

SOCIAL WORK AND RESEARCH CENTRE

The Social Work and Research Centre with its project office at Tilonia, P.O. Madanganj 305812, Distt. Ajmer, Rajasthan, started itself as a ground water research centre, sponsored by St. Stephen's College, Delhi where its registered office is located. The Tilonia base centre was started in 1972 in a complex of building where a T.B. Sanitorium was established and then withdrawn. The Centre has 45 acres of land around the building complex which has been rented out to it by the Rajasthan Government. The Centres initial funds were provided by OCFAM, Government of India and Rajasthan.

Objectives :

Objectives of the organisation as given in the Constitution are:

1. To establish an agency with an interdisciplinary approach committed towards providing three basic technical services in the rural areas: Water Development, Medical and Education;
2. To establish communication between the specialists and the farmers : give importance to rural communications and treat it as an input;
3. To get to know the rural people better, their agricultural practices, their customs, taboos against medical treatment and their standing of literacy and whether this state of affairs can be improved, altered or destroyed;
4. To emphasise an integrated approach to rural development. That is, provide these three services from one Centre, one campus so that the rural community needing these services do not have to go to three different places;
5. To let these specialists-geologist, geophysicist, social worker, teacher, engineer, doctor-needed to run these services stay and work in the rural areas, guide them when required and much more, learn from the ways of the farmers, their attitude and

experiences, because their experience and practical wisdom means more and teaches more than any book or an urban trained degree holder;

6. To cooperate and seek State Government help in all matters and get their approval before implementing any programme;
  7. To become self supporting (i.e. generate enough income by giving these services on a no profit no loss basis);
  8. To recruit young specialists interested in the field of rural development to give them the facilities, the equipment and the conditions to contribute their best;
  9. To lay emphasis on providing economic benefits, in a direct or indirect form so that the tangible results providing water, caring for child, establishing schools develop some faith and confidence in the Centre in the minds of the rural people;
  10. To involve as many technical colleges as possible to carry out specific projects in the rural areas where their skill and their experience of intermediate technology will be of great help;
  11. To bring about social change through economic change because it is only through economic benefits that gradual social change is possible;
  12. To bring about socio-economic development with the help of other rural based institutions working towards the same objectives. In other words, not to embark on any developmental activity in isolation;
  13. To establish other SMEC's with similar objectives in other states of India with a view to generating employment among specialists and bringing them closer to the problems and life styles of the rural areas where they are needed in such vast numbers.
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Programmes :

SWRC's first project was introduced in the Silore panchayat area around Tilonia covering about 90,000 population and an area of 500 sq. miles. Since water scarcity was a problem for agriculture in this area, the centre undertook a scientific search for ground water resources, and in course of time, it has become an expert consultant body for ground water research throughout the country.

The services of the centre can be broadly divided into socio-economic programmes and technical consultancy services. The first include, health, nutrition, education, balwadis, rural crafts and other welfare activities besides main agricultural and industrial programmes. The technical services include drawing up plans and conducting surveys, drilling for water, rural banking, agriculture, irrigation, medical care and introduction of intermediate technology.

SWRC operates from its base in Tilonia in Ajmer district but recently it has spread to Maryam and Punjab where two more centres have been established. The Tilonia centre covers 110 villages where intensive water investigation programme is in operation. Socio-economic programmes have been introduced in 17 villages where attempt is made for an integrated approach to rural development.

There is a sub-centre at Jawaja in Masooda Tehsil in Ajmer district where a development programme under Drought Prone Areas Development Scheme has been undertaken. The work is still at survey stage which has been half-completed.

Maryam Centre:

SWRC set up a low-cost housing consultancy service centre at Khori in Mahendragarh district of Maryam. The low-cost housing projects including construction of Panchayat 'ghars' are under the over-all charge of the Rural Development Board of the State. Besides this, the Khori centre is also engaged in a ground water survey in the Khol Block of the district covering 28 villages. This has been

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undertaken in cooperation with the state public health department. It has also undertaken, with assistance from the UNICEF, a community health programme including women's welfare, child welfare, nutrition, fisheries and kitchen gardening.

Punjab Centre :

At the instance of the Irrigation Department of the Punjab Government, an SWRC team is conducting a survey with the object of drafting rural unemployed youth in various irrigation schemes.

The particulars about the various programmes undertaken and being run by SWRC are given below :

1. Agriculture including supply of seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, demonstration farms and afforestation. These are going on in 17 villages and the number of beneficiaries is 1,065.
2. Village and cottage industries including weaving, cloth printing, handicrafts and leather work in the same villages covering 135 beneficiaries.
3. Education and training including 3 primary schools, non-formal education in 6 villages, balwadis in 4 villages and nutrition programme benefitting 300 children. There are 3 craft centres where about 400 women receive training in tailoring etc. Agricultural training is given to about 100 marginal farmers in Silora block.
4. Community health programme includes running of 2 dispensaries and benefitting about 100,000 patients, a programme of bare-foot doctors visiting the villages for treatment and prevention of diseases, maternity service and family planning.
5. Survey for self-employment schemes conducted among 400 youth of Punjab.

6. Ground water development programme covers 150 beneficiaries. Survey conducted in two blocks covers 600 families.
7. Consultancy services in low-cost housing in one village in Punjab.

Workers :

GWRC has a team of some 19 trained specialists in ground water, water development and management, education, health, medical care and social work. They have been drawn from IIT, Kharagpur, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Universities of Rajasthan, Delhi, Indore, Calcutta and Madras. The total number of staff is 140.

SEVA MANDIR

Seva Mandir, Udaipur 313001, Rajasthan, has its roots in the social vision of Dr. M.S. Mehta, inspired by the ideals of Servants of India Society and similar social reconstruction efforts in England and the U.S.A. Dr. Mehta's dream took the first concrete shape towards realisation in 1952 when he put aside Rs. 50,000 and a plot of land which had been acquired by him in Udaipur for the project. In 1965 a small building was put up on this site. Dr. Mehta as the first life worker and Adhishthata (Chief Executive) of Seva Mandir took up residence in this building in 1966. From then on, Seva Mandir has been active in its many-sided activities.

Objectives :

The objectives as given in its constitution are :-

1. To provide opportunity and atmosphere for understanding human values, dispassionate study of the trends and problems of the country, and to place, as far as possible the results of such study before the society;
2. To undertake practical measures for promoting the social, economic, educational and intellectual development of the rural and urban community;
3. To undertake and supplement relief and rehabilitation work during natural catastrophes such as floods, famines, epidemics etc.
4. To orient Seva Mandir as a vehicle of a dynamic, positive and action-oriented movement under the leadership of a small group of devoted and disciplined workers with the attitudes of meeting challenges by seeking and applying solutions of social problems rather than merely engaging in complaints or criticism.

Programmes : - Present Activities

1. Farmers Functional Literacy Project (FFLP) :

The FFLP is an ongoing programme in which literacy is linked up with the life of the learners, specially their home life and agricultural activities. There are 60 centres run under the project and more than 1300 farmers derive benefit from them. The teachers work on part-time basis under full-time supervisors.

2. Rural Mobile Library:

As a follow-up of our literacy programme for rural adults about 100 mobile library centres are functioning with the help of two mobile units. The number of readers is about 4,000. A collection of approximately 10,000 books is being utilised for circulation among the readers in the area of service.

