

5. DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES OF POST- INDEPENDENCE ERA

Etawah Pilot Project (1948)

This project was started in 1948 by Mr. Albert Mayer of USA who came to India as a warrior at a village called Mahewa in UP. A pilot project for development of Etawah district in UP was formulated by him with the following objectives.

1. To know the degree of productive and social improvements, through self confidence and cooperatives;
2. To find how quickly these results could be attained;
3. To know whether the results remain permanent even after the special pressure is withdrawn; and
4. To assess how far the results were reproductive in other places.

In the project, development officers at various levels were posted. At village level, there was a 'multi-purpose' village level worker (VLW) with four or five villages under him. The entire project was sponsored and funded by the Government of UP.

This programme works were, by and large, similar to earlier projects; introduction of improved variety seeds, chemical fertilizers, improved implements, plant protection measures, horticultural development, soil conservation, improved cultural practices and the like. There were projects in animal husbandry, cooperation, credit provision, marketing and supply, improvements of roads, water supply, drainage etc. There were adult literacy programmes, tour for farmers, village leader training camps, mass contact programmes, etc.

The project total expenditure was 1.54 million rupees. Of this total expenditure only 1.3 per cent was on grants-in-aid and subsidy. This was very little share. It also did not distribute materials of any kind at free of cost to the people. The emphasis was self-help. Advice alone was free.

Initially the work was started in 64 villages. After one year the number of villages covered by the project went up to 97. In 1951, another 125 villages were included. Finally this project was merged with the National Extension Service (NES) block.

The most convincing achievement of this project was in agriculture, particularly in wheat production due to adoption of improved production technologies. This project solved the problem of unemployment and under-employments. There was 53.3 per cent expenditure on capital works, which resulted in making available of good roads, and other structures. Success gained in Etawah could not be maintained after Mayer's departure in 1957.

Nilokheri Project (1948)

It started during 1948 under the leadership of S.K.Dey. Its primary purpose was to develop a new township to rehabilitate displaced persons from West Pakistan. The project was built in a swampy barren land by refugees 'self help and governments' assistance, located around the vocational training centre on the highway of Delhi and Ambala.

Dey launched the new scheme called 'Mazdoor Manzil' for construction of township at Nilokheri. This scheme gave the people (1) training on Agricultural implements preparation, (2) cottage industries (3) carpentry etc. It was based on self-sufficiency for rural cum urban in all essential requirements of life. Later this township was subsequently handed over to the Government of Punjab. After the bifurcation of Punjab, Nilokheri went to Haryana state.