

# India's Tenth Plan and Kerala's Development Challenges

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Kerala is really at the crossroads of its economic development. The crucial role of public action in the realisation of high human development indicators is now widely acknowledged. Despite the impressive achievements, the people of Kerala are not in a mood to celebrate. And this, we believe, is due to the continuing economic hardships manifested in high levels of unemployment, which is predominantly of the educated, and the low productivity of its industrial sector etc. The state-interventionist approach for economic development has indeed helped to raise the standard of living of the people, but the inefficiency afflicting the state and the public sector has exerted severe constraints on the Government's ability to sustain, not to speak of enhancing, its interventions. The government budget that was supposed to generate a surplus for investment in new development initiatives turned negative since the early eighties.

It is in this context that the Central Government initiated a series of far-reaching economic reforms from the early nineties. Successive governments have followed this process. The results are mixed. There have been remarkable gains in some fronts and serious difficulties in some others. Kerala has been a direct beneficiary

of this process especially in a number of ways including the liberalised exchange rate system. On the downside one must note the low employment generating capacity of these reforms. Given the enhanced level of competition, many public sector enterprises have felt the heat and have resorted to retrenchment of its employees. Both agriculturists and industrialists (especially of small and medium enterprises) are also concerned about the easy entry of foreign goods.

This calls for a fresh approach to planning at the national and state levels. The Indian Planning Commission's 'Approach Paper to the Tenth Plan (2002-07)' recognises the changing role of the Government as well as that of planning. It calls for a new orientation with emphasis on social sectors and infrastructure development while recognising the increasing role of the private sector in the commodity producing sectors. The Planning Commission's Approach Paper has emphasised the need to move from resource planning to reform planning. This entails focus on policies, and institutions.

It is neither desirable nor feasible for a state government to chalk out an independent approach to planning.

**Kerala's strategic choices are limited and are largely dictated by national and international factors. International factors exert a much more crucial influence on the Kerala economy than is realised by its people because Kerala's integration with the outside world is much deeper than for India as a whole.**



However, there is considerable scope for innovation and flexibility in fixing priorities and mobilising resources taking into account the larger socio-economic context and capability of the state.

The new context of national economic reform and economic liberalisation in the rest of the world call for carefully articulated policies in a large number of areas. This is especially so far a state like Kerala where the people have been used to expecting the government 'to do everything'. Kerala's strategic choices are limited and are largely dictated by national and international factors. International factors exert a much more crucial influence on the Kerala economy than is realised by its people because Kerala's integration with the outside world is much deeper than for India as a whole. The historical export orientation of its agriculture and industry has increased over time. A new dimension has been added since the early seventies with the international labour migration to the Gulf countries. The opening up of the Indian economy during the last decade has further enhanced the process of integration. This important feature of Kerala economy has to be appreciated while planning for its development.

The Approach Paper prepared by the Planning Commission provides a national framework for the formulation of the Tenth Plan. The growth objective has been set as doubling of the per capita income within a period of ten years. This means a growth target of seven per cent per capita per annum (or 8.6 per cent of growth in GDP) for the country as a whole. However, a

growth target of seven per cent per annum for Kerala in order to double the per capita income within the next ten years does not seem to be so unrealistic. This is because of the demographic advantage Kerala enjoys. During the nineties, its annual average population growth rate was only 0.9 per cent and this is likely to come down to around 0.5 per cent in the next ten years. This means Kerala requires an annual average growth rate of only around 7.5 per cent to achieve a per capita growth rate of seven per cent. The additional investible resources required for this are available within Kerala in the form of remittances by its people working in Gulf countries. This necessitates initiatives to harness them effectively.

The Government of India, while setting a growth target, is aware of the need to go beyond the growth objective and has therefore set up specific development objectives "as being central to the attainment of the objectives of the Plan". When these are examined, Kerala again has a distinct advantage having focused on social development in earlier periods. The ten specific objectives are: (1) Reduction of poverty ratio to 20 per cent by 2007 and to 10 per cent by 2012, (2) Providing gainful employment to the addition to the labour force over the Tenth Plan period. (3) Universal access to primary education by 2007, (4) Reduction in the decadal rate of population growth between 2001 and 2011 to 16.2 per cent. (5) Increase in literacy rates to 72 per cent by 2007 and to 80 per cent by 2012, (6) Reduction of Infant mortality rate (IMR) to 45 per 1000 live births by 2007 and to 28 by 2012, (7) Reduction of maternal mortality ratio (MMR) to 20 per 10,000 live births by 2007 and to 10 by 2012, (8) Increase in forest and tree cover to 25 per cent by 2007 and 33 per cent by 2012, (9) All villages to have access to potable drinking water by 2012 and (10) Cleaning of all major polluted rivers by 2007 and other notified stretches by 2012.

It is highly significant to note that Kerala has already achieved or exceeded the target for six of them (1 and 3 to 7). Of the remaining, only two are of crucial importance i.e., providing gainful employment and taking care of environmental pollution.

It is in the directly economic sphere that Kerala has to demonstrate its capacity for achievement. Particular attention is therefore called for in enhancing economic activities that will address the problem of unemployment. The question of increasing productivity in both agriculture and industry should get priority in Kerala's Tenth Plan. In the social sector, Kerala has been facing, what may be called, second-generation problems for quite some time. Sustaining the existing capacity and its qualitative improvement is the greatest challenge here. Given Kerala's strengths, opportunities and challenges, we believe that a bold approach is called for in realising the developmental potential of the state. Such an approach should spell out policies in areas critical to the state's development in general and planning for development in particular. The state has to acquire a pro-active role in setting priorities, guiding development, channeling investment and ensuring the realisation of both efficiency and equity in the development process. Some of the areas that we consider important have been identified here and elaborated upon. These are (1) the relative roles of public and private sectors, (2) the importance of inducing technological change, (3) industrial policy, (4) policy on labour and employment, (5) development of agriculture, (6) food security, (7) elimination of absolute poverty, (8) social development and (9) issues in governance.

#### **Role of public and private sectors**

There is need for striking a balance between public and private investment. While the resource mobilisation capacities of central and state government largely dictate the former, there is the awareness that the effectiveness of public investment has been rather disappointing. Moreover, considerable resources invested in economic infrastructure, as in the case of irrigation, have either become waste (sunk costs) or remain incomplete due to time and cost overruns. At the same time one cannot wish away the role of public investment in the development of critical infrastructure such as power, water control, roads, drinking water and sanitation and public health. Private sector participation may

be sought in some of these areas (e.g. roads and bridges, power generation) where it is ready to invest through such mutually beneficial schemes. The overriding consideration in the public-private balance should be the development of quality infrastructure without time and cost overruns.

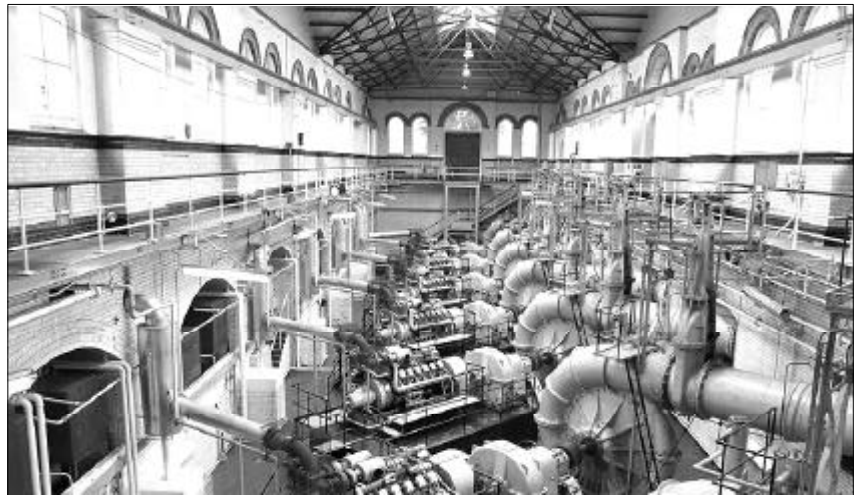
In a state like Kerala where political contestation of new approaches and ideas is quite strong, and often virulent, it is imperative for the government to spell out its approach towards public-private participation in economic activities in clear terms. Considerable anxiety prevails among employees of public sector enterprises because of the threat of closure or retrenchment, in public utilities such as power, water supply and road transport, privatisation per se is unlikely to solve problems. Here the need is for internal restructuring and reform to enhance efficiency. Considerations of equity should be separated from operational efficiency.

The private sector should be attracted for new investment. This is where additional employment can also be generated. The state has the responsibility to set priorities for such new investment areas and work out appropriate policies and guidelines. Joint ventures, as demonstrated in the case of building a new airport in Kochi, are another way to attract private investment with public (government) participation.

Public and private participation need not therefore be viewed as mutually exclusive. There could be areas where public sector has a larger share of investment just as there could be areas where private sector has a larger share. Another realm of public is that of co-operatives. In Kerala, the co-operative sector has an important presence in a number of activities such as banking, marketing, and manufacturing. However, it is the politics of co-operation that has attracted a good deal of the time and energy of the government, political parties and trade unions. Economics of co-operation has in most cases been relegated to the background. If the potential of co-operation has to be harnessed for development, there is need for giving adequate attention to the economic viability of co-operatives.

### **Inducing technological change**

One of the continuing challenges of economic development in Kerala is the need to formulate a policy on technological change. While Kerala is increasingly becoming non-agrarian in its structure, the productivity levels in all sectors of the economy and especially in industry is quite low in relation to its potential. Technological change involves much more than changing the technique of production, usually from labour intensive ones to capital-intensive ones. It also involves the ability to handle the new technology, associated changes needed in organisational structure and management and a host of related issues. While there seems to exist a political consensus in encouraging the adoption of the knowledge-intensive new technologies such as Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Bio-technology (BT), such consensus has been eluding in the case of technological changes that are badly needed in agriculture, construction, and the many labour-intensive industries in Kerala such as coir processing and manufacturing, tile manufacturing and wood processing. The concern here is one of labour displacement since the existing technological base is very low in capital intensity. However, a contradiction is beginning to emerge in Kerala. The younger generation of the labour force i.e. those below the age of 30-35 years, are no longer willing to offer for work involving manual labour and drudgery. This is already evident in crop cultivation, low skilled work in construction, small scale coir processing, etc. If a conscious policy on technological change is not articulated it will result in stagnation of these economic activities, as they would be



caught between labour shortage and the inability to introduce technological changes. Political parties and their trade unions will have to re-examine their old positions and formulate approaches that will be developmental taking into account the aspirations of the younger members in the labour force. Displacement will have to be managed by conscious state policy.

### **Industrial policy**

The new approach of the Government in making Kerala an 'investor-friendly' state is a step in the right direction. The paradox of Kerala in the sphere of industrial development warrants a pro-active approach to dispel the negative image of Kerala among prospective investors. The state is endowed with educated labour force, it has a salubrious climate, an expanding market for many consumer goods and an investible surplus that are locked up to banks as deposits. The contribution of non-resident Keralites in making available such large surpluses in banks has to be noted. However, new investors are shy to come to Kerala and they include entrepreneurs from Kerala as well. The exercise in building an 'investor-friendly' image has to be articulated in the context of a clear-cut industrial policy along with the required state interventions.

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for social security schemes for the destitutes and the disabled.

In order to develop a comprehensive set of social security initiatives that focus on the very poor, it would be necessary to study the existing initiatives. Such a study will have to focus on the existing organisations and their effectiveness also. Besides the demographic situation in terms of decrease in birth rate and increase in population of people above 60 years which will in turn impact the percentage of destitutes in Kerala. The transformation of Kerala society into nuclear families will also compound the problem. Given the trend in the number of destitutes in Kerala, it becomes important to tackle the problem of the most needy viz. the destitutes first. A 'ladder concept' of need based intervention through appropriate social

and outside the State

- Develop a consensus among policy makers, experts and activists on the parameters defining the target group from among destitutes and the disabled
- Development of a data base from the BPL Survey
- Identify the destitutes and the disabled based on the parameters using the NHG network.
- Validate the database and the list by the grama sabha
- Obtain information on the international best practices
- Evolve a draft social security system for the destitutes and disabled and consult stakeholders
- Finalize and adopt a framework
- Preparation of a detailed plan by Social Welfare Department with the active involvement of *Kudumbashree*

**The objective of Social security schemes for destitutes and disabled is to evolve a realistic and sustainable social security system for the destitutes and disabled under the leadership of local governments and which can be implemented through the network of neighbourhood groups.**

security plans focusing on the most needy may be appropriate to Kerala, without of course diluting existing levels of intervention for the other grades of needy people.

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For achieving this objective following methodology has been suggested.

- Study existing social security measures in Kerala and other States in India
- Analyse *Kudumbashree* Pilot Project
- Analyse the experience of NGOs dealing with poorer sections within

- Identify resources for implementation and earmark them
- Build capacity for implementation
- Set up monitoring systems

Successful implementation of this initiative is expected to yield tangible outputs such as: a clear database on the destitutes and the disabled, detailed action plans for providing social security to the destitutes and disabled at the level of each local government, and an evaluation and monitoring system capable of monitoring the implementation of the action plan.

The expected outcomes of this unique social security measure would be an enhancement of the Quality of life of all destitutes and disabled in Kerala and they are taken care of and to bring all destitute families placed above the benchmarked standard of living

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Within this framework it is necessary to identify industries that are suitable for Kerala conditions in order to direct state intervention in a concerted manner to promote them. Going by the experience of the last fifteen years since economic reforms started in India, it would appear that Kerala offers scope for the growth of small and medium enterprises in food processing, textiles and garment, ayurvedic pharmaceuticals and other preparations and electrical goods. In a survey of 100 popular branded goods manufactured in Kerala, (Dhanam, August 1999), it was found that most of them are small and medium enterprises run by young, educated entrepreneurs who have introduced modern technology and marketing strategies.

To the list of industries with high growth potential should be added the knowledge based industries as in Information and Communication Technology, electronics and biotechnology. The principle underlying state policy in the selection of industries for promotion should be based on their low land use, low or no pollution, high value addition, high knowledge or skill intensity and generation of regular employment. In addition, the past policy of spreading the location of industries all around the state should be done way with in favour of creating a critical mass in suitable locations (a cluster approach). Industry-specific policies need to be formulated for a select number of industries for their promotion.

**Policy on labour and employment**

Early developments in the labour front have not been an unmixed blessing for Kerala. A unique feature of this evolution is the high level of organisation of workers in the unorganised or informal sector of the economy resulting in institutional mechanisms for wage setting as well as for giving a modicum of social security. However, such developments did not take place in the context of industrialisation of the economy. On the contrary, private investments were shy to come to Kerala. There is increasing consensus on the view that wage cost per se may not be the deterrent in attracting investments, but the perception of prospective investors on the question of labour relations.

Labour policy in the state has been by and large focused on workers in general - i.e. those who are employed- and unionised workers in particular. The result has been a relative neglect of those who remain unemployed. They have no organised clout and are left to fend for themselves. However, unemployment has emerged as the single most important problem in the Kerala economy. Much of the economic, social and political tensions in the state could be relieved through a progressive reduction in unemployment. This calls for an approach that would have to be different from most others states. This is because unemployment in Kerala is largely that of the educated. It is this dimension that has to be consciously factored into the formulation of other economic policies especially in industrial and service sector development. The imperative for enhancing all round productivity through technological changes should be appreciated from the point of its ability to earn higher wages and create new employment both directly and indirectly.

#### **Policy on agricultural development**

After more than a decade of stagnation, the agricultural sector in Kerala seems to have made a turn around since the late eighties. But the sector has gone through certain fundamental changes. Given the low profitability of rice cultivation, two-thirds of the gross cropped area under rice has shifted to more profitable crop cultivation. Farmers are concentrating in increasing the value per unit of land than per crop, which seems to be a rational strategy given the ecological conditions and market uncertainties with regard to price, etc. However, the agricultural sector is still beset with a number of problems. A long-term developmental perspective is therefore called for.

First and foremost, it should be recognised that labour productivity in agriculture is low compared to its potential. Secondly, much of agriculture is by small and medium farmers. Third, much of public investment in water control (such as canal-based irrigation) has been wasted (non-completion of projects with high time and cost overruns) or serves only a limited purpose (such as stabilisation of yield). Fourth, there is an increasing shortage of labour for unskilled manual work. Fifth,

some important crops like rubber have very little linkage within the Kerala economy. Sixth, the recent decline in prices of some of the agricultural commodities has increased the sense of vulnerability among the farming community. Last, but certainly not the least, is the problem of diseases of the most important crop, coconut.

Given these problems, short-term measures such as subsidies and support prices can have only a limited impact. Moreover, they result in increasing the budgetary burden, which means that the people as a whole have to shoulder the burden to support this sector. A developmental approach to agriculture would call for increasing the productivity, encouraging value-added manufacture using agricultural products, and improved marketing.

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#### **Food security**

Although Kerala produces only one-fifth of its food grain requirement and many other food items are not produced within the state (such as sugar, pulses), it is one of the more food secure states compared to many others in India. This is largely due to the public policy on food security. This is an area where there exists a remarkable degree of political consensus. The most important one in this is the establishment of the public distribution system. The recent policy changes at the central government level have tended to weaken this system. Therefore innovative approaches are needed not only to revive the PDS but also to strengthen it further. The other components of food security are the food and nutritional programmes for

children and pregnant women. Here again Kerala's commendable record in providing free mid-day meal to schoolchildren (up to class VII) has to be strengthened. The ICDS programme is also one, which has worked reasonably well. This programme also needs to be strengthened. The Village Panchayats could play an active role in this by contributing locally mobilised resources, strengthening infrastructure facilities and supervision and monitoring of the functioning of these centres. Strengthening the food security system should be viewed as investment in human capital, which has a direct bearing on the productive efficiency of the labour force when these children reach adulthood.