3. Non-formal Education :

The programme of non-formal education was started in 1974, and since then it has been making steady headway. The programme is mainly intended to rope in the school drop-outs and also those who could not go to school due to poverty or other difficulties. It provides them a situation-based and problem-oriented curriculum, which is functional. There are 30 centres, with the number of beneficiaries around 750.

4. Agriculture-Oriented Mass Literacy Project :

This programme in the tribal areas around Kherwara tehsil (about 50 miles from Udaipur), having started in 1973, has succeeded in making more than 3,000 tribal youth literate. Besides it aroused in them a consciousness for development, which in turn led us to give a new dimension to this programme. Presently there are 100 centres functioning effectively with the number of beneficiaries about 2,250.

5. Peer Group Project :

A new project under the name of Peer Group was launched in March 1975 in Kherwara tehsil. This made a significant headway in the field of development at the grass-roots. Twentyfive youngmen, one from each village, were selected and given training and orientation in village development. These 25 young leaders mobilised a group of youngmen in their villages in order to use them for creating consciousness towards village development in the village people. This was attempted by selecting specific programmes particularly relating to agricultural improvement and economic well being. High-yielding varieties of mize, and wheat, use of better farming methods were introduced with encouraging results. More recently water and irrigation resources have been developed by construction of anicuts and repair of tanks. Revival of cooperative societies and starting of new ones also contributed to this awakening. Modest beginning have also been made in improving the village environment, The experimnt has a fine record of achievement.

6. Water Development :

For quite some time now Seva Mandir has been involved in helping the farmers with financial and technical assistance in sinking of new wells and deepening old wells, chiefly in Badgaon block. More than that a significant role has also been accepted in providing a liaison service by brining the related governmental and non-governmental agencies close to the farmers for obtaining aid and loans for their wells. The Land Development Bank, the Small Farmers' Development Agency and other similar schemes were drawn up to help the rural population in developing their water resources. Now the involvement of commercial banks is obtained for offering facilities for loans and subsidies for sinking of wells and improvement of irrigation channels for small tribal communities.

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Seva Mandir collaborated with the state Government in the construction work of anicuts in Badagaon and Kherwara Blocks.

7. Community Centres in Rural Areas :

Seva Mandir has been desirous of building up community Centres in the villages of its service area. This has been possible by raising funds from some external sources. The village Community also makes its own contribution through labour, partial supply of material and sometime with funds also. One Centre has been already completed and two are under construction.

8. Comprehensive Village Development :

At present three villages are covered under the scheme - Kevitha, Neemachkheda and Dhar. The idea is to concentrate on as many aspects of village life as possible and also wherever possible to place a full time worker in the village, study its needs and work with the community. The aim is to prepare a group of responsible people in the village who will lead the process of self-development in the village.

9. One Thousand Household Industries Project:

In September, 1974 Seva Mandir started the 1000-Household Industries Project with the support of the State Government (Industries Department). A nine-month course in tailoring and embroidery was started in Chandpole area (Udaipur town). From June 1975, woolen knitting by both machine and hand, was included in the project. A new Centre was started in April 1976 in Silawat Wadi, a slum area inhabited mostly by working class Muslims. Since most of the women were illiterate an evening class was also started to help the trainees become literate.

As a follow-up of this programme a cooperative society of trained women has been established. It secures commercial orders for stitching garments and thus supplementing the income of the

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members. From August 1976, a new programme was started for the training of boys in making wooden toys. Twenty boys have been recruited to receive training in this craft.

10. Harijan Welfare :

With financial help from the Rajasthan Harijan Sevak Sangh, Seva Mandir has been running a Balwadi in Amba Mata Colony and two Palnaghars (Crecches) in Ambawata (all in Udaipur). A special feature of the programme is the weekly visit of a lady doctor. Besides conducting the health examination of the children and maintaining their health records, the doctor meets the parents and tries to educate them in various aspects of children's health.

11. Amateur Dramatic Society:

The ADS has now been in action since 1973. During this period it has staged various full-length Hindi plays which were widely appreciated. To improve further the quality of the plays and to provide understanding of the principles and techniques of dramatics a five-week workshop was organised in 1975 which was a great success.

12. Publication Department :

A small beginning has been made in publishing single books for neo-literates and semi-educated people. Fifteen pamphlets on Nutrition, Health and Hygiene have already been published. Seva Mandir has also published two short novels "Poojan Maasi" and "Mandir Janta Janardan Ka" and both books were awarded prizes by the Government of India. Saksharta Sandesh, a monthly bulletin in Mewari dialect, is being published for the last five years. A quarterly Newsletter in English is mailed to all subscribers and sympathisers.

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13. Centre for Continuing Education:

Under the Centre presently courses in Hindi and English Stenography are going on. This programme was started under the "Half a Million Job Programme" of the Government of Rajasthan. Another activity of the Centre is to organise language proficiency classes. So far it has been limited to the English language only.

14. Discussion Group :

This programme chiefly involves the urban intellectuals. The group meets occasionally to discuss problems and issues, social, economic, political and philosophical, both national and international.

15. Women's Association (Mahila Sabha):

A group of middle class women meets to organise activities of their interests and needs. These activities are of a very varied nature, may be a trip to a place of religious or architectural interest or a course on nutritive food.

16. Kunjru Library :

Named after Pt. Hridayanath Kunjru the library was started in October 1973. The library is housed in the main Seva Mandir building and can accommodate 50-60 readers in its spacious reading room. Though not fully equipped yet, it has about 13,000 books on various subjects. The intention is to build up the social sciences and development sections of the library and also start a documentation cell of these subjects.

Workers:

There are 47 full-time paid workers and 346 part-time workers:

Looking Ahead:

As this description of Seva Mandir shows, an impressive start has been made towards fulfilling its objectives of promoting development

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amongst the rural and urban communities, especially for the weaker sections. Seva Mandir is gaining appreciation and recognition for its work. There are still many short comings which are due to the lack of resources. Also there are gaps in our efforts. For instance, there are no programmes that deal specially with health and cooperative aspects of community life, although these concerns are implicit in the programmes being run at present. There are several different activities bearing on rural development but the over-all concept and strategy of rural development by an agency like Seva Mandir needs to be worked out. There is also a constant concern with the nature of Seva Mandir as an organisation for social service and its special ethos. Also, there is the question of the resource base of Seva Mandir, how resources can be generated and community's support for Seva Mandir work mobilised. These and connected matters are occupying the attention of the workers and management. Seva Mandir has to face these problems in order that it can maintain its vigour and vitality in its functioning. It is a big challenge for it to remain true to its mission of social reconstruction.

Poor financial situation on the one side and increasing financial commitment on the other continue to be the main source of worry to Seva Mandir. The Trust has no regular source of income and has no reserve fund. With expanding activities of Seva Mandir larger amount of funds is needed. Seva Mandir largely relies upon grants and donations from foundations, trusts and individuals to meet its financial commitments. Occasionally funds are obtained from the Government for the projects that are sponsored by the State or Central Government.

## SWRC Community Health Care

ARTI SAWHNY & MANYA JAYARAM\*

THE SWRC has been in the field since February, 1973. It has an assortment of services that cater to all aspects of rural life and needs. The idea is to have a rural based, integrated development programme that takes care of integrated development activities.

The services can be broadly divided into 2 basic categories, technical, and social welfare. Under the former services drilling and groundwater, agriculture and the rural bank play an important role. The latter includes health, education, rural handicrafts and other welfare activities. All these services function individually as well as reinforce one another in the field. Since the community served is the same and the workers are all from the same organisation there is considerable familiarity with one another. All the workers aim at the same common objectives using different means to attain them.

