. In respect of individual crops bajari has registered the highest increase followed by rice, wheat, maize and pulses. Cultivation of potatoes increased in recent years from 300 hectares at the time of independence to 1100 hectares at present.
The area under tobacco a cash crop has more than doubled, also there is a substantial increase in the area of cotton and groundnuts as cash crops.

The total area cultivated in the district was 5,71,300 hectares of which the food crops claimed 69 per cent and non-food crops 31 per cent. There is thus a preponderance of food crops over the non-food crops.

According to the figures given in the Table III-8, the main crops in Anand taluka are bajari, rice, wheat, pulses and jowar covering (in acres) 87981, 18301, 8420, 5988 and 1034 respectively. The share of total food crops in this taluka is 44.02 per cent in crops which is 0.74 per cent of the Kheda district as a whole. Food

While the major crops of Vadasinor taluka are bajara, rice, pulses, jowar and wheat covering area (in acres) 5767, 3720, 1074, 705 and 330 respectively. The share of total food crops in taluka is 53.54 per cent.

A close look to these figures reveals the fact that though the pattern remains the same the difference is too much wide between Anand as developed taluka and Vadasinor taluka as backward taluka in terms of coverage of acres and percentage to the total. This also results into the difference in outturn of various crops in acres.

In non-food crops Vadasinor taluka surpass Anand taluka in cotton and groundnuts where it demonstrates 9554 acres with 26.79 per cent in relation to cotton and 4335 acres with
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. Crop No.</th>
<th>*Area in An and Taluka</th>
<th>Percentage to total in taluka</th>
<th>*Area in Vadsar taluka</th>
<th>Percentage to total crops in district</th>
<th>Percentage to total crop in district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Rice</td>
<td>18301</td>
<td>10.61</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>3720</td>
<td>10.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Wheat</td>
<td>8420</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Jowar</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>4.23</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bajara</td>
<td>78981</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>10.19</td>
<td>5767</td>
<td>16.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Total pulses</td>
<td>6988</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>1074</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cotton</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>9554</td>
<td>26.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Groundnut</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>4345</td>
<td>12.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Sesame</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>9.60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Other crops</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>47.48</td>
<td>24.38</td>
<td>1013</td>
<td>24.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Total of</td>
<td>92695</td>
<td>44.02</td>
<td>9.74</td>
<td>18489</td>
<td>53.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Total of</td>
<td>68489</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.21</td>
<td>15977</td>
<td>43.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Total area under all crops</td>
<td>161185</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>11.37</td>
<td>35669</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


* Source: Directorage of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat, Computed on the basis of provisional figures.
12.18 per cent of total cropped area in relation with groundnuts in taluka. While Anand registers 544 acres in cotton with 0.35 per cent to total, also in groundnut it shows 0.36 per centage to total. In relation to percentage to total crops of the district also Vadasinor claims more share than Anand taluka, 16.42 per cent in cotton and 15.80 per cent in groundnuts. While Anand taluka claims only 0.38 per cent in cotton and 0.85 per cent in groundnut.

The explanation of this reverse position can be found from the position of tobacco crop which is the leading non-food crop of Anand taluka. Out of its 47.48 per cent area for other crops as reported in Census, tobacco covers the area of 35161 acres of the total area of taluka. Its share in matter of tobacco is the highest in the district 33 per cent in comparison with all other talukas. It also enables the Kheda district to give the highest share in Gujarat 68.07 per cent among all the districts of Gujarat State.

Modernization of Agriculture -

IV: Intensive Cultivation:

The agricultural land available for cultivation is limited in Kheda district as well as in Anand and Vadasinor talukas. There is a little scope of increasing the net cultivated area which may be compensated by intensive cultivation. It consists of using agricultural inputs in ideal doses and following scientific methods in sowing, manuring, irrigation etc.
Due to the efforts of the Kheda district Panchayat, Anand and Vadasinor Taluka Panchayats have tried to adopt new methods of intensive cultivation. Increasing use of high yielding varieties of seeds have resulted into considerable increase in the output per acre. Indirectly it has also motivated the farmers to use more fertilizers and pesticides. They are able to grow multiple crops where irrigation facilities are available.

Modernization of agriculture through improved farm techniques and mechanisation assumes significant importance in the economic conditions prevailing at present. It helps in accelerating the pace of agricultural development in the area. The farmer is able to undertake deep ploughing and improved agricultural practices.

V. Agricultural Implements:

Table III-7 indicates that improved implements like iron ploughs, oil-engines, electric pumps and tractors have steadily increased during 60's and 70's in the district as well as in two talukas. As a result the use of traditional wooden plough has comparatively declined which demonstrates the rapid mechanisation of agriculture in the district. "The number of tractors in this district is the highest among the districts of Gujarat." 21
VI: Manures and Fertilizers:

Different schemes for preparation of manure mixture and compost manure from organic wastes were implemented by the district and taluka panchayats. The farmers at village level, the staff of village panchayat and municipalities were trained in preparing of compost from waste. "In 1970 the use of rural compost was 20,736 and town compost was 689 tonnes which increased to 63,557 and 5552 tonnes respectively in 1980 throughout the district."\(^22\)

The main fertilizers used in Kheda district as well as in Anand and Vadasinor talukas are urea, Ammonium Nitrate, Diammonium, Phosphate etc. The fertilizers promotion programme was implemented by the district Panchayat from 1970. The cultivators are explained the importance of application of fertilizers in proper proportion. Also gram sevaks were imparted special training regarding sales and distribution of chemical fertilizers. All these efforts resulted into an increase in the use of chemical fertilizers i.e. "Ammonium sulphate from 73,329 tonnes in early 70's to 159,395 tonnes at present. Phosphate from 1,953 tonnes to 20,397 and potassic 31.5 tonnes to 110.0 tonnes."\(^23\)

VII: Seed Supply: There are about 7 research stations working in the district to provide improved seeds to the farmers. Moreover, there are 10 talukas seed multiplication farms working for seed multiplication of different varieties of
improved seeds. In addition the Institute of Agriculture popularly known as Krishi-Go-Vidya Bhavan working at Anand plays great role not only in research of seeds but also in overall development of agriculture in the district as well as in whole of Gujarat State.