#### **Form poverty reduction to elimination of absolute poverty**

Kerala has reached a stage, in our opinion, for a shift in its objective of poverty reduction or alleviation to one of elimination of absolute poverty. State policy has been central to the reduction in poverty in Kerala since the mid-seventies. This has been complemented by institutional factors such as the ability to secure high wages in the unorganised sector (compared to other states) and establishment of social security systems with the support of the state. People's initiatives in poverty alleviation also have a strong element of state intervention. For example, the introduction of the Community Development Scheme (now known as the Kudumbasree project) and similar initiatives resulting in the formation of Self Help Groups especially focused on women might have also contribute to the alleviation of poverty in some of the regions.

Poverty, interpreted in the broader sense of human deprivation, has also been on a steady decline in Kerala. This however has a long history and is closely linked to the enhancement of basic human capabilities such as in literacy and schooling and access to health care resulting in a higher average life expectancy.

Given this background, Kerala is poised for achieving the objective of eliminating absolute poverty and human deprivation. Measurable indicators can be formulated for achieving this objective within a time frame. This task however cannot be implemented for achieving this objective

within a time frame. This task however cannot be implemented or achieved in isolation but will be the result of an effective implementation of various related programmes. These are food security, school education, and primary health care including public health; focus on poor women, housing and social security measures. Technological change and modernisation of agricultural and agro-processing activities as well as labour-intensive manufacturing resulting in enhanced labour productivity is likely to yield concrete results in overcoming income-poverty in the state. Therefore the new approach should give equal emphasis of productivity enhancement policies as well as welfare policies. These are complimentary in their contribution to the elimination of poverty.

#### Policy on social development

Social development issues especially in education and health have always attracted

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considerable public attention and debate in Kerala. It is certainly a measure of the importance people attach to these dimensions of individual and social existence. Four main social sectors demanding focused attention are briefly discussed here.

Education: Kerala's achievements in education and health are in terms of basic capabilities. Literacy and school enrolment are high enough to have achieved saturation. But the quality of school education continues to dog the state. Another issue is that of expanding and strengthening vocational education at the high school and higher secondary levels. At the higher education level, the achievements are also quantitative only. The quality of higher education in Kerala leaves much to be

desired. While there is demand for expanding higher education especially in technical and professional subjects, the qualitative aspects do not seem to have received adequate attention. Now that the problem of quantitative expansion is being taken care of, the focus should shift to enhancing the quality of education and the realisation of social objective of ensuring equity.

Health: In the case of health care too, Kerala's achievements are only basic. Health care facilities have registered an enormous increase for the last two decades. The private sector now dominates the system both in rural and urban areas. This calls for a reorientation and restructuring of the public health care system. The need to strengthen primary health care is one. With the Panchayats assuming control over the management of health care at the local level there should be a careful synchronisation of control and management of this sector by the state government as well as the

Panchayats. Areas in which the private sector will not take initiative because of the 'Public goods' nature of the service are that of public health and sanitation. This has to get adequate attention and resources from the state. While programmes like immunisation have received some priority, thanks to national level policies and programmes, the question of management of wastes, vector control and other public health issues have not received adequate attention. This needs to be corrected.

Given Kerala's achievements in basic health indicators, there is need for a re-examination of the objectives in the sector. With the attainment of replacement fertility rate, promotion of family planning need not continue as a priority programme. The emerging areas of concern seem to be (a)

strengthening the state health care system, (b) establishing effective institutional arrangements for public health and sanitation, (c) preventive programmes for chronic diseases, and (d) regulating the private health care sector within the ambit of social objectives and medical ethics.

Social security and welfare: While Kerala has a large number of social welfare programmes and projects for children, women, the aged, the handicapped and the destitute and similar vulnerable groups, the effectiveness of these need to be reviewed. These are in the nature of 'poor relief and hardly adequate for maintaining a minimum standard of living. Payment of pensions, although quite nominal and hardly adequate for biological maintenance, does not serve its purpose when they are not distributed regularly. A review of the functioning of the Welfare Funds is required with a view to enhancing their efficiency as well as support to the members. A number of Welfare Funds spent more on establishment charges than on benefits to the members. Given the advanced stage in Kerala's demographic transition, the share of the aged in the population will continue to increase through the next couple of decades. Caring of the elderly people will therefore emerge as a new challenge in the area of social security and welfare in the coming decades.

Issues in Governance: Good governance is basic to all forms of state intervention for accelerating economic development. In the Kerala context a number of reforms in the functioning of the government are urgently called for. Enhancing the efficiency in government services needs to be set up as an objective in a time bound framework. Immediate reforms linked to economic development are called for in such areas as administration of taxes and other revenues, restructuring of the public utilities and public sector enterprises, and social sector services. Preliminary studies indicate that the State Government is not in a position to collect one-third of its tax revenue. This constitutes a loss of nearly Rs. 3,500 crores at current levels. If a good part of this is collected, much of the fiscal problems of the government can be addressed and some additional resources allocated for developmental activities. ■

# Tenth Five Year Plan : Diversification needed in Agriculture

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The National Agricultural Policy -2000 envisages a growth rate exceeding four per cent per annum in agriculture sector. The Tenth Plan also targets a four per cent growth rate in the agriculture sector. The regionally differentiated strategy based on agro climatic conditions and natural resources will be continued during the Tenth Plan and the agricultural growth projected for Kerala is 3.05 per cent for the plan period to realize a national growth rate of four per cent in agriculture. The agricultural growth of this order is expected to put the other sectors also on a higher trajectory of growth.

The changing economic scenario and the need for agricultural technologies and agro management practices

appropriate to diversifying market demands, export opportunities and environmental concerns is posing new challenges to the technology dissemination systems in Kerala. It is expected that future agricultural growth would largely accrue from improvements in productivity of diversified farming systems with regional specialisation and sustainable management of natural resources, especially land and water. Effective linkages of production system with marketing, agro processing and other value added activities would play an increasingly important role in the diversification of agriculture.

## Farming systems approach

The major strength of the mixed cropping pattern traditionally followed

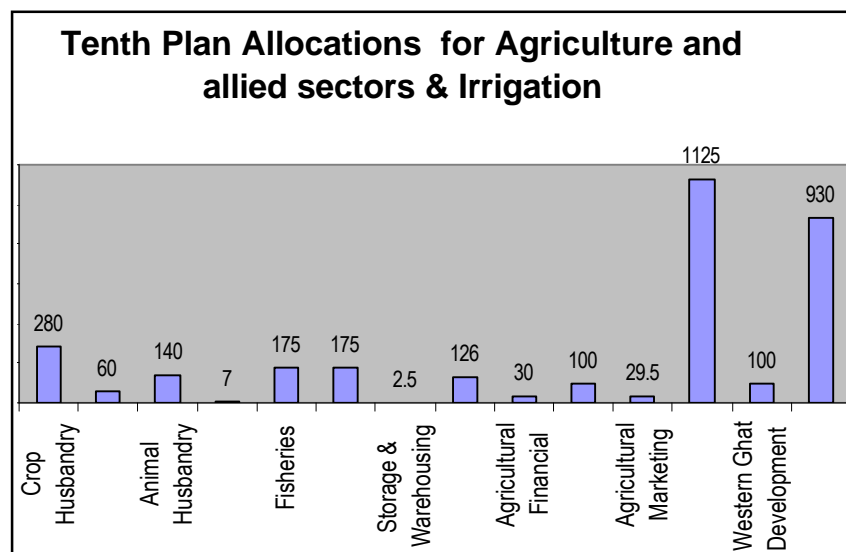


in Kerala was the high degree of resilience for meeting the adverse conditions emerging from the loss in revenue as a result of the fall in prices of agricultural commodities. Fluctuations in the prices of agricultural commodities normally do not adversely affect a cross section of the commodities concurrently and the mixed cropping system thus acts as a cushion for absorbing the shock through cross subsidisation, especially across the economy. However, the extent of coverage under mixed cropping system is quite low in the state. Eventhough this strategy was advocated for the last 15 years, the adoption rate as well as success stories reported are far from the potential. Instead a system of

developmental programmes in isolation for different resources and by different departments may not result in desired changes. Watershed programmes would require significant upscaling during the Tenth plan through state plan schemes as well as local governments schemes. Rainwater harvesting and conservation would also be promoted.

### Organic farming

The demand for organic food is increasing in the world. Specific areas/zones need to be identified to encourage the production of different commodities. However it would require to develop requisite infrastructure for production technologies, post harvest handling and certification.



monoculture got prominence in the crop production sector. Perhaps favourable factor price ratio and institutional support for monoculture might have led to the situation. During Tenth plan more focused attention would be given for promoting farming systems approach.

### Natural resource management

It is estimated that out of 22.4 lakh hectare of cultivated land in the state, around 9 lakh ha. is prone to soil erosion. The cumulative coverage under soil and water conservation at the end of ninth plan was 2.40 lakh ha. There is a need to adopt the integrated approach for the development of natural resources. Unless the integrated concept is adopted,

### Horticulture

Kerala has the natural endowments conducive for a wide variety of horticultural crops. The opportunity for raising a variety of fruits and vegetables by taking advantage of the varying climate and other favourable features remain largely untapped. Horticulture has been identified as a major area for optimum exploitation during tenth plan. Similarly Kerala has a rich diversity of medicinal plants. Production, consumption and international trade in medicinal plants and phyto medicines are growing. Promotion of medicinal plants is identified as a thrust area during tenth plan.

### Marketing, quality control and value addition

In the changing scenario, the nature of marketing support required for safeguarding the interest of the small and marginal farmers is different. In an increasingly globalised market arising out of trade liberalisation, *inter alia* through WTO Agreement. In the context of the fast changes that are taking place towards commercialization and multilateral

### Major thrust areas for agriculture and allied sectors

- Promotion of farming systems approach.
- Watershed approach for natural resource management.
- Strengthening of marketing, processing and value addition.
- Revamping and modernisation of agricultural extension.
- Strengthening quality assurance system.
- Agro ecological zone specific strategies for agricultural growth
- Promotion of private participation.
- Promotion of Horticulture.
- Functional integration of Land Use Board, Soil Survey and Soil Conservation.
- Functional integration of agencies in Horticulture sub sector.
- Promotion of organic farming and appropriate biotechnology.
- Strengthening quality of veterinary services.
- Animal health care.
- Promotion of fodder production.
- Promotion of micro enterprises.
- Promotion of inland fisheries.
- Integrated approach for sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture.
- Participatory forest management.
- Promotion of homestead forestry.
- Promotion of non wood forest products
- Participatory irrigation management
- Development of local level water resources



## Water resources

The strategy adopted for the development of water resources and its management aimed at conservation of natural resources including rainwater through appropriate intervention and ensuring its optimal utilisation. It also contemplated optimum utilisation of the potential already created by introducing appropriate system of participatory management. For the planned development of river basins as a whole, basin wise studies are proposed during Tenth Plan period. The

strategy adopted for Tenth Plan include (i) completion of ongoing projects in a time bound manner, (ii) revamping of first and second generation projects to improve the water use efficiency (iii) water resources planning and management at river basin level by preparing watershed based plans in five river basins viz., Chaliyar, Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba-Achancovil and Neyyar. New strategies proposed are more or less in tune with the National Water Policy 2002 which warrants the revamping of old dams for increasing the water use efficiency, timely and proper maintenance of the irrigation structures, participatory planning etc.

### Reforms proposed during Tenth Plan

- Institutional reform by bringing together departments of fisheries, local governments, specialised agencies like Land Use Board, various research institutions to provide convergence of service.
- Strengthening of local governments in agriculture development to facilitate exploitation of microlevel production possibilities.
- Facilitation of private investment particularly in setting up markets, storage centres to offset declining investment in infrastructure.
- Protection of ground water exploitation by legal measures.
- Establishment of a river basin organisation for water resource management on a river basin level
- Introduction of participatory management
- Introduction of parallel law for co-operatives.

A number of new schemes were initiated during the first two years of the Tenth Plan which includes establishment of agri export zone, virtual university for agriculture trade, disease free zone for cattle, promotion of backyard poultry, microenterprises, participatory forest management, participatory irrigation management, promotion of medicinal plants, documentation of traditional indigenous knowledge in agriculture, establishment of river basin organisation, quality control labs etc.

trading arrangements the protective regime under which the small farm segment was nurtured is gradually disappearing. Many of the agricultural commodities like pepper, cardamom, cashewnut are facing severe competition in the global market. A very efficient market intelligence service capable of monitoring the global trends and preparing the production front for transformation in line with the emerging global trends is visualised during tenth plan. Steps are progressing to establish a virtual university in the state for agricultural trade.

### Agricultural extension

Agricultural extension is the key to augment productivity of crops to a great extent and extension should begin to broad base its programmes by utilising a farming system approach, and suitably address marketing and value addition. Wider use of electronic mass media through optimising the strengths of

public-private sectors have to be adopted.

It is now a fact that further growth in the agriculture could be achieved mainly through increase in productivity which is possible through accelerated development and dissemination of improved technologies. It is proposed to reorient agricultural extension services to utilise the modern communication technologies. Already a project on Karshaka information system (Kissan) has been initiated by the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Information Technology

### Modernisation of agriculture

The new technologies will help to improve the productivity of crops and cropping systems. Modernisation of agriculture through improvement in infrastructure facilities in soil testing laboratories, tissue culture labs, quality control labs, biocontrol labs fabrication

of machineries and establishment of new laboratories are proposed during tenth plan.

Sub sector specific strategies include promotion of rice cultivation in potential areas, promotion of seed villages, production and distribution of quality planting materials, replanting senile and diseased plants, product diversification and value addition, promotion of homestead cultivation, promotion of high value crops, popularization of suitable plantation based farming systems etc are proposed during tenth plan.

During tenth plan Rs.8000 crores is earmarked for local governments which is 1/3 of the plan size. A minimum of 30 per cent has to be allocated for the productive sector. The allocation under state plan and considerable fund flow from local plans will take agriculture a long way in the desired direction during tenth plan. ❖



# New phase of Planning and Industrial Growth



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We are in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Tenth Five Year Plan. Planning during the last two Five Year Plans (VIII and IX Plans) can be considered as somewhat different in character as compared to the ones in the earlier period. With the paradigm shift in India's economic policy away from state-regulation to market-orientation introduced in 1991 on the logic of liberalisation and globalisation, the approach of development planning has also changed in its character. This is particularly true in relation to industry sector. Now it is the market-determined and not the state-mediated (planned) resource allocations that govern the type of industries, production capacities, spatial locations etc. The planning process has no direct role in the industrial growth; its role is indirect in the sense of creating conditions enabling private investment to establish and carry on industrial activities guided by the market forces. As far as industry sector is concerned, it can therefore be said that the planning has taken a new phase since the introduction of pro-market liberalisation in India's basic economic policy. This is true both at the Centre and States.

It follows that the growth trend of

industrial sector in the Indian states since the 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan must have been somewhat different from the earlier Plan periods. The period from 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan can also be called the post liberalisation era. The basic objective of this essay is to compare the industrial growth-rate of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plans with the earlier Plans (7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>) and thereby comment upon the efficiency of the new planning phase on industrial growth in Kerala. In other words, the aim of the analysis is to evaluate the effectiveness of the economic environment conditioned by the pro-market liberalisation policy vis-à-vis command-planning policy to promote industrial growth in the backward state-region like Kerala.

The neoclassical theory, on which is based the ongoing pro-market liberalisation policy, postulates that an initially less-advanced region (e.g. Kerala) should achieve a growth rate higher than the more advanced state-regions (e.g. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu) when the growth takes place under "free" market condition so that the "regional

differentiation" is reduced and the tendency toward "convergence" is strengthened to achieve balanced regional development in the country. How far Kerala's experience with industrial growth in the post-liberalisation era testifies the above proposition? This is the central question of our empirical investigation. The analysis of this question also enables us to comment upon the relative efficiency of economic planning under pro-market liberalisation policy as compared to the earlier planning under state-regulated investment allocation for raising then industrial growth in regions.

The term industry generally refers to a portmanteau of number of activities like mining, manufacturing, electricity generation and construction. However, we confine our analysis to manufacturing activity alone. The analysis is carried out in a comparative framework. The growth rate of Kerala is compared with Karnataka and Tamil Nadu in the pre and post liberalisation periods. And the growth profile of Kerala is portrayed against the background of inter-state variations in industrial development in the country. The growth rates are worked out by using two alternative sources of data namely, net state domestic product by manufacture and net value added by manufacture in the factory (registered sector).

On the basis of the composite index, which captures of industrial development in

Ranking of states on the basis of the composite index of industrial development		
	1993-94 *	1999-2000
Maharashtra	1	1
Tamil Nadu	2	2
Andhra Pradesh	3	4
Gujarat	4	3
Uttar Pradesh	5	5
West Bengal	6	7
Karnataka	7	6
Madhya Pradesh	8	11
Rajasthan	9	8
Bihar	10	15
Kerala	11	10
Haryana	12	9
Delhi	13	12
Orissa	14	13
Assam	15	14

\* This is the year from which data on NSDP with a new base price series are available

terms of seven indicators with weights assigned using principal component analysis (PCA), it is seen that there has not been a major change in the ranks of states since the launching of pro-market liberalisation (new phase of Planning). This is shown in the following table:

The states, which already have high levels of industrialisation, continue to occupy the top ranks and the tendency of other states to catch up seems to be absent. In other words, the dismantling of restrictions on

India average. To generalise the growth performance of Kerala was nearly better during the post liberalisation era as compared to the pre liberalisation (command-planning) period. However, the empirical evidences tended to indicate relatively not high but poor growth performances of Kerala. This is shown in the following table:

The analysis of manufacture to NSDP new series with 1993-94 basis shows that the simple growth rate of manufacturing for the post liberalisation era recorded by Kerala is

component in the conditions of Kerala. May be there are some intrinsic shortcomings to the globalisation policy for promoting manufacturing industry in Kerala.