### The Rural Community We Serve

A village in these areas is a conglomeration of factors. The social stratification even today is determined by the caste structure with very minor modifications. The attitude to life in general still remains highly fatalistic. As a result the people are an apathetic group accepting whatever befalls them. This fatalism has been reinforced by the feudal structure that has characterized this part of our country.

Another factor which often leads to resistance is the common thread of traditional beliefs and taboos that is woven into the daily pattern of their lives. For instance, we have found the existence of strong beliefs in supernatural powers as causative factors for certain diseases e.g. epilepsy, various forms of coma and other diseases, characterized by behavioural changes in the individual. Preference for the male child as opposed to the female, we have found, has been the cause for greater care being given to the health

needs of boys. In one of our villages, Chota Naraina, our doctor was prevented from attending to a little girl who was very ill only because she was a female child. In the presence of the child, preparations for the funeral were being made. No amount of persuasion from the doctor yielded any result. Again, child marriage is an accepted tradition. This has a direct effect on the general fertility rate.

These, among other traditional beliefs and customs, provide ample scope for local healers, witch-doctors, and nature curers to exploit the rural folk by making different deities responsible for both the cause and cure of their disease.

Therefore for working with the rural community, a clear understanding and insight has to be gained into the functioning of these factors and their interplay within the society before the formulation and/or implementation of any health programme.

### The SWRC Approach to Health Care Delivery

This organisation's approach to all programmes is governed by one primary factor which is community participation. In the field of health activities too, this was the emphasis and hence it took a good 24 months to establish contact and credibility with the community. During this period the emphasis was not on programme planning but on reaching out and understanding the community as a whole and particularly their health needs. The method of approach that was adopted was very informal and often, involved socializing with the community, sharing their sorrows and joys and just being available when needed. This involvement of the health personnel with the community led to the SWRC identifying the health needs of the community and increasing their own awareness and understanding of the rural community; and the community in turn having an opportunity to test credibility and motive of the organization and its workers.

This approach created an awareness regarding health needs which is a necessary precondition

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for any form of community participation and interest. This awareness further led to the demand from the community for health services. On receipt of this demand, a dialogue was started between the village council and us which evolved a system of joint planning and implementations. This has formed the crux of all our health programmes.

The basic Health Objectives of SWRC are to provide basic illness care; to involve the community in the planning, supervision and evaluation of the health programme; to decentralise health services and skills to the lowest possible level, i.e. the village; to work through existing semi-skilled/skilled persons in the community like the dai, fakir, vaid, etc; to work in co-ordination with existing Government services, supplementing them whenever required to achieve financial-sufficiency; and to bring about village-level medical self-sufficiency.

The SWRC established a dispensary at Tilonia in February, 1973 offering only curative services. The reason for starting a health programme through a dispensary needs little elaboration, since it is the easiest means of entry into an otherwise resistant community despite the fact that only 10% of the sick in the rural areas would come for treatment.

Simultaneously, the ground was being prepared for incorporating preventive and promotive aspects of health into the already existing curative programme. This was done through various programmes, such as scar surveys, immunisation programme, disinfection of drinking water wells, implemented for the Government. As an incidental outcome of this, widespread contact with the community was made. Consequently demands for dispensaries came from various villages. Since a dispensary was not found to be an economically viable solution to the expressed demand for health services nor did it cater to the concept of decentralisation of health services with maximum community participation, the SWRC worked out an organizational pattern which both provided the services required and individual community participation.

The infrastructure evolved around the main dispensary at Tilonia and the sub-dispensary

located at Chota Naraina roughly 14 km. away from Tilonia. The services from these two dispensaries radiate to the surrounding 20 villages through a village level health worker. It is interesting to note that the dispensary at Chota Naraina is being supported by the community at large. The kind of support sought includes—

- (a) Provision of space for the dispensary.
- (b) Provision of living accommodation for the ANM in charge.
- (c) The salary of one village level worker amounting to Rs. 60 per month.
- (d) A quarter of the cost of medicines being paid for by the beneficiaries.
- (e) Free labour and help in the renovation and construction of buildings.
- (f) Collection of funds for the construction of the hospital.

#### Selection of the Area of Work

The Community Health Programme started in May, 1975. In the first phase 25 villages within a radius of 15 km. and an approximate population of 20,000 were covered. These villages are centred around the two dispensaries.

The establishment of the Chota Naraina sub-dispensary and the community's contribution towards it set off a chain of reactions whereby all the surrounding villages offered their fullest cooperation in return for health facilities to be provided in their respective villages.

Since the demand for curative services is high and since preventive measures are slow and yield no obvious results, it is imperative for us to emphasize the curative in order to make the preventive palatable to the community. This does not in any way imply that the preventive aspects are less important but quite the contrary. It is merely an entry into a community through a weak spot.

This gave rise to the concept of the village level health worker. To ensure that one reaches out to at least 80% of the population in the area covered, training and skill have to be disseminated to the people at the individual village level itself. This has been done by us through training young boys from the villages in various basic aspects of health and family planning. The selec-

tion of these boys was made by the village council and forwarded for approval to the medical team at the SWRC. The basic requirements that these youngsters had to fulfil were that they would be regular inhabitants of the particular village between 15 and 25 years of age, having completed the 8th class and with a workable knowledge of Hindi. The selected candidate should be well accepted by the villagers and be motivated to do this kind of work.

The village as a whole also had to accept some conditions of the programme itself. The whole village was responsible for the supervision and effective functioning of their worker. Every household had to pay a part of the worker's salary every month. And recipients of drugs had to pay 25% of the cost of medicines received.

On the completion of training these health workers are expected to undertake basic illness care and dispensing of basic drugs; house to house visits to ensure that every individual in the village is seen and any needing intensive care referred; surveys to obtain vital statistics; keeping lists of patients suffering from tuberculosis, venereal diseases and leprosy, and of eye patients who may need specialised attention, maintain growth charts of children up to the age of 5 and a list of women up to the age of 50 with special reference to family planning so as to motivate, educate and help them avail of the services at the required time.

Apart from these functions the worker also gets trained in communication methods. He learns the use of a camera and a cassette recorder so that he makes his own filmstrips. He also learns about puppetry, making of hand puppets, writing of scripts and adapting local songs, stories and beliefs to convey his new ideas. In short, he has to learn to tap all the local resources available to him.

We feel that this would imply a package deal, an integrated programme of rural community health that on the one hand offers basic services and preventive measures (the most vital of which are reducing infant mortality, reducing birth rate and ensuring proper ante-natal and post-natal services to women) as well involving the common villager at every level of planning and im-

plementation of the programme.

Each village is visited once every 15 days by the doctor and lady doctor, the medical social worker, the compounder, ANM, and the field assistant. The village health worker collects all the patients and the doctors examine them. A list of the patients along with their disease and prescribed course of treatment is handed over to the worker. He then attends the hospital the following day to collect medicines, clarify doubts and learn about the treatment, side effects of drugs, etc.

After the patients are examined, a meeting is called and all problems regarding the programme are discussed, thrashed out and decided upon by the medical social worker, the community worker, the village level health worker and all the villagers. This ensures smooth running of the programme.

Some of these sessions include film shows on family planning, tuberculosis, hygiene, nutrition, and other aspects. There are also informal health education lectures and puppet shows.