As a general practice most of the cultivators keep a reserve stock of their farm produce and use it as seed for sowing in the next season. Other obtain them from co-operative societies, from well-to-do cultivators or from local merchants.

The improved high yielding variety of seeds which are used in Kheda district, Anand and Vadasinor talukas are as under: 1) Jirasar - 280, 2) Sukhvel - 20, Gaur - 10, Mensuri in paddy (2), J.117 Kalyan Sona, Sonalika, H.D.M. 1553, HDM 1593 in wheat.
(3) Kurfisinduri, Kurfichamatkar and Kurfi Jyoti in Potato.

According to district agricultural officer round about 380 tonnes of improved seeds are distributed every year in the district. The entire Kheda district is covered under the Intensive Agricultural Area Programme since 1966-67.
Uneven Distribution of Land: The most important factor responsible for imbalanced development in the district is uneven distribution of land among the cultivators. Table III-9 reveals that a very large majority, more than 75 per cent of cultivators, are small land holders. However, they hold between them only 39 per cent of the total cultivated land. Only 1.53 per cent of the total land holders are large cultivators who possess between them nearly 7.30 per cent of the total land, each one of them having more than 25 acres. About 23 per cent of the total land holders are medium cultivators each cultivating more than 5 acres but less than 25 acres of land. More than half of the agricultural land is being cultivated by such medium land holders. Naturally the advantage of different schemes of agricultural development has been taken by the few well-to-do farmers who are in the position to utilize inputs offered through different schemes.

Other Factors: Historical, geographical and situational differences between the two talukas have also led to the imbalance in agricultural development.

Geographically, the area of Anand taluka is an unbroken plain with 76 inhabited villages and 4 towns spread over 676 sq.km. Anand, the taluka panchayat headquarter, is an important junction on the Bombay - Ahmedabad broad-guage line of Western Railways with branches to Godhara and Cambay. The town played very important role in the Satyagrah movement for Independence. The Amul Dairy of Anand is well-known in the country. It
Table III-9
Size of Land Holdings in Kheda District (1971-72)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Size of holdings (Acres)</th>
<th>No. of holders</th>
<th>Percentage to total holders</th>
<th>Area held in acres</th>
<th>Percentage to total area held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Up to 5 acres</td>
<td>2,09,982</td>
<td>75.15</td>
<td>5,12,358</td>
<td>39.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Above 5 and up to 25 acres</td>
<td>65,172</td>
<td>23.32</td>
<td>6,96,152</td>
<td>53.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Above 25 acres</td>
<td>4,264</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>95,169</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 2,79,422 100.00 13,03,680 100.00

Source: Collector, Kheda District, Kheda, Published in Gazetteer of India, Gujarat State, Kheda district, 1977, p. 462.
produces milk powder, condensed milk, baby food, butter, ghee, casien and cheese and supplies milk to the Arey Colony, Bombay. There are also factories of medicines, soap, snuff, pulses and ice. The city is famous for its snuff manufactured on a large scale.

Thus the taluka headquarter is humming with many rural developmental activities which has tremendous effect on rural life in general and on farmers' life in particular.

Historically speaking, since Anand taluka remained as the part of British rule from the very beginning, it was exposed to the modern trends of western world quite earlier than its counter part - Vadasinor taluka.

Vadasinor taluka, previously known as Balasinor State in British period, was the only Mahammadan State of importance in the Rewakantha Political agency. Due to its age-old feudal structure of society and traditional administration of old princely state, the taluka lags behind Anand taluka in terms of overall development also. In overall ranking of all 185 talukas of Gujarat State in terms of development, the Gujarat government has given 151 rank to Vadasinor taluka while its counter part Anand taluka got 036. In other words Anand taluka belongs to the cluster of first fifty developed talukas while Vadasinor taluka occupies the place in the cluster of last 50 backward talukas of the State.
Vadasinor, the taluka panchayat headquarter, is situated in hilly tract with the Shedhi flowing four miles away. It is ten miles away from Sevalia station on Anand-Godhara broad-guage section of the western railway and connected by State transport bus services with Sevalia, Nadiad, Virpur, Kapadwanj etc. As it is half encircled by rocks its climate is hot and close. It had a strong fort around the town which is now in dilapiated condition. There are two oilmills and one ginning factory.

Thus there is a vast difference between Anand and Vadasinor talukas which has resulted into the difference in development of agricultural sector. At the same time there are developed as well as backward villages in either of the two talukas. How far leadership particularly in PRIs can play its meaningful role for the present situation is the main concern of the following chapters.
REFERENCES


7. Ibid., p. 11.


12. Ibid. *Indian worker*, p. 5.


17  Budgets of Kheda District Panchayat, Nadiad, of years 1963-64, 1969-70 and 1981-82.


19  Ibid., Gazetteer of Gujarat, Kheda District, p. 238 - 245.

20  Ibid., Gazetteer of Gujarat, Kheda District, p. 249 - 254.