The comparison of the trends in the manufacturing growth in Kerala with the neighbouring states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu brings out another point. There are inter-state variations in the growth promoting effect of the pro-market economic liberalisation policy environment but not of the pattern envisaged in the neoclassical conceptualisation of balanced regional development process. Kerala did improve its growth performance during the post-reform period taken as a whole, but not distinctly at a higher rate as compared to the neighbouring states and hence could not improve its relative position in the industrial map of the country.

The growth trend in manufacturing also includes registered and unregistered sectors. The registered sector accounts for the larger share of output by manufacture in Kerala. However, the share of unregistered sector is substantial and relatively higher than at all India. But there may be a temptation to infer that the relatively slow growth rate of NSDP by manufacture in Kerala is due to the relatively poor growth performance of unregistered sector during the post reforms period.

The macro growth trends in the value-

Growth rate (exponential) of value added in the factory manufacturing: Kerala as compared to neighbouring states and all-India (%)				
Period	Kerala	Karnataka	Tamilnadu	All India
1981-82 to 1990-91	5.77	7.71	7.94	6.51
1991-92 to 1996 -97	5.39	7.24	7.08	9.06
Growth rate worked out on Annual Survey of Industries data at constant 1980-81 prices				

investments and allowing the market forces to find destinations for investments under the pro-market liberalisation policy environment has not produced major changes in industrial activity to bolster industrial growth in the less industrialised states. With regard to Kerala, the rank shows a slight improvement of moving on to the tenth position from eleventh. It can thus be concluded that the states including Kerala maintain their earlier status quo with regard to industrial development during the post-liberalisation era as well.

From the analysis of growth trends in NSDP by manufacturing it is seen that the growth movement was on a stagnant path till mid 80s both in Kerala and all India. In all India there was acceleration in the movement thereafter. In Kerala the acceleration took place only towards the close of 80s. The secular (long term) growth trend appeared less favourable to Kerala as compare to all India and the gap in the growth rates and the level of NSDP by manufacture between Kerala and all India widened overtime. Kerala was under the grip of stagnation in manufacturing in the 70s as was in the case at all India.

The growth performance improved in the 80s but it was lower than all India record. Kerala showed further improvement in the acceleration of its performance during the 90s by recording annual growth rate equalled to all India average. However, the secular growth trend was found to be lower than all

lower than Karnataka though marginally better than Tamil Nadu. Thus the analysis of NSDP new series also did not give unequivocal evidence of the relatively better performance of Kerala. Moreover, the new base shows that average growth rate of NSDP has slow down since the later parts of 90s in Kerala.

The findings emerging from the analysis of NSDP both old series (1980-81) prices

Growth rate (exponential) of NSDP by manufacture in Kerala as compared to neighbouring states and all-India (%)				
Period	Kerala	Karnataka	Tamilnadu	All India
1981-82 to 1990-91	4.25	15.10	3.78	6.52
1991-92 to 1996 -97	4.91	12.31	5.34	7.15
1997-98 to 2000-01*	3.9	8.8	0.5	3.51
Growth rate worked out on NSDP at constant 1980-81 prices * Average of year-to-year percentage changes; ** at 1993-94 prices				

and new series (1993-94) indicate improvement in the growth performance of manufacturing industry in Kerala in the nineties representing the post-liberalisation era as compared to the earlier decade representing the state-led planning period. However, the growth rate began to slow down towards the end of the first phase of liberalisation policy. May be that there are weakness in the state government's implementation as well as competence in meeting the challenges of economic liberalisation policy, especially its open-economy dimension, rather globalisation

added (income) in the factory sector of Kerala shows that the manufacturing in the registered sector has been growing relatively slow in Kerala as compared to Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and all-India during the post liberalisation era. This is shown in the following table:

There is no suggestion that Kerala is not having the positive growth effect of ongoing liberalisation policies in manufacturing. The growth rate in value added in nineties is lower than the eighties in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu also. It is plausible to argue that the

relatively poor growth record of Kerala in manufacturing income *inter alia* is due to relatively small increase in capital investment. It is also due to the differences of the degree of responsiveness, commitment and capability of implementation of the respective state governments. Whatever may be the reason, the relatively low growth rate of factory manufacturing in Kerala has made the state to remain industrially backward as compared to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

The relative growth of micro level industries in the factory sector shows that a few resource based traditional industries have recorded better growth performances in the nineties in Kerala. The growth of capital good industries and modern manufacturers has been relatively low. From the comparison of three states in the matter of micro level industries and their growth rate it is seen that the top performing industries in Kerala are different from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Industries recording high growth rate in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have recorded lower growth rate in Kerala. Thus a striking feature emerges from the comparison is that the relatively higher growth buoyancy in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu is on account of their diversified industrial structure.

It is a fact that Kerala could not attract adequate capital investment in manufacturing in general and the registered segment in particular and consequently could not achieve a growth rate equal to or higher than the neighbouring states and all-India during the post liberalisation era. The shyness of capital to move into Kerala's manufacturing sector could be due to some unfriendly factors specific to the state region. The region specific factors could be acting as constrains to the growth of manufacturing industry in Kerala. On the basis of the foregoing analysis we would favour drawing the reasonable conclusions that (1) industrial growth rate has been relatively high in the new phase of Planning under pro-market liberalisation policy environment as compared to the earlier state-mediated planning of investment in Kerala but (2) its growth rate has been relatively poor as compared to the more advanced neighbouring state of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

The first conclusion commends well on the new Planning phase for being influential in raising industrial growth in a backward state like Kerala during the last decade within the environment of ongoing economic liberalisations. The second conclusion

# Tenth Plan

## Targets and growth rate

The National Development Council has approved the Tenth Five Year Plan. Unlike the previous Plans there are clear monitorable targets both at the national level and disaggregated at the State level. Targets for Kerala are given below:

- To ensure economic growth of 6.5% per annum in the Tenth Plan (2002-07) with 3.05% in Agriculture & Allied Sectors.
- To reduce poverty from 12.7% in 1999-2000 to 6% by 2007 and near elimination by 2012.
- To ensure 100% enrolment of all children by the end of 2003 and their retention till they complete 14 years of age.
- To increase literacy rate from 90.92% in 2001 to 98% in 2007 and elimination of rural-urban and female-male disparity.
- To reduce Infant Mortality Rate from 14 per 1000 live births in 1999 to 8 per 1000 by 2007.
- To increase the forest tree cover from the present 26.6% to 33% by 2012 and also to ensure density of

The growth rates expected from Kerala for the Tenth Plan	
Agriculture Sector	3.05%
Industrial Sector	5.89%
Service Sector	8.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

comments poorly on the adequacy of growth buoyancy to initiate a process towards convergence of development as between the backward and rich industrial states in India under pro-market liberalization policy environment. To say the least, our analysis raises doubt about the validity of the very neoclassical postulate of balanced

tree cover by eco-stabilisation, eco-restoration and eco-protection.

- To provide drinking water to all partially covered habitations (71% to 100%), thus making them fully covered habitations.
- To reduce gender gaps in health, education and wage rates by 50% by 2007.
- To provide all-weather road connectivity to all habitations (the connectivity is now 83%) with population of 500 and above by 2007.
- To bring down the decadal population growth rate from 9.4% to 5% by 2011 and to achieve population stabilisation.
- To bring down the unemployment rate from the level of 20.4% (current daily status) in 1999-2000 to 10% by 2007 and near zero by 2012.

The Planning Commission has broadly approved a Plan size of Rs.24,000 crores for the Tenth Five Year Plan. About 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of this Plan size is to be devolved to Local Governments. 10% of the Plan is set apart for Special Component Plan and 2.25% for Tribal Sub Plan.

development of regions in a country under market-determined resource allocation. The analysis stresses the relevance of an active role of the state in reducing regional differentiation in industrial development under the new Planning phase, rather under the economic reform policy based on pro-market liberalisation and globalisation. ■

# Local Governments and Decentralised Development

**S.M. Vijayanand**  
Secretary (Planning)

Kerala embarked on a trajectory of rapid decentralisation since October 1995. The State has moved ahead at good pace by transferring not only functions and responsibilities but also the authority to carry them out along with resources, both human and financial. Kerala has carried out certain pioneering reforms worthy of attention and study.

To operationalise decentralisation, Kerala chose the path of participatory local level planning as the entry point. This succeeded to a considerable extent in harnessing public action in favour of decentralisation. In order to push the system and force the process a campaign approach was followed for decentralised planning - known as the 'People's Planning Campaign'. This campaign created a powerful demand factor for decentralisation to be guided along the right path. To a large degree the campaign succeeded in setting the agenda for decentralisation. Now the institutionalization phase has begun under the Kerala Development Programme. Extent of decentralization and its quality can be gauged from the following:

- In the health sector all institutions other than medical colleges and big regional speciality hospitals have been placed under the control of the local governments.
- In the education sector, in rural areas the high schools have been transferred to the District Panchayats and the primary and upper primary schools to Village Panchayats; in urban areas, all schools have been transferred to the urban local bodies.

To operationalise decentralisation, Kerala chose the path of participatory local level planning as the entry point. This succeeded to a considerable extent in harnessing public action in favour of decentralisation.

- The entire responsibility of poverty alleviation has gone to the local governments; all the centrally sponsored anti-poverty programmes are planned and implemented through them.
- As regards social welfare, barring statutory functions relating to juvenile justice, the entire functions have gone to local governments. The ICDS is fully implemented by Village Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies. Care of the disabled, to a substantial degree has become a local government responsibility.
- In the agriculture and allied sectors, the following have become the *de facto* and *de jure* local government functions.
  - ^ Agricultural extension including farmer oriented support for increasing production and productivity.

- ^ Watershed management and minor irrigation.
- ^ Dairy development.
- ^ Animal husbandry including veterinary care.
- ^ Inland fisheries.
- Barring highways and major district roads, connectivity has become local government responsibility.
- The whole of sanitation and almost the entire rural water supply have moved over to local governments.
- Promotion of tiny, cottage and small industries is mostly with the local governments.
- All the welfare pensions are administered by the local governments.

### Good governance features.

Government has to play a conscious role to improve governance in local governments. Experience shows that it is relatively easier to introduce good governance features at the level of the local government. To recapitulate, some of the good governance features in the Kerala experiment are –

- Transparency and right to information
- Public IEC campaigns
- Insistence on due process
- Participation in all stages
- De-bureaucratization especially in technical matters
- Accreditation of NGOs to act as support agencies for local

- governments
- Giving opportunities to young professionals to serve as apprentices in local governments eg: Civil and agricultural engineers, IT professionals etc.
- Recognition of best practices by selecting Beacon Panchayats
- Strengthening in dependent umpiring institutions
- Introducing code of conduct for elected representatives and officials
- Making citizen's charter compulsory
- Revising office management systems to make them people friendly
- Simplification and modernization using information technology.

### Role of government

Genuine decentralisation demands that there should be a gradual withdrawal of direct executive control over local governments. This has to be balanced with the need for accountability. The best option is to create independent regulatory institutions or strengthen existing ones. Kerala has gone considerable ahead in this process.

As decentralisation progresses, the attitude of the government towards the local government has to go through appropriate phases which has administrative implications. In the initial days patience and tolerance are highly essential as several mistakes could be made – some of them bonafide and a good number of them malafide. Government should have all eyes and ears to grasp the complexities of the process. Quickly this should be followed by a corrective phase where the focus is on helping local governments to set their house in order. This would mark the period of stabilization and institutionalization. Thereafter the regulatory institutions should take over and have both preventive as well as punitive systems in place to avoid mal-administration and malfeasance.

### A quick assessment of performance

Decentralization has had several positive spin-offs. They are summarized below:

1. The formula based devolution of funds has ensured that funds have flowed to every nook and corner of the State including the hitherto outlying and backward areas, facilitating public investment.
2. The cornerstone of Kerala's decentralization has been people's participation. The processes have been designed to facilitate intervention by the interested citizen at all stages of the development process right from generation of developmental ideas
  - i) As is evident from the performance, local governments have done well in provision of minimum needs infrastructure both to households as well as to communities. This is particularly true of housing, sanitation, water supply, infrastructure of hospitals and schools and connectivity.
  - ii) The introduction of the mandatory Women Component Plan has been a path breaker. Local governments have gradually matured in their

Milestones in Kerala's decentralization initiatives	
October 1995	Transfer of powers and functions to local governments; along with institutions, offices and functionaries.
February 1996	Introduction of a Special Budget Document for local government allocations.
August 1996	Launching of People's Plan Campaign for decentralized planning and announcement of earmarking of about 35 percent plan resources to local governments.
March 1999	Restructuring of the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act.
March 2000	Amendments to 35 Acts having relevance to local government functioning.
July 2000	Transfer of district level offices and staff to District Panchayat.
January 2002	Decision to redeploy surplus staff especially engineers to local governments.
January 2002	Decision to fix share of untied plan grants as one-third of the total plan size of the State.

- through project planning, project implementation, up to monitoring.
3. Decentralization has resulted in better targeting especially in the case of individual benefits by insisting on a due process in the selection of beneficiaries. The quality of identification has certainly improved.
  4. Decentralization has opened up opportunities for wide ranging reforms. Already right to information, prescription of dire process in giving of benefits, outsourcing of technical services, community management of assets and simplification of procedures have taken place. More reforms in the form of independent regulatory institutions, improved management systems both financial and administrative, enhanced accountability mechanisms etc., are in the offing.
  5. In development matters local governments have significant achievements. The important ones are:

- iii) Local government plans have shown a strong anti-poverty bias. More funds have flown to families below poverty line through local governments than would normally have been.
- iv) Local governments have evolved good models in water supply, improvement of quality of education, improving agriculture productivity, etc. They have generally shown a preference for affordable technologies and appropriate solutions. There have been some positive steps in areas like integrated

natural resource management

### **Institutionalisation efforts**

The Kerala Development Programme has been launched in 2002 to take decentralization to a new trajectory of growth and maturation. It seeks to analyze the experience of People's Plan Campaign and address issues thrown up by experience. The objectives of the programme are:

- To make Government's policy commitments to decentralization unambiguously clear.
- To take decentralization from the campaign mode to a phase of institutionalization to make it sustainable.
- To focus attention on the needs, opportunities and concerns arising out of experiences so far and devise clear strategies and action plans to address them.

**The Kerala Development Programme has been launched in 2002 to take decentralization to a new trajectory of growth and maturation.**

- Motivate and guide local governments to concentrate on local development and improve delivery of services avoiding waste and inefficiencies.
- To bring about an organic relationship between transferred departments and local governments and bring in role clarity.
- To launch a comprehensive capacity building programme going beyond plan formulation and implementation and stressing management, governance and long term development issues.

As part of this programme, steps have been initiated.

- To conduct model Gramasabhas, develop an operationable social audit methodology, publish model Citizen's Charters, update accounts, introduce IT enabled services and developing a transparent and norm based priority list of people below poverty line.
- To involve departments to motivate their staff and facilitate them to

develop a proper relationship with local governments.

- To link up with academic and research institutions.

### **Towards a new planning approach**

For the Tenth Plan the core objectives of planning at the local level have been identified as the following.

- 1) Promote local economic development by increasing production and productivity of agriculture and allied sectors and the traditional and small-scale industries with focus on employment generation and poverty reduction.
- 2) Move towards greater social justice and reduction in gender disparities.
- 3) Focus on National Resource Management and integrated area development.

- 4) Upgrade the quality of basic services provided by the local governments with special emphasis on health, education, water supply, sanitation including solid waste management and care of the disabled.
- 5) Improve governance particularly with reference to responsibility, transparency, people's participation and management.
- 6) Achieve improved efficiency of resource use.

In the process of realizing these objectives the local governments are expected to play a proactive role by inducing synergies between various stakeholders in local development and enabling solutions to emerge through self-help and joint community action with public funds being spent only for the most critical purposes. Thus the Plan has to be much larger than the investment of public resources and much wider than the activity of local governments alone.

The general priorities of the Tenth Plan are:



- 1) Local economic development with emphasis on productive sectors to generate more jobs for poverty reduction.
- 2) Rehabilitation of existing assets to ensure optimum utilisation.
- 3) Upgradation of traditional industries and promotion of micro enterprises.
- 4) Development of agriculture on a watershed basis and shift to participatory irrigation management.
- 5) Rational medium term spatial planning for infrastructure development.

Certain innovations have been introduced in the planning methodology



to make it more participatory and quality oriented. They include :

1. Preparation of a Vision document by a Working Group consisting of Experts drawn from among elected members, practitioners, officials, academicians and activists. The functions of this Working Group are:

- Analysis of the development sector(s)/area(s) assigned to it.
- Evaluation of the performance during the last five years.
- Identification of existing problems, gaps, needs, possibilities.
- Generation of a shared vision on the development of the sector(s)/area(s).