To keep regular check on the functioning of the health workers, there is a staff meeting every Sunday where registers, drug records, receipt books and general worker are checked and evaluated. This is followed up by surprise visits by the community worker and or the medical social worker to safeguard against any possible lax on the part of the workers.

This organisational set up enabled us to reach almost every receptive sick individual in our area of work and provide him with domiciliary treatment. Having thus gained acceptability, we implemented other programmes such as immunisation, maternity and child health including ante-natal and delivery services, T.B. control, family planning, protection of drinking water, malaria control, nutrition, health education, surgical camps.

The maternity and child health programme work out through local dais who were identified and trained by us in conducting hygienic deliveries, ante-natal and post-natal care, and infant care. The dai is guided and helped periodically by the ANM.

This method of functioning has proved extremely successful in terms of reaching the maximum number of people and increasing awareness regarding a host of rural health problems.

The SWRC in all its programmes believes in working with the Government. The idea is not to start a parallel system but to effectively deliver the goods and act as an implementing agency wherever possible. For instance, the district has a tuberculosis programme and a mobile X-ray unit to screen patients. It needs organizations to identify cases and ensure regularity of treatment. This is where a voluntary organization like ours can fit in. Similarly, for the malaria control programme patients are identified, smears made and sent to the malaria eradication unit in Ajmer. Immunizations such as smallpox and D.P.T. are carried out by us in our area of work with the help of the district health officer who provides us the vaccines. The family planning programme functions with the co-operation of the Government. The Government team is sent to Tilonia for the tubectomy and vasectomy camps and the incentive money provided by them. In between, cases are referred by us to the Government hospital at Kishangarh or the P.H.C.

We have found from experience that there is a lot of practical knowledge to be gained from the existing skilled and semi-skilled persons within the community. Hence great deal of effort went into building a good relationship between the SWRC doctors and health personnel, and the local healers. As a result, our relationship has become so cordial that they visit us for chats, exchange of information and even treatment.

The traditional modes of treatment are more familiar and therefore readily accepted by the people. In addition, we have found that they are often very effective and cheap for minor ailments. Our intention is not to substitute or eradicate the local practitioners but to scientifically verify their remedies and techniques encouraging those that are found beneficial and discouraging those that are harmful or exploitative. Some of the remedies found to be in practice yielding results are:

- (i) The use of carrot seeds along with gur and a local plant for inducing abortions.
- (ii) Akada local plant is used for a multiplicity of ailments.
  - (a) The milk from this plant is rubbed on the skin to extract thorns, splinters, etc.
  - (b) It is used for the treatment of swellings.
  - (c) The leaf is used to prevent motion sickness.  
(Its action is probably hygroscopic)
- (iii) A herb called 'karthamba' is used as the main ingredient along with small amounts of 34 other ingredients e.g. dried ginger, ajwain, methi seed, etc. as a carminative and antifatulent.
- (iv) The use of the neem for the following:
  - (a) Snake-bite—a person bitten by a snake is made to eat neem leaves. If he finds them sweet, then the snake is a poisonous one. If not, then it is non-poisonous.
  - (b) Simple boils—a paste made out of the bark of the neem tree (like chandan paste) is used very effectively topically.
- (v) Maraua—a local herb—is used for treating irritative conditions of the eye. The leaves are boiled in water and then strained. This concoction is then used as local eye drops.

Our effort is to get closer to the practitioners and their systems so as to incorporate it into the allopathic system used by us.

One of the major problems in the allopathic system is the cost of drugs. Hence, if there are suitable and cheaper modes of treatment available, they need to be tested and used.

This health programme arrived at with the help of a whole host of people at all levels promises better results especially since it is everyone's programme. It has so far provided very remarkable results. Already there are SWRCs starting in two other States working in the same manner.

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# SEVA-MANDIR NEWSLETTER

Vol. 2 No. 1

A ROUND-UP OF NEWS AND VIEWS

October 1977

## Focus on Training

During the past year Seva Mandir has been involved in the tasks of Training in a variety of contexts. It organized the training programme for the co-ordinators of Nehru Yuvak Kendras (Youth Centres) and hosted the UNESCO sponsored National Field Operational Seminar on Literacy. It was also the venue of a workshop on Youth Leadership Training organized by the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare. In addition several workers in Seva Mandir's projects have participated in training programmes organized by various state, national and international agencies. To reflect this concern, this issue of the Newsletter is devoted to the theme of training in development work.

### Participatory Training for Development

".....If a principal role of change agents is to set in motion a process of critical awareness among communities of their development situation, leading on to self-directed community action for change, then their training has to be so organized so as to equip them for such a role.

Such a training process would involve the acquiring of skills to promote relatively intangible objectives like awareness-building, a sense of

community participation and group dynamics. Moreover, change-agents would require to be able to respond to the needs, moods and cultural nuances of local community life. Failing this they would become alienated from the people and end up by being barriers rather than catalysts of participatory development.

The methodology for such training has by definition to be non-directive and dialogical. In addition, it would need to incorporate the following features:—

1. Emphasis on self-training and group learning through continuous inter-action between participants, exchange of experiences through actual field visits and through dialogue. Such an approach would be based on the following assumptions.

a. Education or training is not a mere transmission of pre-packaged knowledge :

b. education or training should not be divorced from the real world, from a situation as it exists :

c. that by exposing change agents themselves to the realities of rural development through a comparative analysis of innovative approaches in four countries the participants would be able to :

i. identify the issues and problems that confront them as change agents;

ii. to arrive at solutions which are most applicable to their own situations, and,

iii. act upon these solution within the framework of their own organizations and the communities in which they work;

2. Maximum participation of the participants in planning the programme, in identifying their own training needs, furthering their own understanding and analysing their work situation and concrete problems. The raw material for training should be the participants actual experiences in the course of their work. This approach was recommended in the belief that :—

a. Anyone who has worked in the field has a great deal to contribute to discussions, and

b. an effective way to make change agents understand the significance of concepts like people's participation is to provide them an opportunity for self-training in a programme which depends for its success on their active participation in its management.

3. Creating an atmosphere which is conducive to frank reflection and analysis of whatever the participants consider important, including the training itself, and an honest, even if painful process of self-searching, criticism and self-criticism.

4. Make the programme an experiment in community living.

5. An on-going evaluation of the training should be built into the training programme.

6. The person initiating the Training had to be a co-ordinator a catalyst rather than a trainer.

This methodology should prove to be suitable not only for imparting social skills to change agents but many elements of it may even be used in technical training programmes. Learning can be maximized as well as made more interesting by making it a joint effort, a participatory exercise than by imposing it on people by treating them as passive objects."

With acknowledgment from "Participatory Training for Development" by K. T. Bhasin.

## Experience Based Training for Nehru Yuvak Kendras Co-ordinators

A training programme for the co-ordinators of the Nehru Yuvak Kendras (NYK) was organized by Seva Mandir during November/December 1976. The NYK Scheme was started in 1972 by the Government of India. Their objective is to station a Kendra in each district of the country to cater to the needs of non-student youth, and to channel their energies into the development process. They are to concern themselves with non-formal education related to agriculture, health, family and community life; provide vocational training for self-employment, and conduct community social services, and cultural and sports activities. In this way the Yuvak Kendras are expected to become a dynamic force amongst the youth of our country.