- Suggesting an action plan to realise the vision with priorities and reasons for the priority.
  - Preparation of draft projects to implement the action plan.
  - Identification of spillover projects.
  - Updation of development reports.
  - Monitoring of projects every quarter.
  - Any other task assigned by the DPC or local government.
2. A stock taking of the Ninth Plan with special references to –
- Identification of spillover and incomplete works.
  - Listing out of incomplete deposit works.
  - Verification of assets created or distributed under the Ninth Plan.
  - Quick evaluation of the Ninth Plan with reference to physical and financial targets and achievements, resources mobilised.
- 1) The Development Report prepared five years ago has been updated with two parts – the 1<sup>st</sup> part being an evaluation of the Ninth Plan and 2<sup>nd</sup> part giving sectorwise status, development issues and suggestions.
- 2) Linkage with banks has been attempted in a planned manner.
- 3) Anti-poverty Sub Plans are being prepared under decentralised plan and each anti-poverty sub plan should have an obligatory component for destitutes.
- 4) In the case of water supply programmes a 10% capital contribution from beneficiaries would be insisted on and the Operations and Maintenance would be fully by the beneficiary groups.
- 5) In the case of irrigation 20% of the capital contribution from the benefited farmers is required who would later take over their full maintenance responsibilities.
- 6) After Grama Sabha / Ward Sabha meetings special consultations with stakeholders, like farmers, traders, industrialists, labour poor and academics etc. are to be held.

7) 5% of the resources is earmarked for the children, aged and the disabled.

8) All plans would have a Reform Plan consisting of elements such as Updating of records, Completion of Asset Register, Preparation of Road Register, Preparation of benefit register including supply of benefit cards to all beneficiaries, Increasing local resource mobilisation through taxes, user charges and contributions, Innovative means of financing through cess, BOT, Community contribution and borrowings, Performance standards for institutions and officers, Steps to reduce waste and leakages. Measures to control possible corruption, Measures to improve performance of obligatory functions in the case of Village Panchayats and Municipal bodies, Efforts at promoting development through local action without significant outflow of funds from the local government. This could include tapping of funds from local philanthropists, NRIs, the Corporate sector and NGOs,

1. In order to eliminate benami works all works costing Rs.25,000 or more are to be implemented through competitive tenders.

2. A concurrent third-party monitoring system is to be put in place.

3. A draft social audit policy has been published which is to be discussed with stakeholders and finalised. s

The analysis of the first two years' plans would be completed by March 2003. Thereafter consultations with local governments and other stakeholders would be held and a consensus developed on improving the quality of planning to make the investments most optimum. Then with proper modifications in the guidelines the projects for the remaining three years of the Five Year Plan would be prepared.

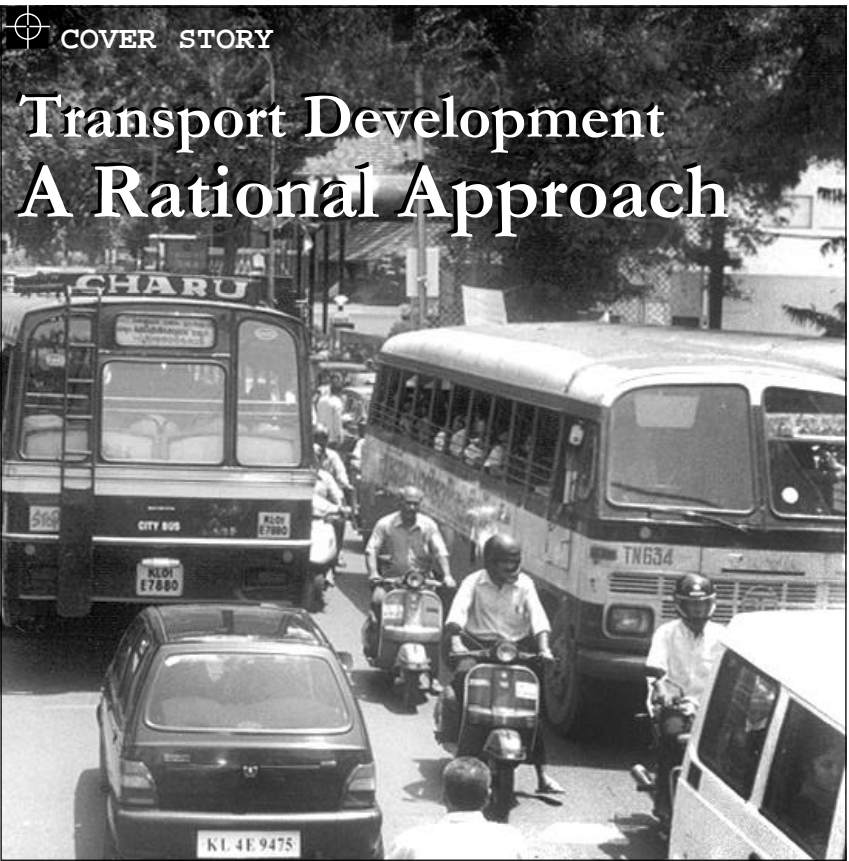
A series of initiatives are being taken up to address the issues identified. The initiatives to be implemented on a project mode are expected to contribute significantly to the institutionalization process. ❏



**M.N. Prasad**

Chairman (Rtd), Railway Board

Transport is a basic necessity for the people. In most cases, it is best served by roads and in some areas by waterways. Once the basic needs of transport are met, any further development should be based on the dual considerations of the traffic to be carried and the relative economics of the scheme. Rail transport generally entails complementary transport by road at both ends. Hence it is better justified where the traffic (whether passenger or goods) is to be moved over long distances, or where the volume of traffic is too large to be moved by alternative modes. Railway construction in hilly terrain is far more expensive and hence difficult to justify, except for compelling reasons like strategic requirements. Where there is a railway line already, the question whether it should be doubled, or electrified, or converted from MG to BG, ought to be decided by the Railways, mainly based on economic or operational justification. Since the Railways are under the Central Government, it has been customary for the political leadership of the States to keep pressing for various railway projects, or for introduction of new trains, etc, regardless of the economic implications. Whatever demands are not conceded are held out as evidence of the Centre's neglect of the State. Indian Railways do not receive any subsidy for their social burdens, like grant of concessional season tickets, or concessional tariffs for essential commodities. On the other hand, they have to pay to the General Revenues a yearly dividend of 6.5% on the capital at charge. None of its losses is written off. As such, any loss incurred on account of uneconomic projects, or trains, will ultimately have to be recovered from the people themselves, in the form of hikes in fares and freight rates. In the matter of energy consumption, the comparative figures for the different modes are as follows: - Pipelines: 0.25; Waterways: 0.625; Rail: 1.0; Road: 4.3 and Air: 23.4. Taking into account the pay-load: tare ratio of the



vehicles, the relative advantage of rail over road works out to approx. 4.5 for goods traffic and 2.0 for passenger traffic. Movement of goods by rail has the added advantage of economizing in consumption of petroleum, since 60% of rail-borne freight is presently being moved by electric traction. It also helps minimise environmental pollution. However, the high initial cost of electrification, coupled with the rising trend in electricity tariffs, has made it increasingly difficult for the Railways to justify new R E projects based on financial returns.

#### **Kerala's transport scenario**

Being a narrow strip of land, extending N-S for about 550 km, and having an average width of only 70 km, with its major transport corridors, both road and rail, running for the entire length, and the population and the economic activities well spread over, Kerala is somewhat analogous to Greater Bombay, both in geographical shape and in the transport needs of the people. As such, it would be

advantageous to follow the Bombay model for development of the transport infrastructure of the State. In view of the above, the broad strategy should be to strengthen the N-S corridors, both highways and railway, to form the main arteries for movement, and to develop the rest of the existing infrastructure to serve as feeders, connecting the hinterland to the main corridor. Railway doubling projects already completed or in progress, are quite in line with this concept. But the development of roads is lagging far behind, whether it be the improvement of NH-s to 2 lane / 4 lane standards, or construction of NH bypasses round the cities and towns. These need to be speeded up.

On the Railways front, the following ought to be the priorities for infrastructure development.

a) Completion of the sanctioned Doubling of Shoranur- Mangalore section. The portion Shoranur- Calicut has been lagging behind and needs to be speeded up.

b) Doubling of the existing single line from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam, via Kottayam. This section have been over saturated for many years. Only two short stretches, Ernakulam Mulanthuruthi (18 km) and Mavelikara-Kayamkulam Jn (8 km) have been sanctioned for doubling so far. The balance 89 km also needs to be sanctioned and got completed on priority, say, by 2006, latest. (Doubling of the coastal line between Ernakulam and Kayamkulam via Alleppey, as demanded by the political leaders of that area, does not qualify for equal priority, since the traffic density on this route is less and there is still scope for increasing line capacity by providing crossing facilities at certain stations.)

c) Construction of a second passenger terminal for Thiruvananthapuram at Kochuveli. This is an approved work and needs to be taken up and completed without any further delay, considering the capacity limitations at Trivandrum Centra1- and

d) Construction of the coastal link

Programme 2003-2004.

The hinterland of Kerala, which is presently not served by railway lines, comprises (Hilly terrain where the laying of new lines would be highly uneconomical. Since the State already has a good network of roads, the real needs of the people in regard to rail-travel would mainly relate to long-distance travel. This can well be met by providing computerised railway reservation offices in all important towns not connected by rail. Once this facility is made available, it will be a simple matter for the people to book their tickets in advance and travel by road to the nearest railhead station to catch the trains. (It is understood there is already a proposal to set up such a facility in the four out-lying District headquarters, to begin with.) The New Line projects, Angamali-Shabarimala and Kottayam-Erumeli, sanctioned at a total cost of Rs.750 cr (which may be around 1000 cr by now) would not be of much use to people at large. On the other hand, the adverse fall-outs would be quite

were deemed imperative to provide a new line to help Sabarimala pilgrims, the proper course would be to have the line from Kottayam to Erumeli only and leave the rest of the distance to be covered by road. This will facilitate dispersal of the pilgrim traffic and also avoid destruction of forests and wild life.

In the case of highways, completion of by-passes around towns, provision of bus-bays at all regular stops and strengthening of shoulders ought to be the priority items. Inadequacy of public transport has led to proliferation of smaller vehicles on the comparatively narrow roads, slowing down movements and posing safety hazards. A quantitative and qualitative improvement to public transport is called for. In towns and cities centralised asphalt mixing depots should be established to avoid roadside stacking of materials for roadwork. In addition, off-street parking lots must be developed to avoid parking on busy roads. The strategy for easing the present situation and meeting the growing transport needs of the State should aim at optimal utilisation of all the available modes of public transport, road, rail and inland waterways. Development of National Waterway No.3 between Kollam and Kottapuram needs to be speeded up and the rest of the water ways also taken up for improvement, at the Central or the State level, so that pressure roads can be relieved to some extent. Demands for new railway lines, airports, ports etc. should not be allowed to become emotive issues, whether for the State, or for any particular region of the State.

Unless and until effective steps are taken, based on a time-bound programme, to improve the existing transport network of the State and ameliorate the hardships and hazards to which the people are presently exposed, it would be unwise to embark on fancied projects and even more so to utilise public funds for the purpose, Since it would be of no direct benefit to the common man. All available resources of the State, including taxes and any additional levies to be collected from the people should, instead, be utilised for improving the existing system and ensuring road safety. ■



between Guruvayur and Tanur (on the Shoranur-Calicut section) to form an alternative route for thorough traffic, like the one via Alleppey. (In fact, the existing branch line from Thrissur to Guruvayur was only the first stage of such a coastal line project and, as such, the completion of this alternative route was what had originally been proposed to be done, while strengthening the Shoranur-Mangalore section. But this proposal was pended and, instead, doubling of the entire section Shoranur- Calicut was sanctioned.) This coastal link has since been included in the Railways' Works

considerable, such as: (a) large-scale acquisition of land; (b) environmental degradation caused by construction of high embankments and deep cuttings and the attendant problems like lowering of water-table, loss of forest cover, hazards to wild life, etc; (c) numerous road crossings, causing impediments to traffic and (d) aggravation of the problem of overcrowding around the temple at Sabarimala during the pilgrimage season. It would, therefore, be prudent to reconsider whether the above projects should at all be proceeded with. If, for any reason, it

# Gender and Decentralisation

## Opportunities and Challenges



**Sarada Muralidharan**

The constitutional amendments on local governance through Panchayati Raj sought to create for the first time a space for women in the political arena independent of the usual processes that moulded people's representatives. Despite the constitutional provisions for equality, the cultural and socio economic traditions of patriarchal systems have been so internalized by Indian society as to make equality and power qualities that women do not aspire to as a matter of right. The issues of formalized subservience and exploitation are difficult to tackle rationally as they have insidiously permeated almost every household and social space, and every individual therefore has a vested interest in the empowerment debate.

It was therefore with a great degree of ambivalence that women were inducted into political parties to contest and win elections against seats reserved exclusively for women. This was particularly difficult as women had not generally been exposed to the worlds outside their homesteads, and were by and large unversed in the art of politics. However the policy of 33% reservation of seats and president positions provided women with the first real opportunity to make an impact as a separate entity that needed to be considered in the scheme of things. Women representatives were an easy vessel

through which the amorphous vote bank of women could be tapped and won over. So it turned out to be expedient to equip them with the skills of public speaking, and to a certain extent, of administration. In many cases these were skills that were developed along the way and mostly self taught, which in itself was a process of empowerment unintended by the party systems that projected them, as these skills and the interface with women and other community aid for the "Women's Component Plan". There had been no guidelines as to what constituted such a plan, although the resource persons and panchayat presidents had been given, as part of their induction training, orientation on examining gender issues in the local context.

The experience of Kerala in democratic decentralization has been more exciting and

meaningful than most other states. This has been to a large extent because of the extent of due to financial devolution and administrative decentralization in the state. This had come about through a major policy initiative of government and State led Campaign for Decentralised Planning. Along with the funds, the administrative wherewithal and the authority and freedom to conceive of, plan, innovate and implement programmes, made the local bodies in a position to stake claim to being the third tier of governance after the Central and state governments. As elsewhere, in Kerala too, women were nearly totally absent from mainstream political structures at both grassroots and higher levels. This is despite the high levels of literacy, education and comparatively better social status. Engendering strategies have tended to be adhoc and oriented towards increasing benefits within the existing structures. In a sense, they could be said to be led by a 'Women In Development' approach and unable to assimilate a 'Gender and Development' vision. It would be interesting to see the impact of the policies of decentralization as practiced in Kerala on gender and empowerment in the state.

When a breakup of the employment profiles of the representatives of the 1995 and 2000 elections is taken, interesting patterns emerge. The demographic profile of male and female representatives only bears out what was already known... that the women representatives of the local governments were less politically and administratively experienced, had less

**The ideal NHG would be one that involved itself in the planning process to the extent of deliberating the needs and priorities of the community that were to be reflected in the plan, participate in the community structures that came up for implementation or monitoring of the projects that were taken up, network on a regular basis with elected representatives, review and critique the performance of the panchayat .**

exposure outside their homesteads, and were generally younger though equally or better educationally qualified than their male counterparts. Although there has been a marginal change in the 2000 profiles of the women representatives, and a greater tendency to contest in the 'open' seats as well, the policy of rotation of reserved seats has gone against the interests of members of reserved constituencies.

The plan campaign did attempt to bring in more women members to the various facilitative structures as part of their gender strategy, and to include discussions on women's issues as part of the development agenda that the local governments evolved. A separate task force to formulate women's projects was created. The technical/expert committees also had a panel to examine the gender sensibilities of the projects for women. Although it had been proposed that at least a third of the facilitators should be women, in reality their proportion was far less... not only were local governments reluctant to take women who they felt would not be able to give the kind of time, commitment and advice needed, there were not too many women volunteers either.

The single most remarkable intervention that has brought gender issues into the forefront of the governance agenda has been the institution of the Women's Component plan. Whereas the development grama sabhas

had to discuss women's issues separately, and include a chapter in the development report, these discussions and debates did not end up in projects aimed at addressing these concerns even though it had been suggested by the state government that at least 10% of the plan be set apart for women's developmental issues. Not only that, women were missing from the list of beneficiaries too, in the absence of specific directives. For the second year of the plan, it was made mandatory to set apart 10% of the grant in aid for the "Women's Component Plan". There had been no guidelines as to what constituted such a plan, although the resource persons and panchayat presidents had been given, as part of their induction training, orientation on examining gender issues in the local context.

A review of the first year of the mandatory WCP showed that whereas the amounts set apart for women based projects went up considerably from 3% to 9.6%, the projects tended not to be women centric and were general projects where the beneficiaries were women. It was also seen that meaningful discussions had not been generated on the basis of identified needs and priorities. Evidently the mere presence of women representatives, the formation of women task forces and the setting up of a women's needs' fund was not enough to bring women's issues on board. There was a malaise that affected innovative thinking in this area that had to be tackled. Interaction with the women members and the task force members showed a capability to identify issues both practical and strategic rather exhaustively, but an inability to correlate between project implementation and need resolution. One of the problems was that the implementing machinery, which was in most cases the one that made projects out of general development proposals, imposed its world view which was very status-quoist on the projects, so you ended up with rather unimaginative run of the mill distribution of assets schemes. Another problem was the attitudes of the technical committees which tended to block even the random original project which found its way into a project concept, on account of lack of appreciation of the issues involved. These were not problems confined to the WCP but the manifestation in WCP was far more

pronounced. On the whole, the largest stumbling blocks were the attitudinal stalemate and the dearth of ideas on the part of all concerned.

Therefore as part of the capacity building effort, state wide capacity building camps were held for lady panchayat presidents and the WCP task forces, where participatory analyses, experience sharing and bonding exercises were given priority along with the regular training provided on rules and regulations, office procedures, planning methodologies etc. A manual on WCP was prepared and model projects that directly or indirectly addressed various issues that were being thrown up during the gender debate like lack of access, restricted mobility, non availability of social space outside the homestead, drudgery and unhealthy working conditions, difficulties in managing the nurturing and income generating roles together, alcoholism and domestic violence, marginalisation from the work force, poor health seeking behaviour, invisibility in the public sphere etc., were discussed and incorporated into the training format and the manual, which would have to be accepted by the scrutinizing machinery as well. A common refrain that came up during these sessions was the need for bringing women SHGs and neighbourhood groups that had come up in the panchayats on their own or under the instance of the panchayats center



stage so as to occupy the public space that decentralized planning had created for community intervention.

The Five year planning framework when introduced also took care to have a separate task force at the state level prepare manuals on women's plans, local area development with focus on women, social welfare schemes looking at issues of women in special circumstances, poverty alleviation programmes which were sensitive to the problems of feminisation of poverty. These were intended to inform local level planning processes of the concerns to be kept in mind while working towards long term development goals.

A main strategy of empowerment revolved around the concept of neighbourhood groups. The idea of the NHG had its rationale in the need for a self sustaining grama sabha ethos. Once the initial excitement died down, the participation in the grama sabha dwindled considerably, posing a real threat to the foundations of transparency, accountability and community participation that were the *raison d'être* of political decentralization. It was necessary to evolve a community mechanism that would take on the mantle of participation and social audit. When NHGs were formed under the initiative of local governments, they manifested in various shapes and textures.



Most of these groups had poverty alleviation as their priority function, and were very often groups of poor women of the area (which was not necessarily contiguous with the 'neighbourhood' that was conceived as a subset of the electoral ward).

The ideal NHG would be one that involved itself in the planning process to the extent of deliberating the needs and priorities of the community that were to be reflected in the plan, participate in the community structures that came up for implementation or monitoring of the projects that were taken up, network on a regular basis with elected representatives, review and critique the performance of the panchayat by focusing on the NHG, capacity building efforts could be optimized and regular follow up by functionaries targeted with greater effort. The forum for thrift and credit could be developed into a hunting ground for ideas and debate. The Kudumbasree (the state poverty eradication mission) that rode piggy back on the decentralized plan, set about creating NHGs over the breadth and width of the local body they adopted. While Kudumbasree originally formed groups of women without excluding the 'non-poor', later on the policy was changed to limit the Kudumbasree groups to 'poor only' groups of women. At present Kudumbasree groups have spread over the entire state and the top priority has shifted from one of participation in the development process to self employment and capacity building for poverty alleviation.

Kudumbasree has at present groups in all local governments. These groups of poor women are allowed to choose from over 250 micro enterprises and given training in developing the necessary technical and administrative skills to run these enterprises. All members of the mother group do not necessarily participate in the enterprise. Many limit themselves to the thrift and credit activities of the group. Sometimes the micro enterprise membership spreads itself across groups and formal follow up mechanisms which are remarkably up to date on the financial status of each group and on the status of the enterprise are in place as part of the Kudumbasree support systems. The Kudumbasree groups are organized into

Area development Societies (ADS) at the ward level and into Community development Societies (CDS) at the local body level.

Thus it can be seen that a community framework that can take on the development response function is available at the local body level. While Kudumbasree in principle agrees to including prior existing groups in its ambit without disturbing their structure, it has been seen that this has not been practicable on the ground as the provisions allow only those who are poor to be entitled to subsidies for micro enterprises under the tie ups provided by Kudumbasree. Presently these women groups have been given specific functions in the decentralized planning process as far as planning for poverty reduction and women projects are concerned. The members of Kudumbasree groups are to be inducted into the anti poverty sub plan and women's component plan task forces. However it is seen that their presence has not been able to materially alter the texture of the projects. The priority of Government has been poverty alleviation and empowerment has been seen as more of a by product of the reduction of poverty, and not as a transformative process in itself.

Therefore when we analyse the gains that decentralisation and focus on women's issues have brought in, we find that women have become more visible in community structures. There has been a sizeable amount of funds both of the state and of financial organizations that have reached women. Women who have entered the political process of panchayati raj have overcome initial obstacles and shown the capacity to survive. They have been able to forcefully put across the argument for water, health and sanitation in the local bodies. Women who have participated in vibrant self help or neighbourhood groups have developed a strong sense of self worth and faith in their ability to interact with power structures. Increase in their contribution to the household income has led to an increased relevance within the family.

The question to be asked at this juncture is whether this is enough – whether this process on completion in its present format will lead to the optimal empowerment and gender based social justice that we aspire to? To answer that question we need to look

around at whether societal relations have changed and domestic equilibrium have been brought about by these processes. We need to examine whether the scourge of dowry has been on a downswing on account of empowered women asserting their sense of self worth. We need to see whether political parties and organizations are mainstreaming their women or continuing to marginalise them by limiting their functional domain to women's wings or units.

Even the manifestations of empowerment as narrated above are fraught with the danger of impermanence. There have been experiences galore of women's initiatives being thwarted through



bureaucratic and community belligerence. There have been threat perceptions and allegations of disruption of households. There has been repeated under spending of the allocations of the women's component plan. There have been concerted attempts to redefine the WCP in terms of asset distribution schemes especially by ridiculing anything that attempts to address strategic issues. Women members who stick their necks out continue to be in danger of being heckled and in the occasional case, of being subject to slander. There certainly hasn't been any genuine attempt to restructure office and home environments so that the energies and contributions of women can be optimized. There has been hardly any effort to redefine gender roles and equations, so as to reduce the social inequities which feed on them. Attempts at creation of safety nets for women in distress have been halfhearted and tend to limit themselves to symptomatic

treatment or crisis response rather than address the causes that are embedded in our value systems. Such an effort of course is not easy, nor can it be achieved overnight. It would involve engaging the entire society and not women alone in the debate on mutual rights, roles and responsibilities. It would need willingness on the part of all concerned be it government, political parties, organizations, bureaucracy, community structures, individuals to examine the dynamics of gender relations and recognize where and how they become skewed. Such a willingness does not come about by seeing the problem as that of women alone, and would need initiatives where both structural and value based adjustments are made, where

there is capacity building for good governance which invents new skills that are sensitive to the gender dynamics impeding women. It is time that the developmental agenda makes conscientisation a priority concern. The enormity of the effort and the difficulties in challenging value systems do not make the need to do so any less relevant. Decentralisation has been able to throw up structures and opportunities that have the potential of highlighting the gender debate. The poverty reduction effort is a gigantic enterprise but so long as the power and authority positions in society do not become equitable, its success can not be one that will be sustained. Therefore it is time that the decentralization process in the state moves ahead and builds on the institutions it has created to expand the space, the legitimacy and the authority of women, in the interest of sustainable development.

## REMEMBRANCE

**Prof. V. Paradas**

Vice-Chairman, Gandhi Peace Foundation, Thiruvananthapuram

**M**ahatma Gandhi was a great revolutionary. But his revolution was of non-violent in nature. Therefore, Gandhiji was a non-violent revolutionary. His non-violence was spiritual in form and content and progressive in character. The weapon that the Mahatma wielded against brute forces was Satyagraha, a unique weapon, invisible but, perhaps, more powerful than the atom-bomb. His revolution was holistic embracing political, economic, social and cultural spheres of human life.

Gandhiji was a revolutionary thinker. When he said: "My life is My Message", it unfolded a message of revolution. He had revolutionary goals, both pre-independent and post-independent. Thus, his life itself was a message of revolution. The historic slogans like "Simon go Back", Quit India, "Do or Die" were totally revolutionary in character. The Hind Swaraj which he wrote in 1909 is a revolutionary work, a manifesto. It is one of the best modern handbooks of real revolution. The Constructive Programme that he authored in 1941 is a comprehensive instrument of reconstruction, an instrument of a silent revolution.

As a practical idealist and a deeply religious personality, Gandhiji stood solidly for the freedom of the human being in all its majesty. When he talked about freedom, he meant individual and collective freedom, a symbiosis of equal rights and equal values.

During his life-time, Gandhiji sowed the seeds of several revolutions: the revolution against consumerism and unlimited materialism; the revolution against technology beyond human control; the revolution for decentralisation of socio-economic, political and cultural systems; the revolution to rehabilitate the individual in the social system; the revolution for non-



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# The difference between need and greed

Gandhiji once said: This earth has enough to satisfy everyone's need, but not to satisfy anyone's greed. Thus he interpreted the relationship between man and nature. Inherent within these words is the vision of Gandhiji on how the development of the society should be. At a time, when the relevance of Gandhiji and Gandhian ideals is increasingly felt, the way he interpreted nature and his ideas on the relationship between men and nature acquire greater significance.

Many Planners of modern India too had this vision in their mind, right from the beginning of first five-year plan and that is why they have put equity and social justice as two cardinal principles of Indian planning process. Now everybody admits that unless and until equity and social justice are taken into consideration, economic development cannot be transformed into human development.

Our State can be proud of the fact that through constant and crucial role of public action based on equity and social justice, we could achieve high human development. But we are lagging behind in economic development, and this raises serious doubts about the sustainability of the Kerala Model of development. A paradigm shift is necessary, which is capable of ensuring the high quality of physical life where the basic needs of our population are satisfied, and, at the same time, a high level of economic development is ensured. It is a fact that the modest and irregular growth the world economy now experiencing poses major problems for both developed and developing countries. But insistence of social justice becomes inevitable if mankind has to achieve peace with progress. Even though insistence of social justice is a societal process, each individual can contribute to it. If everyone realises the difference between need and greed and transforms the way of life accordingly, maintaining the sustainability of growth and keeping a high quality of physical life will not be a much difficult task.

Editor- in- Chief



# Road Map to Total Sanitation

**V. Jithendran**

Director Kerala Total Sanitation & Health Mission

There is a wide spread belief that sustainability of the much talked about Kerala model of health is suspect because of its high morbidity lead. Water and sanitation related diseases feature prominently in the morbidity pattern prevailing in the State. Poor sanitation and hygiene are the most critical routes of transmission of infectious diseases. One of the factors that has contributed to this is Kerala's high density of population. Lack of basic amenities compel people to resort to practices such as open-air defecation.

The matter has been further aggravated by acute poverty, poor hygiene and inadequate garbage disposal and drainage facilities. Sanitary crisis accentuated with open air defecation and inadequate solid and liquid waste management tends to affect the entire Kerala population. On health grounds alone radical approaches to this crisis are required. Till the late eighties access to latrine in households was viewed as the generic indicator of sanitation. Later on the focus shifted from household latrine to household sanitation which is a

package of health and hygiene education, safe latrine, disposal of household sullage and solid waste. In fact household sanitation programme has many components of which construction of facilities is only one. The other components include (i) household motivation and participation; (ii) hygiene education and (iii) proper use and maintenance of facilities. The introduction of Information Education and Communication (IEC) as an integral part of sanitation programmes helped raise consciousness in the community



about the pressing need to improve environmental sanitation. There has been a growing realization of the vulnerability of public health system due to in sanitary conditions as evidenced by the out break of water and sanitation related deceases from time to time and from place to place. Therefore health imperative has always been the driving motivation for public investment in sanitation.

The Government sponsored sanitation programmes of the nineties could not make any significant increase in the coverage of families. The major reasons contributing to this predicament were heavy reliance on subsidy, over emphasis on targets and hardware, inadequate participation of stakeholders, low importance given to IEC and limited technology options. It was in this context that Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) was introduced with focus on IEC, Human Resource Development and Capacity building activities. The rural areas of Kollam and Kasargode districts were identified in 2001 for TSC implementation. Subsequently all other districts were also taken up under the programme.

The Kerala Total Sanitation and Health Mission (KTSHM) was registered in February 2000 with the responsibility of developing conceptual framework, formulating programme strategies, providing expert consultancy and building sector related capacities of local governments. The strengths of the Mission as revealed from two years of its existence are its capacity for conceptualisation and strategy formulation, working with communities, model building, capacity building and forging partnership with other sector related organizations in the WATSAN sector.

The guiding principles of Kerala Total Sanitation and Health Mission are the following:

- build successful scaleable micro models of total sanitation in willing panchayats and motivating other

panchayats to replicate the same with locally specific modifications.

- build-up sanitation as a societal concern
- bring about inter sectoral convergence of resources, services and facilities.
- mission mode and rigorous professionalism
- capacitate a team of 30 volunteers in each grama panchayat : the Health Promotion Team (HPT)
- develop locally specific and process oriented IEC
- local government action to supplement community action
- dissemination of locally adaptable

technology. The community will be enabled to exercise informed choice among different design options

- every new house to be constructed should have sanitation facilities including household latrine.
- motivating children : sanitation in and through schools
- women to play a recognisable role
- linking sanitation with water and health
- promotion of sanitation as a continuous activity: a campaign to institutionalise the concepts of sanitation within the community to be passed on from generation to generation as a social custom.



The central point of the action programme for total sanitation is that it is conceived as a 3 H - Campaign- the Heart, Head and Hands Campaign - for total solid waste management; total liquid waste management, total sewage management and total storm water management wherein the concept of 'total' is critical. This has IEC processes, technical elements, financial implications, organisational aspects and gender concerns. The stakeholders are ordinary citizens at home, workplaces and public places; institutions like schools, hospitals, places of pilgrimage, commercial establishments, industrial units, and civic institutions. The technical activities which are taken up include preparation of current local solid waste generation, dispersal and accrual map; water source and water quantity and quality map; roads and side drain map and water stagnation map; construction of sanitary latrines; segregation at source, storage, transportation, processing and disposal of solid wastes; road surface maintenance and surveillance; preparation of mosquito breeding site map; improvement of market places, slaughter houses, burial grounds and other pollution abatement measures. Since the campaign aims to bring about lasting attitudinal and behavioural changes locally specific action points are formulated for different categories and groups of people. For instance, house-centred activities include health education, propagation of 4-R (reduce, reuse, recycle, and recover) principle of waste management, construction of household latrine, household waste management, monitoring of drinking water quality, installing smokeless ovens, ensuring universal immunisation etc. Similarly, individual - centred, school - centred, institution - centred and community - centred activities are also visualised. Translating these into action require mobilising people's awareness and people's resources on a significant scale with sufficient continuity. A people centred and bottom-up organisational structure with neighborhood groups (NHG) of 15-20 families living in a

contiguous area spearheads the campaign.

### Road Ahead

The Kerala Total Sanitation and Health Mission gives technical support to local governments in the formulation and implementation of total health

**One of the objectives of this initiative is to evolve a new development paradigm for improving the physical quality of life. This is sought to be achieved through improved nutritional levels of children and women, provision of adequate quantity of safe drinking water, total hygienic management of wastes, proper storm water drainage facilities, improving health care delivery system, improving the quality of formal education, establishing and nurturing a dynamic chain of citizen education centres, substantially increasing community based cultural activities and making people's institutions vibrant. It will be a learning process by documenting and reflecting on experiences; discussing and analysing them; and revisiting and readapting approaches.**

project with focus on convergence, inter-sectoral linkages, community management and gender. One of the objectives of this initiative is to evolve a new development paradigm for improving the physical quality of life. This is sought to be achieved through improved nutritional levels of children

and women, provision of adequate quantity of safe drinking water, total hygienic management of wastes, proper storm water drainage facilities, improving health care delivery system, improving the quality of formal education, establishing and nurturing a dynamic chain of citizen education centres, substantially increasing community based cultural activities and making people's institutions vibrant. It will be a learning process by documenting and reflecting on experiences; discussing and analysing them; and revisiting and readapting approaches. The responsibility for planning and implementing the project will be with the local government. However the Technical Support Group (TSG) of the KTSHM helps the panchayat conceive a holistic Health Programme draw up detailed programme of action and milestones and formulate a process oriented capacity building strategy for its operationalization

### Conclusion

Kerala has the highest coverage of individual household latrines in India. It is also a fact that in Kerala more than 80% people depend on ground water for drinking purpose. Kerala's well density is about 140 wells per Sq. Km. which works out to almost one well for a family. Pathogenic pollution of these wells due to leachate of the "sanitary-latrines" is becoming an imminent threat to public health. This situation demands critical examination of the total sanitation programme from the point of view of its potential for water source pollution. The synergy of community initiatives and technical expertise in the sanitation and health sector can lead Kerala to a totally clean environment: an environment with substantial reduction in flies and mosquitoes. This may look difficult but presently there is a fervour in the sanitation sector. This new found enthusiasm can gradually assume the proportions of a people's struggle for the right to privacy, the right to dignity and the right to health. ■

around at whether societal relations have changed and domestic equilibrium have been brought about by these processes. We need to examine whether the scourge of dowry has been on a downswing on account of empowered women asserting their sense of self worth. We need to see whether political parties and organizations are mainstreaming their women or continuing to marginalise them by limiting their functional domain to women's wings or units.

Even the manifestations of empowerment as narrated above are fraught with the danger of impermanence. There have been experiences galore of women's initiatives being thwarted through



bureaucratic and community belligerence. There have been threat perceptions and allegations of disruption of households. There has been repeated under spending of the allocations of the women's component plan. There have been concerted attempts to redefine the WCP in terms of asset distribution schemes especially by ridiculing anything that attempts to address strategic issues. Women members who stick their necks out continue to be in danger of being heckled and in the occasional case, of being subject to slander. There certainly hasn't been any genuine attempt to restructure office and home environments so that the energies and contributions of women can be optimized. There has been hardly any effort to redefine gender roles and equations, so as to reduce the social inequities which feed on them. Attempts at creation of safety nets for women in distress have been halfhearted and tend to limit themselves to symptomatic

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there is capacity building for good governance which invents new skills that are sensitive to the gender dynamics impeding women. It is time that the developmental agenda makes conscientisation a priority concern. The enormity of the effort and the difficulties in challenging value systems do not make the need to do so any less relevant. Decentralisation has been able to throw up structures and opportunities that have the potential of highlighting the gender debate. The poverty reduction effort is a gigantic enterprise but so long as the power and authority positions in society do not become equitable, its success can not be one that will be sustained. Therefore it is time that the decentralization process in the state moves ahead and builds on the institutions it has created to expand the space, the legitimacy and the authority of women, in the interest of sustainable development.