In the training programme we drew on the resources and experiences of 33 Yuvak Kendra co-ordinators from various parts of the country. The primary purpose of the programme was to review, revitalize, and to give a new impetus to this scheme which was already functioning in 120 districts. By bringing together their rich and varied experiences, together with discussions, reflection and self-study, the participants were given the opportunity to evolve a deeper understanding and commitment to the scheme. By coming together they realised that they were not isolated workers but an integral part of a vast process in development. As a group committed to the same objectives, through active participation and constructive criticism they could reassess their individual roles, as well as that of the scheme as a whole.

The training programme, was formulated keeping these ideas in mind. Before arriving, each participant had to prepare a paper on his or her activities, which was then discussed and analyzed, by the entire group. This was followed by groups of participants working together to prepare papers on different aspects of the Scheme. Having pooled their diverse experiences, an action-oriented project was then undertaken in 6 villages in Kherwara and Badgaon Panchayat Samitis. Teams of trainees worked with village youth in planning activities and events for the following year. They actively participated in the villagers' cultural and community life by involving themselves in a drama and sports festival. Their concrete plans and proposals for activities in the villages for this year are being carried through by the youth programme of the Centre for Rural Development, Vidya Bhavan Rural Institute and Seva Mandir workers. These action-oriented programmes taught the participants to act as members of a group, and to be effective in a given practical situation. Time was also set aside to discuss practical drawbacks and improvements to be made in the Scheme. The major improvements suggested were improvements in the support arrangements of the scheme, as well as in the monthly reporting. The culmination of the programme was the preparation of a draft plan by each trainee which outlined their activities for the following year.

In general the response to the training was positive and fruitful. However, its true value can only be estimated from the activities that are being carried out by the Nehru Yuvak Kendras in various parts of our land.

## National Field Operations Seminar in Literacy

The appalling literacy rates in the country directly point to the vital need for developing new adult literacy and educational techniques. This is an area in which much time and energy must be spent. Social scientists now realise that in order for adult literacy and education to make any headway its contents must be closely related and integrated with the lives of those it wishes to serve. Literacy must be useful in the everyday lives of the people, it must not be merely an adornment or luxury. In order to be dynamic, literacy has to be linked with social and individual development, and a new cadre of literacy workers must be trained to put these ideas into practice.

For this purpose the National Field Operation Seminar in Literacy was convened in Seva Mandir in January 1977 under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare, Govt of India, in collaboration with UNESCO. The main purpose of the programme was to bring together workers in the field of adult education, (and related fields) and to develop an adult literacy programme based on the specific needs of a local village. Having evolved an educational curriculum for a locality as a group, they would have the experience, insights and confidence to evolve similar programmes in their own areas of work. This exercise was to gear teachers to view education as a dynamic and changing process which needs to constantly evolve and innovate

to meet the differing requirements of students. This exercise was to provide a definite break from the tendency to evolve rigid and static curricula with which students cannot identify. This programme provided an excellent opportunity to train adult educators and planners using this rather new action-oriented and problem-solving research methods.

For this training the participants were divided into three groups, each of which was allotted a village for field work. It was the task of each group to carry out the following:

1. to develop tools and techniques to identify the educational needs of the community.
2. to translate these needs into an educational programme.
3. to integrate the literacy, non-formal educational programmes with local developmental activities.
4. to adopt a multi-disciplinary approach in developing curriculum and organizing non-formal learning sessions.
5. and to conduct an evaluation of the entire exercise.

The participants found this method effective. They obtained a sense of confidence in organizing and planning adult education programmes in different social, economic and cultural environments. The training helped clarify the concept of non-formal education through practice. Their experiences, observations, programmes and plans have been compiled and published in the form of a detailed report which would be of great value to others working in the field.

## Training Programme for Development Workers

*-Manna Ram Dangi*

ACFOD (Asian Cultural Forum on Development) is an extra-governmental organization supported by freedom From Hunger Campaign/Action for the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations.

As an organization ACFOD aims to bring together persons and groups in all countries of the Asian region into a movement which participates in integral development. This includes the socio-economic and religio-cultural advancement of people.

ACFOD organized a Regional Training Programme for Development workers from August 28th 1976 to January 7th 1977. In the training programme for development workers, six countries participated. These were India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Each country sent one representative to the programme. All trainees were from non-governmental organizations. I was sent from Seva Mandir as the Indian participant.

The aims of the training programme were to promote the active and purposeful interaction of development workers at primary and intermediate levels through travel, meeting and the study of each other's projects, to help development workers to see their local problems in a wider perspective, and to relate the micro issues of development and social justice to those at a macro level. It also helped to systematize and make meaningful this exchange of experiences for more effective use by individual development workers.

We were in all seven participants including the programme co-ordinator. All the participants were grass roots level workers. We visited each participating country in turn. The details of organization and projects visited are listed below:

**INDIA:** We visited all the projects of Seva Mandir in Kherwara and Badgaon Blocks, saw

the work of the Dangi youth organization of Mewar area, and made general observations in Bombay and Delhi.

**THAILAND:** In Thailand we saw Rural Reconstruction movements and Government's project in rural development/which was in collaboration with the Israeli Government, and did sight-seeing in Bangkok.

**PHILLIPINES:** Here we visited Punla Foundation (working for community organization and development), Social Action group projects in different parts of the country (Mindanao Island) Church and different farmers and fishermen groups working in several places. We also attended a low-cost audio visual work-shop at Manila for a week.

**MALAYSIA:** We met a farmer who was a pioneer in landless farmers struggles, we visited a Tamil Farmers Co-operative Farm and different village youth organizations.

**INDONESIA:** We visited LP3ES projects (an organization that is working for rural development and continuing education) DEAN-DESA projects (working for rural development), PESANTREN (religious school or traditional education institute) which is based on the philosophies of Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhiji. In addition we saw different village organizations of farmers, fishermen and artisans.

**SRI LANKA:** we saw many of the activities of the Sarvodaya movement, and visited another organization called National Heritage. We made general observations of mid-south Srilanka.

### THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME:

During the training programme we wrote documentation reports, own country reports and visit reports. There were group discussions, evaluation meetings and individual and group impressions of projects. The training developed our confidence, as well as strengthened our mission to work for human development at the grass-root level. We developed a sense of Asian brotherhood and friendship even though we came from different cultural and religious backgrounds-Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Christian. Follow-up work after the training is also planned. I have sent a proposal for a Development Education Project to carried out in my own area.

## Rural Development Project for Weaker Sections

This March the Rural Development Project came into being. The project aims to work with weaker sections of the village community, the small and marginal farmers and poor village artisans. The work involves co-operative development, agricultural extension, banking services, rural engineering work, and the development of rural house-hold industries. It also aims to link the beneficiaries with the opportunities provided for rural development by government and voluntary agencies.

The project so far covers 8 village clusters around Udaipur, all of which are poorly connected to the city and thus categorized as "interior areas". Most of the beneficiaries are tribale people. Already considerable progress has been made in various activities initiated which are listed below:

### Co-operative and Banking Services :

The disputes of some 80 members belonging to 3 co-operative societies with regards to loan recoveries have been settled. Aid in providing loans to fifteen tribal farmers for contour-bunding and for the construction of irrigation channels was given. Assistance was given to the 2 co-operative schemes to secure Rs. 2000 each for irrigation channel construction and well deepening.

### Rural Engineering Work :

Anicut work that Seva Mandir started was completed, and channel surveys of the irrigation

schemes at Dhekli and Hunder covering an area of 5000 feet have been made. Supervision and guidance for contourbunding work at Hunder, as well as the supervision and arrangements for road repair in Dhar have been carried out. On Dhar road drainage and culverts work has been completed. 27 farmers were trained to operate diesel-engines and electric motors.

### Agricultural Extension Work :

In Dhekli and Hunder training was conducted to build a nursery for fruit trees. Farmers were supplied with improved maize seeds and fertilizers. The growing of cereal and vegetable crops was supervised. 20 bighas of land were sprayed with insecticides to control Aphides. 350 wood and fruit tree saplings were distributed to tribal farmers. 200 animals have been vaccinated in Dhar. 48 soils samples have been collected from 3 villages to study the physical-chemical properties of soil.

### Rural Home Industries :

The benefits of having subsidiary jobs using hold industries in 6 villages locally available raw materials have been discussed. Survey programmes and plans are now underway to set up a project for rural house hold industries in 6 villages.

## Projects Progress Notes

### Farmers Functional Literacy Project :

Planning has been completed for 1977-78 and regional meetings have been held with the instructors and organizers. Functional literacy related to co-operative societies and farming has been included in this year's curriculum. During 1976-1977 nearly 1200 adults were made literate of whom 182 were women. At present 60 centres are functioning.

#### NON FORMAL EDUCATION PROJECT :

This is for the age-group 8-14. A new feature in this year's programme is the concept of continuous training of the centres, co-ordinators through monthly meetings. In these the previous month's work is reviewed, demonstrations are given for new techniques for handicrafts, and literacy work, and plans are made for the coming month. The co-ordinators and supervisors are encouraged to draw on the local resources and to develop programmes related to local needs. During the monthly meetings the sharing of each other's experiences has been the chief source of learning and inspiration to the participants. A resource centre containing appropriate materials, e.g. booklets, charts, magazines for the co-ordinators has been set up in the library.

#### THOUSAND HOUSE-HOLD INDUSTRIES PROJECT :

Three new training programmes have been included in this scheme. There is a one year course in toy-making for young men in which there are sixteen trainees. A six month training course in hosiery has been started in which 30 women are enrolled. A training programme for 20 women lasting 6 months for cardboard box making is about to be started.

#### PEER GROUP PROJECT AND AGRICULTURE-ORIENTED MASS LITERACY PROJECT, KHERWARA.

These are being continued for another two years and have been enlarged in scope to include another 23 villages. Animal husbandry has been included as one of the new dimensions for extension work through this programme. Literacy work under the Agriculture Oriented Literacy Programme and Rural Mobile Library services have been integrated with the Peer Group Scheme. Special attention is being given to trainees for group development in the villages. Shri Rajesh Tandon of the National Labor Institute has been associated with Seva Mandir in this aspect of the project. Close co-ordination is also being developed with the Block Development, Drought Prone Area Programme, and Tribal Development authorities in the functioning of these schemes.

#### RURAL MOBILE LIBRARY PROJECT :

At present there are 96 library centres and 10 reading rooms functioning in the three blocks of Bargoaon, Girva and Kherwara which cater to the needs of 150 villages.

#### HARIJAN COMMUNITY PROJECT :

In the Udaipur Harijan bustee there are 2 child-care centres where 90 children whose ages range from 6 months to 3 years are being looked after. Each project is run by a full-time nurse and assistant as well as a part-time doctor. 6 meetings with the parents of the children have been held to discuss both educational and health matters.

At Ambhamata bustee there is a kitchen for 40 children and a childcare centre that caters to the needs of 25 children. A new centre has been completed to further expand our activities here.

4 workers in this project attended the Rajasthan Harijan Sevak Sangh meeting in March 1977 at Jaipur.

## EVENTS

A training programme under the aegis of 'Save the Food grain' organization was organized for 14 Seva Mandir workers from 14th - 16th April, 1977.

A workshop on Youth Leadership training was organized at Seva Mandir by the Ministry of Education and social Welfare on may 13th and 14th. The participants included Shri V. M. Dandekar, Director, Institute of Political Economy, Lonavala, Shri Nitish De, then the Director, National Labour Institute, New Delhi, and Shri Anil Bordia, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education.

A two day meeting of the State level People's Committee was held at Seva Mandir under the chairmanship of Dr. M.S. Mehta on the 3rd and 4th of September. Participants included Shri Siddhraj Dhadha Sarvodaya leader,

6/9/8 P.F. Hstok,  
Shri General Karaman,  
A.E.E.N.S. Narm Badli-16

General Post



Shri Gokubhal Bhatt, Chairman, State Khadi and Village Industries Board, Shri Jawaharlal Jain, President, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Prof. Shri Daya Krishna, Dr. T.K. Unnithan and Shri K.L. Bordia.

Seva Mandir Board of Trustees, Executive Council Advisory and General Assembly met on 4th and 5th May. At the Executive Committee meeting Shri Kishore Saint was elected as General Secretary of Seva Mandir for a period of two years.

**LECTURES AND DISCUSSION GROUP MEETINGS**

On October 12th 1976, Shri P. N. Haksar, then Deputy Chairman of the planning Commission had an informal meeting with the members of Seva Mandir.

On February 15th, Prof. Guy Hunter, Director of Overseas Development Institute, Univ. of Reading, England, gave a talk entitled "The New International Economic Order."

On April 18th, Dr. B.R. Purohit, Head of Political Science Dept., Univ. of Udaipur led a discussion on "Lok Sabha election & Post Elections Political Scene". The discussion group held another session to continue this discussion on May 2nd.

**MAHILA SABHA :**

The Mahila Sabha started this year's activities on July 23rd 1977. They have already had some spicey food cooking demonstrations which were thoroughly enjoyed. On the 21st of August, 25 ladies and 10 children set out for a trip to Jaismand. It was a lovely outing with singing, cool breeze and beautiful scenery. Different groups set out to see the Palace on the Peak and Ruthi Rani ka Mahal. On September 3rd Mrs Manjset, daughter of Mrs Arjun Singh gave a free bag-

making demonstration to 20 ladies. On September 17th she is giving a Candle making demonstration. The Mahila sabha has many activities planned for this year and is looking for new active members.

**DRAMA GROUP :**

Since "Oedipus Rex" the drama group has staged "Lomdian" (Foxes) in both Udaipur and Jodhpur. It won Best Actor, Best Director and Best Play awards in the Jodhpur Interstate Festival. "Abdullah Diwana" was staged this September-- it was a great success. They are planning 3 more plays for this year. From this October a weekly integrated training course in drama will be started.

**INVOLVEMENTS :**

Dr M.S. Mehta attended the preparatory meetings for the National People's Committee and National Adult Education Board. He is the Vice-President of the National People's Committee and a member of the reconstituted National Adult Education Board. He also attended the Constructive Workers Seminar held in Delhi from 17th-19th July.

Shri K.L. Bordia is a member of the State Level People's Committee for Rajasthan and convonor of this activity for Udaipur, Dungarpur and Banswara districts.

Shri Kishore Saint attended the following: World Conference of Friends World College in New York this February, a workshop on "TV for the Poor" at the Space Research centre at Ahmedabad, a seminar on voluntary Efforts in Rural Development' at the Gandhi Peacea Foundation in August and a Seminar on: "Voluntary Agencies Role in Adult Education" also in August.

**SEVA MANDIR** has been awarded the Nadezheda K. Krupskaya prize of honourable mention for 1977 by the United Nations Educational Scientific and cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in recognition of its efforts for the promotion of literacy programmes in the backward and tribal areas of Udaipur district.