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**M**ahatma Gandhi was a great revolutionary. But his revolution was of non-violent in nature. Therefore, Gandhiji was a non-violent revolutionary. His non-violence was spiritual in form and content and progressive in character. The weapon that the Mahatma wielded against brute forces was Satyagraha, a unique weapon, invisible but, perhaps, more powerful than the atom-bomb. His revolution was holistic embracing political, economic, social and cultural spheres of human life.

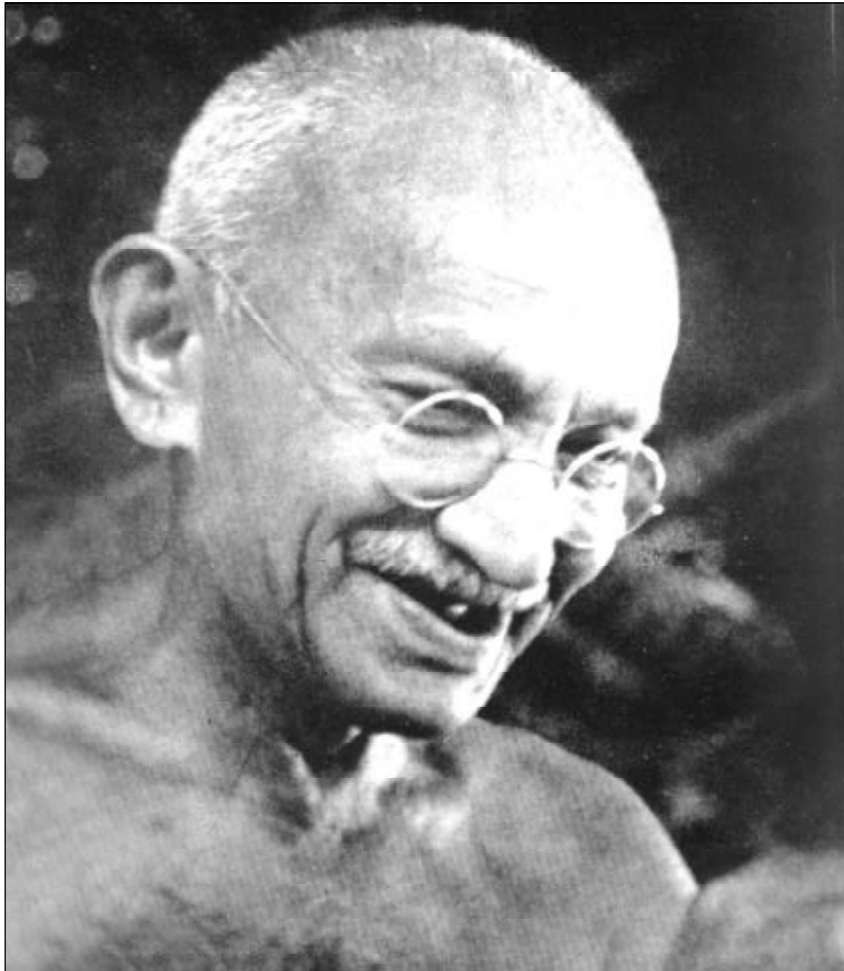
Gandhiji was a revolutionary thinker. When he said: "My life is My Message", it unfolded a message of revolution. He had revolutionary goals, both pre-independent and post-independent. Thus, his life itself was a message of revolution. The historic slogans like "Simon go Back", Quit India, "Do or Die" were totally revolutionary in character. The Hind Swaraj which he wrote in 1909 is a revolutionary work, a manifesto. It is one of the best modern handbooks of real revolution. The Constructive Programme that he authored in 1941 is a comprehensive instrument of reconstruction, an instrument of a silent revolution.

As a practical idealist and a deeply religious personality, Gandhiji stood solidly for the freedom of the human being in all its majesty. When he talked about freedom, he meant individual and collective freedom, a symbiosis of equal rights and equal values.

During his life-time, Gandhiji sowed the seeds of several revolutions: the revolution against consumerism and unlimited materialism; the revolution against technology beyond human control; the revolution for decentralisation of socio-economic, political and cultural systems; the revolution to rehabilitate the individual in the social system; the revolution for non-

# Gandhiji

## The Revolutionary



violent and peaceful methods of social change; the revolution for ecological balance and pollution free society; the revolution for gainful employment; and the revolution for maintaining cultural identity of nations, small communities against monocultures. Gandhiji worked for a major change in human nature, a change of heart.

Richard B. Gregg points out that Gandhiji “is not a mere scientist: he is a great scientist in the realm of social truth. He is great, because of his choice of problems, because of his methods of solution, because of the persistence and thoroughness of his search, and because of the profundity of his knowledge of human heart”. Thus, Gandhiji was a scientifically oriented personality. Satyagraha is a scientific method, a science of the soul. It is a democratic and scientific revolution. It is a science in the making. It is a revolution against physical force. It is a revolution which proclaims a force of love, a force of spiritual non-violence, a supreme force of truth and god. In short, Gandhiji practiced non-violent revolution with scientific precision.

The concepts of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Self-reliance, self-sufficiency, sarvodaya, Grama Swaraj and “Sarva-dharma-sama bhahavana” are revolutionary in character. They are aimed at transforming human nature itself. How did he achieve the revolutionary change in human nature? According to Prof. Humayun Kabir, “Gandhi’s revolutionary significance for the world lies in his success in releasing the energies contained in the endurance and patience of the Indian people..... Instead of an aggressive militant struggle, he built up a movement of non-co-operation in which the passivity and endurance of the Indian masses moved forward to political action, the static forces inherent in the Indian character became dynamic”.

The influence of western education is primarily responsible for not understanding the uniqueness of Gandhiji’s revolution. In spite of that, Gandhiji could create a galaxy of leaders from the grass-roots level to the national level. The torch bearers and flag bearers of the Gandhian non-violent revolution spread from Acharya Vinoba Bhava who carried forward his economic revolution in the form of the Bhoodan Movement, to Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia who tried to sharpen the weapons of non-violent, non-co-operation and civil disobedience in post independent India.

Gandhiji stands like a colossus in the pages of history. According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the revolutionary Gandhiji’s voice is the “voice of the age to come, and not which is fading and should fade away”. He further wrote: “Gandhi is the immortal symbol of love and understanding in a world wild with hatred and torn by misunderstanding. He belongs to the ages, to history”. ☩

**D**o you know that the British army equipped its base hospitals in England with X-ray equipment in 1898, when they learnt of its successful use by Surgeon Major Bewoor in the North West Frontiers? Porters carried the accessories to assemble the primitive x-ray unit, in 100-pound boxes. They traveled over virtually road-less terrain over 200 miles into the Khyber Pass region.

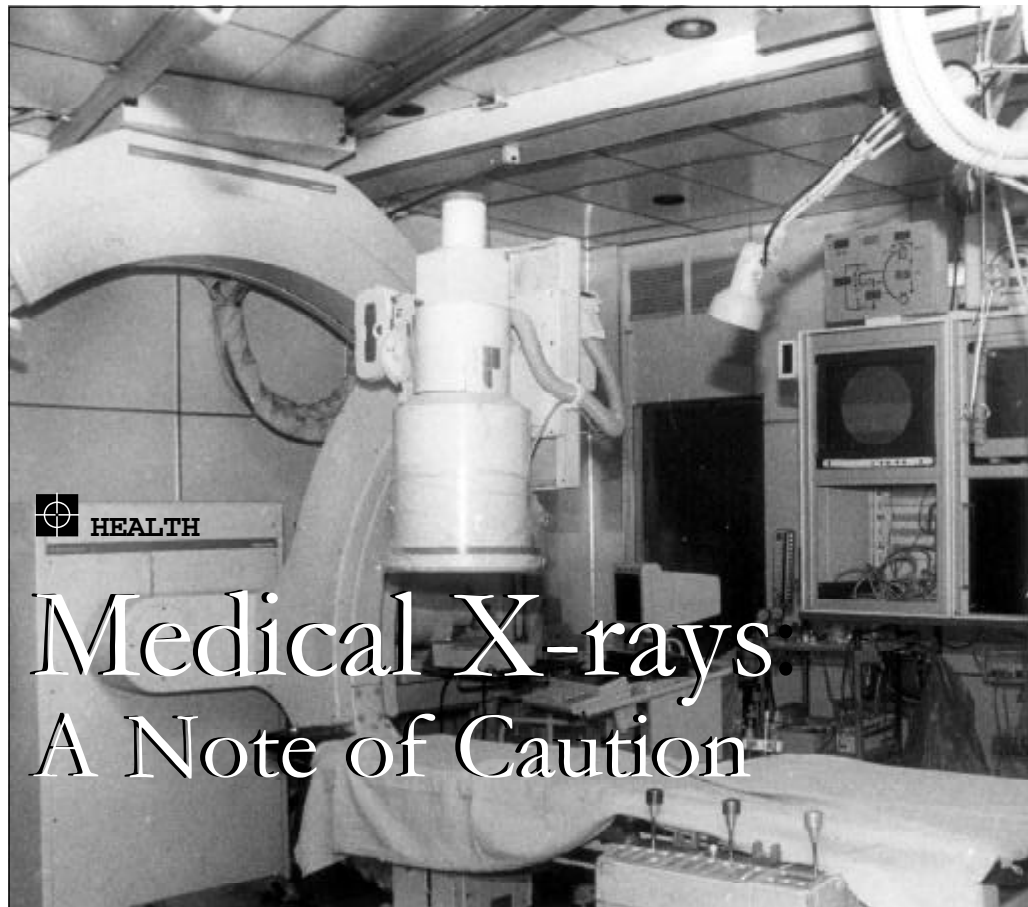
(Late) Dr. K.P.Mody, an eminent radiologist, noted that a chemist imported the first X-ray unit into Bombay in 1902. But medical colleges appreciated their importance 16 years later. Lady Hardinge Hospital in Delhi installed the first x-ray unit in 1918. Over the past 100 years, the total number in India grew into about 35,000 or so.

In 1996, Government of Kerala set up the Directorate of Radiation Safety (DRS) as an independent agency directly under the Secretary, Department of Health and Family Welfare (DH & FW) to enforce AERB guidelines on medical x-ray installations in Kerala. AERB has delegated legal authority to DRS to inspect x-ray installations in Kerala.

I was a member of the specialist committee, which prepared a technical report outlining the constitution and functions of DRS.

The State Government instituted a truly innovative legal process to control medical x-ray installations by amending the Electricity Rules. DRS is a shining example of the initiative taken by Kerala Government and is a model for other States to emulate. DRS has performed creditably in carrying out its mandate.

Specialists agree that physicians should recommend medical X-ray examinations only on the basis of qualified clinical judgement. Well-trained professionals should carry them out with the help of optimally adjusted equipment. They are then the most beneficial life saving procedures, we know of today. If



that is so, is there any need for caution?

There is irrefutable evidence that high doses of ionizing radiation are harmful to man. But most of the medical diagnostic x-ray procedures expose patients to relatively low doses. We do not know conclusively whether low doses are harmful or not. Since we prudently assume that even small doses can cause some harm, physicians should, in any x-ray examination, expose their patients to doses as low as reasonably achievable without losing clinical benefit.

#### **Physicians role in assuring safety**

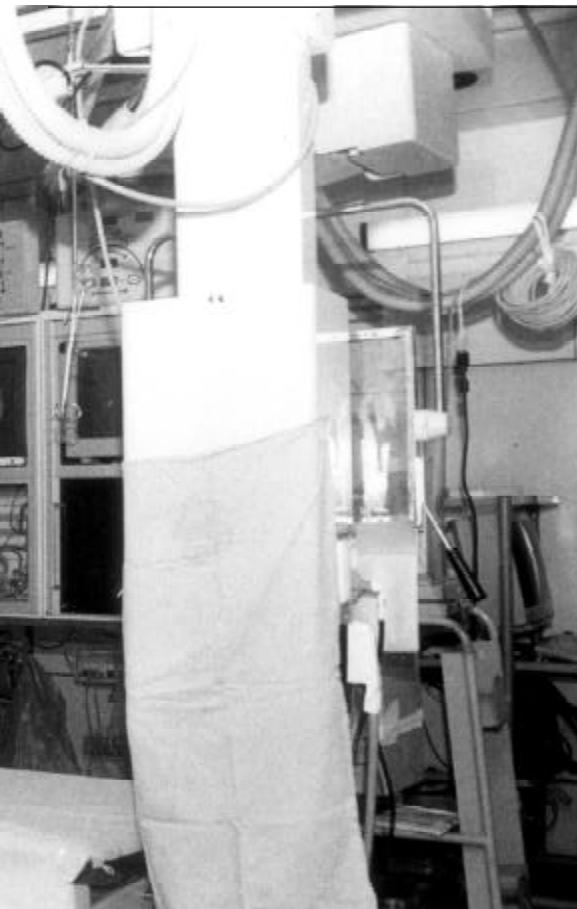
Physicians have an important role in ensuring safe use of x rays. Regrettably, some physicians order X-ray examinations routinely. X-ray examinations at times degrade into a comforting ritual! Physicians should carry out medical X-ray procedures only if they give them useful information to treat the patient.

Physicians should buy only AERB approved x-ray equipment. They should comply with all the radiological safety

requirements. They must use protective accessories such as gonadal shields, mobile protective barriers, lead aprons, etc, and motivate workers to use these accessories.

Extra care should be taken when a pregnant or a potentially pregnant woman is x-rayed. They must ask whether the patient is pregnant or not. A clinically indicated examination need not be avoided simply because of the implied risk from x-ray exposure. Physicians must use optimally adjusted equipment, employ appropriate technique factors and carry out the procedures with as low a dose as is reasonably achievable.

On April 26, 2002, the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) noted that some medical imaging facilities in USA promote and market whole body CT scanning or screening as a preventive or proactive health measure to healthy individuals who have no symptoms or suspicions of disease. FDA warns that for a person without symptoms, CT screening may not reveal serious disease and the potential



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harm to the individual may be greater than the presumed benefit.

CT is a unique tool to diagnose disease, trauma or abnormality and to plan, guide and monitor treatment. But it must not to be used indiscriminately.

. The dose received by a patient during a CT procedure is generally much larger than that from most conventional X-ray procedures.

In 2001, the American Journal of Radiology published eight articles related to radiation doses in CT scan examinations. The journal noted that many CT scan centres in USA use the same technique factors while examining adults and children. Children then receive significantly greater radiation doses than adults without any additional clinical benefits. Children are more sensitive to radiation than adults.

I brought the US FDA advisory which contained recommendations to reduce radiation risk from computed tomography to children and small adults to the notice of over 400 CT scan users in India. I understand

that some radiologists in Kerala implemented the advice from USFDA. For instance, Dr.P.Rajendran, Associate Professor, Department of Radiology, Calicut medical college informed me that acceptable CT images are possible with nearly half the radiation dose. Parents may ask the radiographer whether he uses different technique factors while x-raying children and small adults.

**Role of the public**

Many patients are satisfied only if their physicians recommend an x-ray examination as part of the medical diagnosis. They tend to believe that no examination is complete unless they have been x-rayed! Patients must leave it to the physician to decide.

Crowding near and inside an X-ray room is an unhealthy practice. Very often, the x-ray technologists admit many patients into the x-ray room before starting the examination. Each time the technologist exposes an x-ray film or the radiologist screens a patient, the beam of x-rays directly or indirectly strikes all those present. Patients

may receive unnecessary radiation dose during the waiting period. The dose may even be greater than that received during their own examination!

No one believes it. I had convinced the editor of the Readers Digest to publish a message on this practice in that magazine. Patients must insist that they will not remain in the x-ray room when others are examined.

We would like the public to ask those who own and operate x-ray machines whether their unit is an AERB approved one or not. A “ type approved “ unit has all the built-in safety features. X-ray manufacturers and traders must sell only AERB approved x-ray equipment.

The patient must tell her physician if she is pregnant or thinks that she might be. This must be done before a medical X-ray test is carried out. The physician may cancel the examination. He may postpone it or modify it to reduce the radiation dose. He will exercise better judgement and may proceed with the test, as planned, only if it is essential. At times, the risk of not carrying out a clinically indicated x-ray examination might very well be greater than the risk from radiation.

In summary, x-ray equipment is a very useful tool if it is used with care. Kerala Government has set up an independent Directorate of Radiation Safety to enforce safety guidelines prescribed by the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board. DRS will provide radiation safety related advice and guidance to those who approach the Directorate. ❏

**Free booklet for Physicians**

A WHO booklet titled “ A rational approach to radiodiagnostic investigations” lucidly explains the limitations of medical x-ray procedures. Dr. K.S. Parthasarathy secured its copyright and reprinted a booklet titled “Patient Protection in Diagnostic Radiology” published by the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). If any physician wants a free copy of the booklet, he may write to Secretary, Atomic Energy Regulatory Board, Niyamak Bhavan, Mumbai 400094.

## Marine pearl culture

# Scope for Group Farming



**T.S. Velayudhan**  
Principal scientist, CMFRI

The bivalve culture of prawn farming is gaining importance and popularity throughout the world. The worldwide popularity of mussel as an edible bivalve is no surprise that over 203,000 tonnes of mussels are harvested from the wild and a million tonnes of farmed mussels were landed in 1999 (FAO).

The bivalve resources of India comprising of mussels, edible oysters, clams, gastropods, cephalopods, and pearl oysters have become an important source of income for the coastal villagers.