This Newsletter is distributed free of charge to members, friends and wellwishers of Seva Mandir. Any contributions towards the cost of its production and to the activities of Seva Mandir will be gratefully received. Please send those to the Secretary Seva Mandir, Udaipur.



"THE STATE, VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND  
PEOPLES INSTITUTIONS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT"

KISHORE SAINT.

(Abstract:- In this paper an attempt has been made to trace the emergence of three institutional components- State, Voluntary organisations and People's institutions- in contemporary Indian polity, in their inter-relationship and functioning in the tasks of rural development. The problematics of this relationship have been highlighted and a perspective suggested for a more coherent and effective functioning of the three)

It is a universal feature of the emergence of the modern nation-states that with the growth of the state-power there has been a progressive diminution of the people's ability to maintain control and responsibility over their own lives and over the affairs of the state. This danger and the problems it created from the standpoint of human liberty were well understood during the 19th century, the era of the rise of the modern state, across a wide spectrum of political opinion which included liberals, socialists, anarchists and utilitarians. Thus, we find John Stuart Mills in the closing lines of his essay 'on Liberty' sounding the warning that 'The worth of the state, in the long run, is the worth of the individuals composing it, and the state which postpones the interests of their mental expansion and elevation, to a little more of administrative skill, a state, which dwarfs its men in order that they may be more docile instruments in its hands even for beneficial purposes, will find that with small men no great things can really be accomplished, and that the perfection of machinery, to which it has sacrificed everything, will in the end avail it nothing, for want of the vital power which, in order that the machine might work more smoothly, it has preferred to banish'.

In the modern Indian historical context state-power was shaped and perfected by the British Imperial presence. The movement for self-rule which began within the Imperial parameters, took on an indigenous and voluntarist character only under the leadership of Gandhi. This voluntarism was the fundamental impulse that brought about the change from the Imperial rule to political independence. It also produced the giants of the independence movement with their self-conceived tasks of social reform and reconstruction paralleling the freedom struggle. In the movement for constructive work, especially in the villages, powerful beginnings were made in the direction of the creation of a new order of society based on self-managed, self-reliant and non-violent communities.

However, as a result of the consolidation of the Imperial power through administrative and educational measures, modern statism had already struck deep roots in the Indian polity. The middle classes, who in the earlier period of Muslim rule had provided administrative and commercial support to the feudal regime, took advantage of the new opportunities through and in education, administration, commercial enterprise and, to some degree, in industry. They came to provide the underpinning of the Imperial superstructure which later they were to inherit as the rulers of independent India. Even in the ranks of the independence movement we find both the statist and

voluntarist strands epitomised and symbolised in the twin leadership of Nehru and Gandhi. For Nehru, despite his closeness and genuine affection for the masses and understanding of their power, the main preoccupation was the state its power and its functioning in the interests of the modernisation of the Indian society. After independence he emerged as the chief architect of building the Indian state especially in its technocratic aspects. On the other hand, Gandhi, while recognizing the necessity of the state, put much greater faith and importance by the voluntarist peoples' power guided by moral principles intrinsic to the Indian cultural milieu. That is why he proposed that the major socio-political force at the time of independence, the Indian National Congress, convert itself into a Lok Sevak Sangh to lead, organise and catalyse peoples' energies at the grass-roots in the villages. That did not happen, and with the removal of Gandhi the voluntarist and people-based development impulse further lost its focus and momentum.

Before examining the post-independence policies and practices in the shaping of the Indian polity in its rural developmental aspects, it may be helpful to clarify the distinction that has been assumed in the concepts of the state and the society. It is often a part of the governing ideology of the ruling elite to obliterate this distinction and to equate the state, the governing apparatus, and its interests with those of the society and nation at large and its needs. Sometimes they go further and assume, like Louis XIV of France, that they are the state and what is good for them is good for the state and the society. These are dangerous delusions which might promote the interests of the elite in the short run but, invariably, prove disastrous as far as the larger and long range interests of the society and nation are concerned.

Basically, it needs to be recognised that the people are the primary entity in a nation. They pre-exist the state and in a democratic context the state is their creation, they are not the creation of the state. The state, with its constitution and the governing apparatus, is a framework and an instrument for a people to manage the internal affairs of their polity and to maintain their relations with other states in a sovereign manner. The state is the vessel and the vehicle while the people are 'the vital power' that designs and propels the ship of the state.

Traditionally, in the Indian context, relations between the state and the people have been governed by the raj-praja relationship and the respective dharma assigned to each. This functioned within the larger, universal norms of the Hindu dharma that are not altogether defunct even today. In fact, it'd not be inaccurate to say that the people in India, especially the rural masses, by and large still see themselves as 'Prajā' rather than as 'citizens'. This traditional self-concept of people as 'Prajā' was reinforced by the concept of 'riaya' in the Muslim period and of the 'subject' during the British period. The common denominator in all these notions is the lack of responsibility in the individual regarding the affairs of the state and his or her dependence on the 'Raja', the overlord or the Emperor, as the 'Mai-or 'Andatta', for protection and welfare. The only circumstance under which an individual is accepted to transgress and transcend 'Prajahood' and its constraints is when he renounces the mundane life and seeks the higher, spiritual dharma. The idea of people as responsible citizens, with ability to choose their own rulers, to hold them accountable for their performance

to have rights that are self-justified and to be able to claim protection against the excesses of the state, is one of the paradoxical outcomes of the Western Imperial rule in India. Whether without the powerful shock of this experience this idea would have evolved in India or not, is a debatable point. But there is little doubt that the colonial experience played its part in shaking the despotic ruling structures and brought into question the tenets by which these maintained control over the people.

The ideals of both the ascetic individual above the law and the democratic citizen with well-defined responsibilities and rights within the law were amongst the guiding principles and impulses of the freedom movement. Through large scale application in mass action they came to be imbibed across a wide spectrum of public opinion. Although held as passionate concerns by only a very small minority after independence they have continued to provide the yard-sticks by which to assess the state's performance vis-a-vis the people.

At the time of independence it can be assumed that it was at least the intention to carry out nation-building with both state-power and people's power. In actual practice the main pre-occupation became the strengthening of the state power and it was to the state that main responsibility was assigned for development and welfare of citizens. Some official attempts were made to provide a role for the exercise of peoples' power through the institutions of panchayati raj supported by community development bureaucracy, khadi and village industries, cooperatives etc. under the patronage and ultimate control of the state. As such, they generally failed to evolve any distinct power of their own and remained pale shadows of state bureaucracies. Outside the state set-up concern with generating, strengthening and organising of peoples' power found expression in four broad categories. The traditional jati and tribal organisations continued to exercise control and give direction to the personal and social aspects of life in each community. The Gandhians as constructive workers and as leaders of khadi, Sarvodaya, Bhoodan and Gramdan movements tried to develop new peoples institutions with a new value basis. The Marxists, socialists and liberals of various hues have had the greater impact on organising the workers' and peasants' power in the form of trade unions and movements for land reform, civil rights and social justice. Non-political voluntary organisations contributed indirectly to the awakening of the people through adult education, health programmes, relief and welfare activities.

All of these except the traditional jati organisations and trade unions came to be overwhelmed by the rising state-power. There was loss of self-confidence even amongst the champions of the causes of peoples' power and institutions. Most of these leaders coming from the ruling classes located themselves comfortably within or close to the state apparatus using their earlier base amongst the people as a source of additional personal and political power. In consequence, it was the people and their institutions that withered while the state grew in power progressively until in the internal Emergency it came to hold and exercise well high totalitarian control over the lives of the people.