In terms of production, India produced 1, 57,473 t molluscs in which 55343 t are bivalves, 665 tonnes are gastropods, 101456 tonnes are cephalopods by capture. The production figures for 2002 are 1300 tonnes of mussels, 600 tonnes of oysters by culture and a few kg of pearls.

In India, bivalve culture started in early seventies. The Indian production has not created much impact on the world scenario when compared to that of China, which ranks top in the bivalve production. The reason is the wide spread culture of bivalves in China without any socio-economic problems.

Bivalve culture in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andamans has shown encouraging results. Culture of bivalves is an effective way of enhancing seafood production, among them mussels has the highest production rate and the most valued is the marine pearl oyster and pearl (Queen of gems).

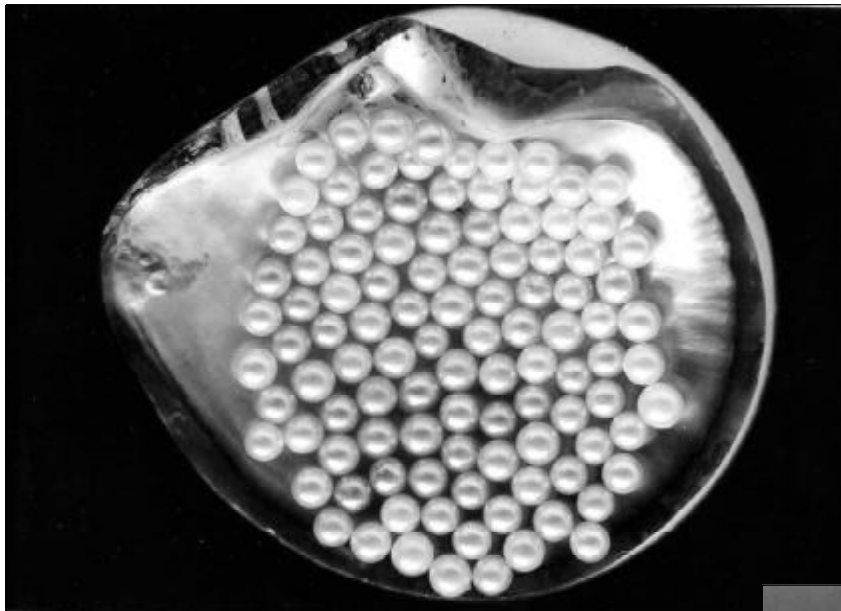
India is endowed with rich resources of pearl oysters, both in the Gulf of Mannar, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Gulf of Kutch along the northwestern Gujarat coast and Vizhinjam in the Southwest coast of India. The pearls are produced from the marine pearl oyster and freshwater mussels. The pearl oyster *Pinctada fucata* (Gould) belongs to the Phylum Mollusca, class pelecypoda, order pseudolamellibranchia, family Pteriidae and genus *Pinctada*. In the Andaman and Nicobar group of Islands, the black-lip pearls oyster *Pinctada margaritifera* is available in stray numbers. There are four more species of pearl oysters *Pinctada sugillata*, *P. chemnitzii*, *P. atropurpurea* and *P. anomioides* in Indian waters. Along the Gujarat coast pearl oysters are found in the intertidal zones ("Khaddas" of Jam Nagar District). In the Gulf of Mannar the oysters are found under water on submerged reefs or rocky areas at a depth of 10-20 m and at a distance of 11-16 km from the coast. The oyster beds are locally known as "paars" and the total numbers of such paars are more than 65 in

the Gulf of Mannar.

### Food and Feeding

Like other free-living bivalve molluscs, pearl oysters are filter feeders. They use their gills for sorting and then lead to mouth. The major food of pearl oyster consists of diatoms, flagellate, larvae of lamellibrachs, gastropods, heteropods, crustacean nauplii, appendages, frustules of copepods, spicules of sponges and unidentified spores, algal filaments, detritus and are found in the stomach and intestine of freshly collected pearl (*P. fucata*) oysters from the farm and natural beds.

### Reproduction



Sexes are separate. The males and females cannot be distinguished from their external morphological characters. Sex reversal and hermaphrodites was also noticed in a few animals. The animal attains sexual maturity at the size of 15.5 mm. The farm-reared pearl oysters reach this size with in 3-4 months. In the Gulf of Mannar the pearl oyster spawn twice in a year. The male and female oysters release their spermatozoa and ova in the surrounding seawater and the eggs get fertilized as soon as they come in contact with the sperms. The larvae reach spat in 20 days time period. A spat of 0.3mm reaches operatable size (45 –50 mm) with in a period of one year in the east coast, the same takes 9 months in the west coast.

The pearl oysters have been observed

to live upto 7 years (farm reared). The spat produced in Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute hatchery are sea ranched in pearl oyster beds to repopulate the barren 'PAARS'.

A natural pearl is formed when the pearl – secreting cells of the mantle migrate into the mantle of the oyster under the stimulus of a foreign body (undischarged eggs of the oyster; sand grains got into the shells and formed pearls; and that parasites or other eggs or other organic matter formed the core of the pearls). The pearl - sac secretes nacre on the foreign body and in due course a pearl is formed according to the shape of the

foreign body.

### Culture pearl production technique

The term “cultured pearl “ was used for the first time in 1920 for the pearls produced in Japanese pearl oyster “akoya gai” and marketed in Europe. The renowned name Mikimoto is the first man to produce cultured pearls are mentioned, the Australian Saville-Kent deserves full credit for the original development of the technique. His technique involved taking a piece of mantle tissue from one oyster and implanting it in

another. The term ‘artificial pearl’ does not denote a cultured pearl, but would refer to cheap imitations made of plastics, glass etc; by using the extract “guanine” from fish scales for artificial shine. The tissue culture techniques in pearl production are maintained as a trade secret by the larger pearl producing nations. For the production of a cultured pearl, a shell bead nucleus is implanted along with a mantle graft tissue into the gonad of the recipient oyster by a skillful surgery. The operated oysters are put in iron cages with lid netted with synthetic threads /plastic baskets/ netlon bags and suspended from the raft, rack, long line or kept on the under water platforms and (land based culture tanks with sufficient water air and feed etc; according to the area in an air conditioned room without contamination) for pearl formation.

The core material called shell bead nucleus is produced from the fresh water mussel shells from Mississippi River, America. This is imported to Japan, China, Thailand and Australia where they produce nucleus beads of 2 – 22 mm diameter. Necessary surgical tools designed and developed by CMFRI are available in Tamil Nadu based companies. “Mabe” pearls are produced by implanting the images of required object in between the mantle and shell cavity without affecting the mantle. This technique was developed by CMFRI, in 2002. The tissue culture of pearl is under





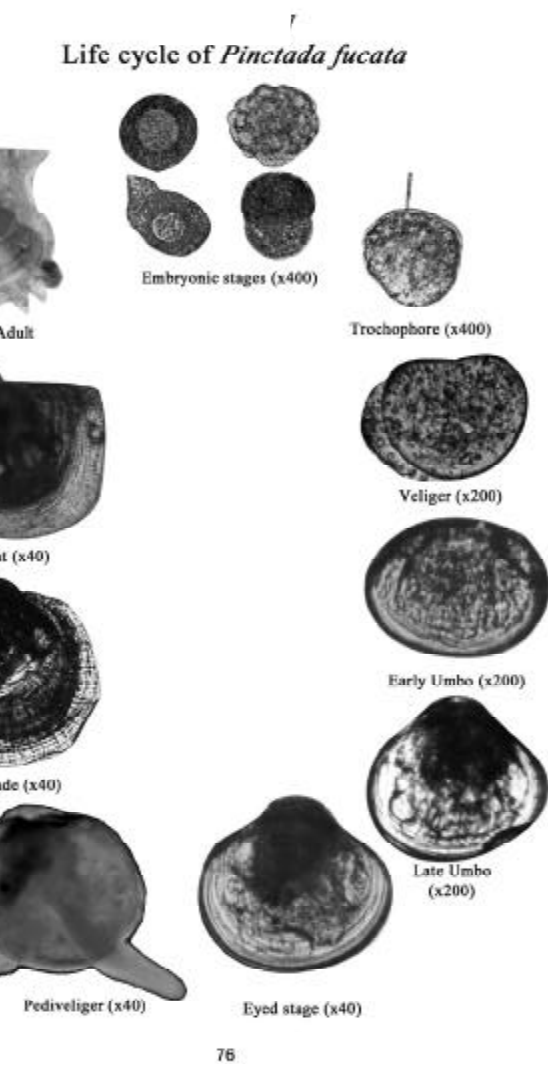
perfection in CMFRI, tissue culture laboratory at Tuticorin.

In Indian pearl oyster a nucleus of 2-8 mm can be used and the duration for sufficient coating of nacre on the implanted nucleus varies from 4-22 months. The oysters should be checked after 3 months to assess the retention of the nucleus by narcotizing the animal or by X-ray screening. The X-ray screening is an expensive procedure and is not viable for small *P. fucata* pearls. It is viable in the case of *P. margaritifera* and *P. maxima* pearls, which are priced higher.

**Harvesting, grading, processing and marketing**

The pearls are harvested by cutting and separating the two valves and squeezing out the pearl from the gonad of the oyster. In order to use the same animal for remplantation, the animal before taking out the pearl is anesthetized as done during implantation and the pearl is extracted carefully. Another nucleus is implanted in the same spot. If the site is not ideal, implantation could be done in other three sites of the same oyster if the animal is healthy. The animal is released back to the farm for healing of wound and rejuvenation for a fortnight or a month. The same animal can be re-implanted; seas ranched and used for graft preparation or leave the animal to live after birthing a good pearl. This practice is prevalent in the case of *P. maxima* and *P. margaritifera* wherein an oyster may value 80-100 \$.

The pearls are graded into “A”, “B” & “C” depending on the size and shape. “A” grade pearls will be spherical with good luster, “B” grade will have small pimple like projection with good luster. “C” grade pearls will have 2 or more teats. Rice pearls and



seedless pearls are produced by implanting several pieces of mantle graft in the gonad. Baroque pearls are shining and odd shaped pearls used for jewellery purposes. The quality of the pearl can be verified by an acid test. Good quality pearls produced by oyster's forms bubbles when treated with HCl. Imitation pearls do not form bubbles.

Pearl care is very essential for retaining the quality for years. The pearls should not be rubbed, heated. Pearl has to be washed in freshwater and dried in a soft cloth or dried in shade; olive or coconut oil may be applied to retain the luster.

In the international market pearls of larger size are highly valued. India is importing pearls worth Rs.29 crores every year. The major countries involved are Bahrain, Hong Kong, Japan, UAE and U.K. In India, few private entrepreneurs are

involved in pearl production. CMFRI is offering regular training on hatchery production, farming methods and pearl production to the officials of State Government, Universities, and Research Institutes, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, industry and progressive farmers.

An NATP Project on Breeding, Culture of pearl oysters and production of pearls (1.3 crores) in *Pinctada fucata* is underway at Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute. A project worth 1.6 crores and funded by DOD (Department of Ocean Development) is proposed to start in Andaman and Nicobar Islands shortly. This will be a pioneering work on the production of black pearls in the country and will bring an additional income by way of export. For competing in the world market, India has to commercialize the pearl programmes and produce bigger sized pearls.

CMFRI held the First Indian Pearl Congress and Exposition at Cochin during the month of February 2003. All the pearl workers in the country were invited to discuss and sort out the problems encountered in pearl culture in India.

Preliminary works are under way to produce pearls of 6 – 8 mm diameter. As pearl production is a long term process, diversification to hatchery/production of young ones from nature, mother oyster culture, implantation and convalescence, post operative culture, harvest of pearls and processing, marketing/ jewellery products, by products etc. and export are to be studied in detail. The most essential component is the production of shell bead nucleus. A world bank aided NATP project is in progress for the production of shell bead nucleus from indigenous molluscan shells using the machineries developed by CMFRI

and CIFT. All these aspects will come to limelight if Marine Pearl Parks are identified and demarcated in respective coastal areas.

The Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute has imparted training to candidates from India and abroad on different aspects of pearl culture. Special training was given to technicians and researchers from 11 countries of South East Asia, France and Bahrain. Apart from training the fishers, CMFRI has supplied pearl oyster spat and implanted pearl oysters to the groups involved in pearl culture from an ICAR Revolving Fund Project. Good pearls were harvested from the oysters grown by the fisher group. Group farming in pearl culture is ideal for coastal fishers as a part time avocation, income generation and promotion of entrepreneurship in the country.

Earlier, CMFRI has imparted the technical know how to different government agencies in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Lakshdweep to take up pearl culture as a commercial venture. Due to technical reasons the ventures couldn't be continued. A critical analysis has shown that the longer gestation period, the labour intensive production mechanism, absence of legal protection for farming areas, huge investment for spat production and grow out oysters were some of the limiting factors for complete success for pearl oyster and pearl production in a commercial manner. Whereas group farming as tested in Valinokkam small-scale operation and utilization of nucleated pearl oysters by women farmers under M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation were found to be most viable and feasible. It is felt that the entire pearl production process can be phased out as different enterprises such as, seed production, grow out of oysters, nucleation of oysters, and grow out of nucleated oysters and pearl marketing. However separate self-help groups under the technical guidance of CMFRI can take up each activity. Financial assistance can be sought from NABARD, state fisheries departments and banks by submitting appropriate project proposals. From the government side immediate steps are to be made to demarcate suitable areas for pearl culture along the coastline of India and declare these farming areas as marine pearl parks.



# Malayala Panchangam

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## The First Newspaper

**Even before the idea of a united Kerala State was born, the first Malayalam paper Malayala Panchangam commenced publication aiming at Malayalam speaking people. The release of Malayala Panchangam was instrumental for such other publications being brought out later from Travancore, Kochi and Malabar.**

**Paul Manalil**

The history of Malayalam journalism begins with 'The Malayalam Almanac', which has its popular name *Malayala Panchangam*. It is believed that *Rajyasamacharam* is the first newspaper in Malayalam, which started publishing from Thalassery in June 1847. But one year ahead of this the former came out from Thalassery. Thus, no doubt, Malayalam journalism had its origin in *Malayala Panchangam*.

During those days, Basal Mission activities in North Kerala flourished under Dr. Herman Gundert with headquarters at Illikkunnu in Thalassery. It has to be corrected that the Malayalam Almanac published from there in 1846 is the first contemporary publication in Malayalam.

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A step forward in its expansion programmes was *Rajyasamacharam* brought out by the Basal Mission. The development since *Rajyasamacharam* found expression when the Mission started another publication *Paschimodayam* in October 1847.

The first newspaper Malayala Panchangam that was the precursor in introducing literacy in the state could be Government printed by a hand press. As the title was given in English along with Malayalam, it later came to be known in English as 'Almanac'.

For all-purpose of references like marriage, birth, death etc., people depended on *Panchangams* inscribed and preserved in *Thaliyolas*. As people reposed much confidence in *Panchangams*, the Basal Mission thought, a newspaper to be brought out with the same title and similar character would get immediate

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acceptance and become a popular medium in no time. Thus for the first time *Malayala Panchangam* knew the yardstick of popularity enjoyed by the print media. The success of Malayalam Almanac encouraged the Basal Mission to launch the second newspaper *Rajyasamacharam*.

The main objective of *Malayala Panchangam* was to protect the interests and aspirations of the local readers. Though the idea of a print media was not born from a Malayali, it marked the beginning of a media culture capable of conquering his mind and popularity.

readers. It published articles, which could influence the readers spiritually. The paper also assumed the role of medium for religious propaganda. Though the paper consisted mostly of almanac related matters to attract the readers, it ignited the inquisitiveness, quest for knowledge and the sarcasm of the readers. Though the paper was founded without any such objectives, the contents could very well help to achieve these aims.

Copies of *Malayala Panchangam* are not available now. But Cheriyan Kuniyanthodathu who conducted extensive research on the life and

left for Germany on 21, November 1845, he could not associate with this publication. Again he returned on 28, February 1847 and therefore prior to his arrival, Muller had already started the publication of *Malayala Panchangam*.

Muller established the press known as Tellicherry Mission Press at Illikkunnu, the headquarters of Basal Mission in Thalassery. An Englishman who was a judge of Thalassery donated the bungalow at Illikkunnu for Basal Mission where the hand press was established. It was known in Malayalam as 'Thalassery Chhapitham'. The books brought out from there also had the inscription as 'Thalassery Chhapitham'. This litho press was working till 1864.

The first periodical published from the hand press was *Malayala Panchangam*, says researcher K.M. Govi. He confirms the view expressed by Graham Shaw that the *Malayala Panchangam* was first printed at the very same press. Muller who took the initiative to publish the journal became its editor. His brother F. Muller had also become the editor of the third Malayalam newspaper *Paschimodayam*.

Some of the works of Gundert were also printed at the same hand press established by Christian Muller. D. Kannankadu who was doing missionary work with Gundert in Tamil Nadu prepared the Malayalam letters. The same letters were used in the hand press.

The primitive prototype of the modern, offset printing was the hand press or *Kallachnu*, as it was known in the vernacular. Basal Mission established a similar press in Mangalore also. A collection of poems entitled *Geethangal* was published from there. Instead of carving the letters from the surface, Kannankadu used a special combination of ink for writing. After watering and applying the ink, during the time of copying, the reproduction of letters is only

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**The main objective of Malayala Panchangam was to protect the interests and aspirations of the local readers. Though the idea of a print media was not born from a Malayali, it marked the beginning of a media culture capable of conquering his mind and popularity. The publication also laid much stress on the social background of the reader. As evidenced by its title, the paper was aware of the significance of holidays, festivals etc. for ready reference. It was also evident that the paper had aimed at adopting a conventional outlook in life and its reintroduction.**

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Since 1846, *Malayala Panchangam* was brought out regularly, says W. Bader in his book 'A Survey of Malayalam Literature'. It used to carry all relevant information required by the reader, writes Bader. Even as an Almanac, *Malayala Panchangam* was useful to the

mission of Dr. Herman Gundert could locate one copy of the *Malayala Panchangam* in Germany.