The March 1977 electoral verdict signified a massive rejection of this state of affairs, of ubiquitous and arbitrary state control that professed social justice but worked to the

advantage of a few. In the new political circumstance that has come into being since then, there has been some basic redirection of the state policy. A new commitment to rural development, backed by large allocation of plan resources has been generated. A more integrated and comprehensive concept of rural development going beyond production-raising agricultural development by the better-off farmers has been evolved. A rural health programme with preventive and self-management perspective in personal and social health has been launched. It has been recognised that there was a misplaced importance given to formal higher education and that adult education with functional, awareness-raising, organisational and literacy components has a much more critical role to play as a causative factor in rural development. Development planning is being viewed as multi-level exercise with an important place for Block and sub-block level planning. It has also come to be recognised as a creative, recurrent and self-correcting process rather than a rigid, periodic effort at resource assessment and budgeting. A review is under way of the Panchayat Raj set-up with a view to bring about its revitalisation.

In all this there is an implicit acceptance that while the state machinery cannot evade its role and responsibility in rural development, it alone cannot deal with this complex and stupendous task, especially since it involves difficult and delicate exercises in social, institutional and educational innovation. This cannot happen without active peoples' participation in developmental efforts. In eliciting peoples involvement and in organising peoples' power for development the importance of peoples' institutions and voluntary organisations is beginning to be understood at least at the policy-making and planning level. In formulating the new directions and programmes in health, adult education, youth movements, integrated rural development and rural industries there has been broad-based consultation at the national level with voluntary agencies, constructive work leaders and peoples' representatives.

Despite this re-marriage, or perhaps, more accurately, renewed courtship, it cannot be assumed that all it is well between the state functionaries and politicians on the one hand and the voluntary and constructive workers on the other, in fact, the lack of an effort for the proper understanding of the problematic relationship between the two sides poses a danger that, after the brief reconciliation, there will be another disenchantment or, at best, a continued bad relationship.

These difficulties and the mutual suspicions and mistrust that surround these have their roots in our recent historical experience. As indicated earlier, both the statist and the voluntarist-populist approaches for development and nation-building emerged during the freedom movement. The voluntarist approach evolved by the Gandhians with its exclusive reliance on peoples' power often failed to come to terms with the state power and its reality. The state bureaucracy with its colonial traditions looked at the voluntarists, at best, as busybodies and dogooders, well-meaning but without competence and, at worst, as threats to the systems of state control. In general, they were to be ignored but, occasionally, they might be tolerated, humoured, used for trying out new ideas and experiments and patronised to decorate committees.

The situation has been aggravated by the emergence of fake and corrupt voluntarism which has ranged from charitable trusts as fronts for tax evasion to grant-in-aid institutions with total dependence on government and foreign funds to voluntary organisations which were in reality bases of local power and patronage. Many of these have lacked integrity in financial matters and competence in the performance of their chosen tasks. They have been far removed from the masses they are supposed to serve and often in league with the local vested interests. The existence of these organisations has brought voluntarism into disrepute and led the government to devise control and supervisory measures which have made deep inroads into the autonomy and self-management of all voluntary institutions.

Yet, despite this general lowering of standards of integrity, there remain organisations whose probity has been beyond question and who have constantly striven to maintain excellence in performance. In rural development pioneering work of proved quality has been done by such organisations as Anand Niketan, Rangpur, Lok Bharati, Sanosara, Gandhi Vidyapeeth, Veddchi, Gandhi Gram and Gandhi Niketan, Madurai, Ramkrishna Vidyalaya, Coimbatore; Bengal Social Service League, Calcutta, to mention only a few. More recently a new crop of organisations manned by younger and professionally oriented leaders has come into being. Amongst these are Social Work and Research Centre, Tilonia; Kishore Bharati, Bankhed; Vigyan Shiksha Kendra, Atarra; Seva Mandir, Udaipur; Community Health project at Jamkhed; Bharatiya Agro-Industries Centre, Uruli-Kanchan; Agridus, Govindpur; Village Reconstruction Organisation, Guntur; Bhagavatula Charitable Trust, Dimili; Amul, Anand, Asag, Ahmedabad.

The successful performance of these organisations derives from a number of factors. They are invariably local and region specific in their roots and concerns. They have close and reliable contacts with the community they serve. They are manned by a core of dedicated workers with exemplary leadership. The best amongst them have their own resource base for their core administration. All of them have an independent outlook and policy, yet they keep in touch with the new national policies and programmes and adapt their own functioning in the light of these. They are characterised by good professional management and maintain effective liaison with the government machinery at all levels. Above all they are free from party political affiliations.

Wherever and whenever voluntary organisations have succeeded, this has been because they have been able to avoid the limitations that are often built into the state machinery. The impersonality, the distance from the situation and the problem, the ponderous and cumbersome procedures, over-specialisation and lack of coordination between various departments, the perpetual transfers and lack of coherence and continuity in policy and practice, self-serving careerism and elitism and rampant corruption are well-known ailments that afflict the state system of administration for development. The difference and the distance in the concerns of the two inhibits or distorts people-state interaction resulting in non-implementation or miscarriage of plans. Until the time that a genuinely democratic machinery of governance comes into being, there will remain a need for organisations who can perform the mediating role between the state and the people. This is the crux of the catalyst role of voluntary agencies to educate, interpret, coordinate and integrate towards the synergistic functioning of the people state system for development. The state, the governing apparatus,

is a reality that cannot be wished away or done without . With the resources and expertise at its command it has the power to carry out long range, national development planning and action. It has to be pressurised and catalysed to perform these tasks effectively in the interests of the people by voluntary agencies outside the government system.

At the grassroots peoples' organisations-panchayats, cooperatives, women's and youth organisations, credit unions, labour unions-are the real vehicles for the creative exercise of peoples' power for the management of their daily lives. One of the key functions of voluntary organisations is to provide planning, training and management support to these organisations to help them to come into their own, to gain access to resources and to take advantage of the schemes and services made available by the state. They have also to be helped to be enlightened about and made vigilant regarding the administrative and political processes in the state. This educative support functions by voluntary organisations can be supported and promoted by the resources of the state. This provides a basis and framework for a partnership between the state voluntary agencies, in the interests of the people.

Whether the attitude of the state is helpful or not, in the last analysis, voluntarism has to be a self-generative and self-reliant force. As an expression of the evolutionary potential in society, it cannot be allowed to remain dependent on state aid or patronage. Its responsibility is to the people and its validation is in their service and betterment. For their growth as a movement with regional and national significance and impact, voluntary agencies have to develop their own mutual support arrangements. They have also to set up facilities for themselves on regional and national basis for information exchange, training, monitoring and evaluation. At present there is a general lack of these and the national and regional level bodies of voluntary organisations have tended to become self-serving, neglecting their role as supporters of member agencies in the field. Only a new type of leadership and functioning in the supporting apex bodies can change this situation. They have to be weaned away from prestige and power play to become genuine service organisations for their constituents. To ensure that people with support and service motivation rather than patrons are elected to these bodies is the responsibility of the members themselves. What is called for is a change in the ethos of the movement and this has to begin with the internal structures of voluntary bodies. Democratic styles have to be accepted and there has to be workers' and people's participation in decision making and in evolving policy. Only through internal self-renewal consonant with the new realities and challenges can these organisations become effective instruments for serving the people.

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