Researchers could not identify this newspaper as it contained a *panchangam* and became popular only as an almanac. Basal Mission also brought out similar other publications points out Cheriyan Kuniyanthodathu. All of them originated from Mangalore.

The missionary Christian Muller brought the hand press, which printed 'Malayalam Almanac', to Illikkunnu from Mangalore on 23, October 1845. As Herman Gundert who gave leadership to the Thalassery mission

**Rajyasamacharam happened to be known as the first newspaper, only very recently. But historians believed that Jnananikshepam edited by John Hoxworth from Kottayam in 1848 was the first work in this direction. When the copy of Jnananikshepam was found out in 1971, Rajyasamacharam came to be known as the first paper and not Jnananikshepam. But now based on the proof regarding the publication of Malayala Panchangam, the position assumed by Rajyasamacharam requires a thorough review.**

possible. When the hand press is at work, only the image of letters where ink has been applied would appear in the copy. The copy could be read easily. It had the format and shape of the letters printed in a printing press.

The works like *Paṣṣhacholmalai* (1845), *Sathyaveda Ithibasam* (1845), *Paadarambam* (1845), *Arunoornu Paṣṣhchol* (1846) etc. by Gundert had also been printed using the type written by Kannankadu. Of this, *Paadarambam* was the first book prepared for the first student. *Paṣṣhancholmalai* was compiled as a three-part book. The books written by Gundert and the periodical *Malayala Panchangam* opened new horizons of knowledge to the readers while *Malayala Panchangam* had been a new experiment for its readers.

The style of journalism followed by Basal Mission was based on the changing interests of its readers. While *Malayala Panchangam* tried to strengthen the traditional values of the readers, *Rajyasamacharam* wanted to inculcate new aspirations to readers. The third paper of Basal Mission *Pachimodayam* instilled confidence in their readers and created an awareness for conscious reading. *Panchangam* helped

the readers to get inspired by the new literary developments. *Malayala Panchangam* in fact proved to be instrumental in bringing about a total change in the outlook of its readers. *Malayala Panchangam* laid the foundation of the 150 years history of Malayalam newspapers.

The contents of the periodical were systematically arranged to attract the readers. The sponsors of this publication had very intimate knowledge of the developments taking place in journalism in the west. The design and the format also clearly indicate this fact. The newspaper was brought out for religious propaganda only. The title *Panchangam* and by its contents were aimed at attracting the local people. This augured well for Malayalam journalism. It has been mentioned in the diary notes of Gundert that *Malayala Panchangam* was published from 1<sup>st</sup> November 1846 to July 1847.

The aims of the *Malayala Panchangam* and the subsequent periodicals like *Rajyasamacharam* and *Pachimodayam* were not different from that of Basal Mission. The Mission, which started its gospel work from Mangalore in 1834, had concentrated on religious

propaganda, social work and educational activities. But when it started its work at Nettur near Thalassery, it declared a relentless war against casteism. When it opened its unit in Kozhikode (1842) and Kannur (1841), the fight against casteism formed a major part of the work undertaken by the Mission. For Mission workers, journalism was only a part of their activities, which they utilised for religious propaganda. Their intention was to utilise journalism as a tool to fight against the inequality shown to the downtrodden on the basis of caste, creed and community.

The Mission actually implemented their main objective in propagating the values of education, as they were aware they could achieve progress in other spheres of activities through this effort. The publication of *Malayala Panchangam* was the first step towards this goal.

As different from other centres of Basal Mission, in Thalassery the presence of Gundert inspired them to start the periodicals.

Though *Malayala Panchangam* had been brought out regularly for one year, the world could know only very little about its character and its special features as a periodical, till copies were available recently. From the information available now, it is the first Malayalam paper. By then, *Rajyasamacharam* lost its pre-eminent position as the first Malayalam paper.

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MONUMENT

# Arakkal Palace to Get a Facelift

Shamshad

The legend has it that a lamp used to be kept constantly burning in a chamber inside the dilapidated Arakkal Palace, not far from the Kannur town. The belief was that the palace would continue to be prosperous as long as the lamp remained burning.

The 'vilakku' may or may not be still kept lit in the palace, once the seat of the Arakkal royal family that had played an important role in shaping the political history of Kannur. But the decaying palace structures, called the 'Arakkal Kettu', that include residential buildings and mosques around a large open ground, 'pandikasalas' and a bell-tower at the entrance of the palace complex remain as remnants of the glory of this tiny Muslim principality, the political

influence of which has eroded ever since the Arakkal Beevi, the then royal head of the family, surrendered to the British General Abercromby in 1790 after a protracted resistance against the English East India Company in alliance with Tipu Sultan of Mysore.

Now this run-down 'Arakkal Kettu' is to get a facelift as the State Government has sanctioned a Rs. 96 lakhs project for their renovation and conservation with the objective of converting it into a place of tourist attraction and developing a museum that can convey its historical importance. The Kannur DTPC that submitted the project envisages the development of a heritage museum at the palace that will be open for the public though the palace structures will remain under the ownership of the Arakkal family.

The Arakkal Kettu is a cluster of decaying buildings around the large open ground being used as Idgah. Built of laterite and wood, the independent units, including the building that was once

used as palace administrative office and four mosques, are in an extreme state of disrepair as are the pandikasalas, once a storehouse of the Arakkal family. The DTPC officials say that the Arakkal Kettu can be turned into a place of tourist attraction by promoting the legends and history of this lone Muslim principality.

There are many versions, all having little historical value, on the origin of the Arakkal royal family. According to one version, the Arakkal family's history can be traced to Cheraman Perumal's nephew, Muhammed Ali, who was believed to have founded the principality in the first century of the Muslim era. Another version links it to a matrimonial alliance between a princess of the powerful Kolathiri dynasty and a Muslim youth. There is yet another version that says that it was founded by Arayankulangara Nair, one of the ministers of the Kolathiri court.

The system of descent being followed by the Arakkal family being matrilineal, the elder most member of

the family, male or female, was its head and ruler. While male rulers were called Ali Rajah, female rulers were known as Arakkal Beevis. The old records, maps and drawings of surveys and many other manuscripts stored in the palace building will throw light on the family's trade relations with the Arabian countries. The Archives Department is preparing an inventory of the records. The Arakkal house enjoyed monopoly on spices trade and supremacy over the seas. It had cordial relationships with Hyder Ali and Tippu Sultan. It had friendly relationships with the Dutch but was not so cordial with the Portuguese.

The C-Earch Architects and Planners prepared the conservation project. It proposes restoration of the palace complex to a stable condition and utilisation of the pandikasalas and allied buildings for promoting trade, fishing and other activities.

According to C-Earth Architects and Planners, the socio-cultural relationship between the Arakkal Kettu and its immediate environment has to be taken care of while conceiving an integrated conservation programme, because any conservation activity should be taken in the total context of the area. Development of this area as a public place is expected to promote employment and commercial opportunities.

According to the project report, one of the buildings located along the beach road and that used to be office building for the palace administration is to be renovated and used as a museum and information centre. The building is in a state of disrepair, the records, drawings and other papers are facing damage, and the exquisitely carved furniture items are badly maintained. All these have to be restored and exhibited in the museum, the project report says.

The palace is no longer what it was centuries back. A large bell in the decrepit bell-tower, however, chimes the bygone glory and influence of the Arakkal family.



## NEW INITIATIVE

**Beginning from this month, a few specific initiatives of MGP will be published as part of the series of articles on MGP. The first in this series is on the initiative titled social security schemes for destitutes and disabled. Provided below are relevant extracts from the MGP Initiative: V.1.2 Five year planning framework: Social security schemes for destitutes and disabled, approved by Government.**

# MGP

## Social Security Schemes

**Dr. K. M. Abraham**

Secretary, MGP

**K**erala has been in the forefront of providing a reasonable good social security cover based on equity considerations in human and social development. It has evolved innovative social security schemes like welfare funds, pensions, universal PDS etc. However, there is a feeling that there are outliers whose social security needs have not been met. They can be classified as destitute or absolutely poor and the other disabled groups among the poor facing physical and mental challenges. The existing schemes often do not reach them and even if they reach them, the benefits are inadequate compared to the severity of their problems.

The Tenth Plan has initiated some action in this regard. Decentralization and the networking of poor through *Kudumbashree* offer interesting possibilities. All local governments have prepared an action plan for the destitutes and the disabled. *Kudumbashree* is already

implementing a pilot plan for identification of destitutes and addressing their problems. It is necessary to integrate these initiatives into a comprehensive social security system for the disabled and destitutes by providing the best expertise available and coming out with an implementable system.

There are 23 Welfare Boards in Kerala. Many of these Boards have ample reserve funds. For instance, the Anganwadi Workers Welfare fund has a corpus of Rs.6.00 crores as reserve fund. Social security schemes have different scales of assistance offered, depending on the type of schemes.

Clearly, the beneficiaries in many of these schemes could also belong to the same class that the social security scheme for the destitute and disabled would be covering. Hence, the share of funds now going to this class from out of the allocations for existing welfare pensions could also go to supplement the funds

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Clearly, the beneficiaries in many of these schemes could also belong to the same class that the social security scheme for the destitute and disabled would be covering. Hence, the share of funds now going to this class from out of the allocations for existing welfare pensions could also go to supplement the funds



for social security schemes for the destitutes and the disabled.

In order to develop a comprehensive set of social security initiatives that focus on the very poor, it would be necessary to study the existing initiatives. Such a study will have to focus on the existing organisations and their effectiveness also. Besides the demographic situation in terms of decrease in birth rate and increase in population of people above 60 years which will in turn impact the percentage of destitutes in Kerala. The transformation of Kerala society into nuclear families will also compound the problem. Given the trend in the number of destitutes in Kerala, it becomes important to tackle the problem of the most needy viz. the destitutes first. A 'ladder concept' of need based intervention through appropriate social

and outside the State

- Develop a consensus among policy makers, experts and activists on the parameters defining the target group from among destitutes and the disabled
- Development of a data base from the BPL Survey
- Identify the destitutes and the disabled based on the parameters using the NHG network.
- Validate the database and the list by the grama sabha
- Obtain information on the international best practices
- Evolve a draft social security system for the destitutes and disabled and consult stakeholders
- Finalize and adopt a framework
- Preparation of a detailed plan by Social Welfare Department with the active involvement of *Kudumbashree*

**The objective of Social security schemes for destitutes and disabled is to evolve a realistic and sustainable social security system for the destitutes and disabled under the leadership of local governments and which can be implemented through the network of neighbourhood groups.**

security plans focusing on the most needy may be appropriate to Kerala, without of course diluting existing levels of intervention for the other grades of needy people.

The objective of Social security schemes for destitutes and disabled is to evolve a realistic and sustainable social security system for the destitutes and disabled under the leadership of local governments and which can be implemented through the network of neighbourhood groups.

For achieving this objective following methodology has been suggested.

- Study existing social security measures in Kerala and other States in India
- Analyse *Kudumbashree* Pilot Project
- Analyse the experience of NGOs dealing with poorer sections within

- Identify resources for implementation and earmark them
- Build capacity for implementation
- Set up monitoring systems

Successful implementation of this initiative is expected to yield tangible outputs such as: a clear database on the destitutes and the disabled, detailed action plans for providing social security to the destitutes and disabled at the level of each local government, and an evaluation and monitoring system capable of monitoring the implementation of the action plan.

The expected outcomes of this unique social security measure would be an enhancement of the Quality of life of all destitutes and disabled in Kerala and they are taken care of and to bring all destitute families placed above the benchmarked standard of living

*Contd from page no. 5*

Within this framework it is necessary to identify industries that are suitable for Kerala conditions in order to direct state intervention in a concerted manner to promote them. Going by the experience of the last fifteen years since economic reforms started in India, it would appear that Kerala offers scope for the growth of small and medium enterprises in food processing, textiles and garment, ayurvedic pharmaceuticals and other preparations and electrical goods. In a survey of 100 popular branded goods manufactured in Kerala, (Dhanam, August 1999), it was found that most of them are small and medium enterprises run by young, educated entrepreneurs who have introduced modern technology and marketing strategies.

To the list of industries with high growth potential should be added the knowledge based industries as in Information and Communication Technology, electronics and biotechnology. The principle underlying state policy in the selection of industries for promotion should be based on their low land use, low or no pollution, high value addition, high knowledge or skill intensity and generation of regular employment. In addition, the past policy of spreading the location of industries all around the state should be done way with in favour of creating a critical mass in suitable locations (a cluster approach). Industry-specific policies need to be formulated for a select number of industries for their promotion.

**Policy on labour and employment**

Early developments in the labour front have not been an unmixed blessing for Kerala. A unique feature of this evolution is the high level of organisation of workers in the unorganised or informal sector of the economy resulting in institutional mechanisms for wage setting as well as for giving a modicum of social security. However, such developments did not take place in the context of industrialisation of the economy. On the contrary, private investments were shy to come to Kerala. There is increasing consensus on the view that wage cost per se may not be the deterrent in attracting investments, but the perception of prospective investors on the question of labour relations.



# Anju

## A Star on the Rise

M. Velayudhan Kutty

**H**urray... At last an Indian athlete has got that done; a place in the athletic arena of the world; an achievement that eluded the greats of Mr. Milkha Singh in 1960 and Mrs. P.T. Usha in 1984! Donning the bronze in long jump in the recent World Championship held in Paris, Mrs. Anju Bobby George, that lanky girl from Changanassery, Kerala did India pride and created a history. It is the first time that India dons a medal in the senior section in world athletics!

A glance at the medal positions of the forerunners of Asian athletics in the Paris Meet is more than enough to realize that Mrs. Anju's bronze values more than a gold. China fetched just two bronzes and Japan a silver and three bronzes only. The only Asian country to win a gold was Qatar. Among the 203

countries that participated, only 40 could find a place in the medal tally. What a great achievement it was for India and Anju!

Anju was born to Cheeramchira Kochuparambil Mr. K.T. Markose and Mrs. Gracy Markose of Changanassery. Anju Markose was her maiden name. While at the C. Kesavan Memorial High School, Koruthode, a school of great fame in Indian athletics, Mr. K.P. Thomas, its great Physical Education Teacher, groomed her up as an athlete of great promise. In the present victory of Mrs. Anju, the 'Koruthode school' and 'Thomas Master' have a lot to take pride in. They proved again that they can make an athlete of world class emerge from their coliseum, as in the case of the Asian medal winners, Mrs. Molly Chacko and Mrs. Jincy Philip.



Chief Minister Mr. A.K. Antony handing over a cheque of Rs. 5 lakh to Mrs. Anju Bobby George for her achievement in World Athletic Championship. Ministers Mr. K. Sudhakaran, Mr. C.F. Thomas and Mr. K. Sankaranarayanan are also seen

### Anju's Achievements

1999	SAF Games	Kathmandu	Long jump	Silver	6.22 m
1999	Sri Lankan Open Meet	Colombo	Long jump	Gold	6.32 m
2000	Circuit Meet	Bhopal	Long jump	Gold	6.59 m
2001	Circuit Meet	Trivandrum	Long jump	Gold	6.74 m
2002	Grand Prix	Hyderabad	Long jump	Silver	6.58 m
	Grand Prix	Bangkok	Long jump	Silver	6.53 m
	Grand Prix	Manila	Long jump	Silver	6.45 m
2002	Commonwealth Games	Manchester	Long jump	Bronze	6.49 m
2002	Asian Games	Busan	Long jump	Gold	6.53 m
2003	World Championship	Paris	Long jump	Bronze	6.70 m

- First Indian woman to cover 6.50 m in long jump.
- National record holder in long jump (6.74 m) and triple jump (13.67 m).
- First Indian woman to win a medal in long jump (6.49 m) in the Commonwealth Games. She won bronze.

Mrs. Anju's collegiate education was in Vimala College, Thrissur, where a sports hostel of the Kerala Sports Council functioned. This enabled her continue the training and competitions in athletics, especially in hurdles and high jump. But, when at the Vimala College, she switched over her interest to heptathlon and long jump. Her coach at the Vimala College was initially Mr. T.P. Ouseph and later Mr. E.J. George.

Anju's ascend after becoming the individual champion at the first College

Games conducted by the Kerala Sports Council in 1995 was too fast. In the same year, she won silver medals in long jump and heptathlon in the All India Inter-University Meet at Jaipur. Her excellence at the university and national levels fetched her a place in the Indian camp too. From then on, she started concentrating in long jump and triple jump. Mr. T.P. Ouseph continued as her coach. Subsequently, Anju started making excellent performances at the national and international levels.

In 2000, Mrs. Anju got married to the national triple jump champion, Mr. Robert Bobby George, the younger brother of the Indian Volleyball legend, the late Jimmy George. This became a real booster to her because of the constant encouragement and training she receives from her understanding husband, who himself was a renowned athlete, particularly in triple jump. Mr. Bobby, who is well versed with the modern trends in training and competitions, is guiding Mrs. Anju to climb higher and higher.

She had short stints in the CRPF and the Railways before joining the Customs and Central Excise as Preventive Officer. She is stationed at Chennai.

At present, she is undergoing training under the great Mr. Mike Powell, the world record holder in long jump.

In this hour of glory, the President of the Republic of India said, "It is the result of your hard work and dedication. I am sure it would go a long way to spur those athletes who have been toiling hard to bring such laurels to our country". As he wished, let us also wish Mrs. Anju better success and sincerely hope that she brings more and more glory to our country. ❖