

## **CHAPTER-IV**

# **ADMINISTRATION AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL: A STUDY SINCE 1975**

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## Section - I

In a federal State the districts or similar type of units receives much importance both from political and administrative point view. According to the Oxford Concise Dictionary a district is a territory marked off for special administrative purposes. This Dictionary defines administration as management of public affairs. Thus one may describe the district administration as the management of public affairs within the territory marked off for special administrative purposes. In other ways, district administration is that portion of public administration which functions within the territorial limits of a district. It is the total functioning of a government in a district; the total and complex organisation of the management of public affairs at work, dynamic and not static, in the territory of geographically demarked district (Khera, 1992).

In a country like India, district administration is the cutting edge of public administration. However, quite surprisingly, the Constitution of India makes no mention at all of a district as a unit of administration. Nothing is mentioned about district administration or about the role of District Magistrate and Collector. There is just one reference in the Constitution, in Article 233, to the appointment of District Judges.

District administration in India is a British legacy. Initially it was established as an essential element of colonialism. As an arm of the colonial power its major objective was to maintain status quo. Even, it had to be repressive, remained unchanged in the new system which proclaimed

development, social and economic change as its goals (Eames and Saran, 1982). However, similar types of units were existed even in the age of Mauryans and Mughals. Mughals divided their kingdom into bounded geographic units for the purpose of taxation. Even in the Code of Manu there was a reference of this type of administrative unit. But the 'Districts' in India as it stand today were first created in 1772 (Ghosh, 1997).

So far as the structure of the District Administration is concerned the concept of the district as a unit of administration in India derives somewhat from the pattern of the French Prefecture, with the District Officer as the Prefect. During the period of East India Company's rule the head of the district was Company's trading agent. In course of time, this principal representative at the district level became the collector of land revenue. The Collector of the district also became officially responsible for the maintenance of law and order (Khera, 1992).

Gradually, the total presence of government at the district could be seen. The districts then truly came under the full governance and administration of the imperial power. The Collector levied and collected the land revenue and other taxes and the same time he maintained law and order as District Magistrate. He also administered a system of justice. There was a police official also, the Superintendent of Police, to assist the Collector in order to carry out the order and function.

In due course of time, the need of at least some minimum arrangements of medical attention in the district was felt. Consequently, a doctor was added to the district staff. He was the Civil Surgeon of the district. This Civil Surgeon was also made the Superintendent of Jail. This arrangement continued more or less throughout the British period. However, towards the end of this period the Jail Superintendent was drawn from a new and separate departmental cadre of

officers specially trained for that purpose. Thus the District Administration grew into a complex apparatus: the District Collector and Magistrate, the Superintendent of Jail, the Civil Surgeon, the District Judge, the Executive Engineer of Public Works; and thus on to include a District Inspector of Schools, a District Agriculture Officer, and the rest of the components of the District Administration as it exist today.

The introduction of local self government institutions and the reforms of 1919 and 1920 have introduced the concepts of departmentalisation; working in mutual isolation etc. the structure of district administration was more or less same till 1992. After the introduction of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, a change in the structure of district administration has been taken place. However, Nirmal Mukherjee, (1989) proposed for the establishment of a district level government. He suggests the replacement of the District Collector and the Zilla Parishad by an elected district government he argued that it is necessary from three point of view— i)it will be more democratic, ii) it will be more federal, and iii) it will be controlled mere by the locals.

Under the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, Zilla Parishad has been established at the district level which is an elected body. The Chairman of the Zilla Parishad has been given the status of Minister of State and the District Collector becomes the ex-officio member of Zilla Parishad. District Planning Coordination Committee (DPCC) is created to formulate plans for the all-round development. It is interesting to note that the concept of district planning is comparatively a new one. And M.A.S. Rajan (1990) is of the opinion that since the districts in India is nothing but a part of a larger area planning has to be independent of the outlines of a district. However he agreed that the plans should be based on extensive local knowledge about resources, people, micro-climate, terrain, etc.

The concept of Panchayati Raj Institutions comprehends an administrative structure that covers Gram Panchayat at district level, Panchayat Samiti at intermediate level, and Zilla Parishad at district level. Thus an effort to establish a direct relation between the district administration and grass-root level can be noticed. So this is the structure of district administration as it exists today.

Now let us look at the functional aspects of district administration. The head of the district is the District Collector. Initially he was District Collector and Magistrate. The office of the District Magistrate, in its early period, was vested with powers relating to administration, judiciary as well as collection of revenue. However, Lord Cornwallis insisted on the separation of judicial from executive functions in District Administration. Henceforth the collector was only a collector of land revenue and the District Judge- Magistrate, having magisterial, judicial functions along with police and general administration, became the head of the district. In contrast to the Cornwallis system there was Munro School of thought about district administration. Under the Munro model the District Collector became the real and effective head of the district and was responsible for the general administration and the welfare of the people in his charge (Mishra, 1996). The Munro model was working in the first decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the provinces of Madras, Bombay, and North-Western provinces.

During 1980s Rippon demanded for participation in administration on the part of the Indians. He allowed political education to the native masses. Local government institutions have been given a new direction during this period. By 1919 the initiative of the District Officer has been reduced and his powers and authority had become limited. The introduction of local self government institutions and the new system of government, as a result of the reforms of 1919 and 1920, created a new phase for the arrangements and functioning of

district administration. The district administration, at that time, emphasised on departmentalism and working in mutual isolation (Mishra, 1996).

With the implementation of Provincial Autonomy in 1937 under the Government of India Act, 1935, the District Officer has become the agent of popular government instead of being an agent of the British Government. Accordingly, the functions and position of the District Officer have changed. The District Magistrate come to be more and more involved with interpretation and enforcement of newly passed economic and social legislation. He had to be engaged more and more in rural development (Mishra, 1996). On the eve of independence in 1947 the District Magistrate had to be something like “jack of all trades”. When we contemplate the social and economic administration in the district, one may find that great changes have been taking place since independence.

The period immediately after independence marked a substantive increase in the power of District Collector. The ministers desired their strength from the bureaucracy right from the state to the district as regards the implementation of the Government policy. Apart from maintaining law and order and revenue administration, the District collector became the king pin of all developmental activities right from the district to the grass root level. In actual sense, he was the ‘Maibaap’ of the district.

So far as the management of the affairs of government at the district level is concerned, the Collector of a district occupies a cardinal position in the administration of the district. He is the local representative of the government. He is the head of the revenue department and the district. He is the executive District Magistrate who keeps in general touch with the working of all departments within the district and with the increased shift in emphasis on

developmental activities. He is personally responsible for coordination and guidance in this respect (Singh and Singh, 1989).

The role of the District Collector increased manifold in 1952-53 with the introduction of Community Development Programme (CDP) and National Extension Service (NES). During this period he was supposed not only to take care of the development administration but he was also responsible to coordinate the activities of various departments, such as, health, animal husbandry, agriculture, industry, education, etc. working at the district level. Apart from this, he had also to take care of the visit of ministers to his district and to be the Chief Guest of various social, academic and other activities.

The Balwant Rai Mehta study team recommended decentralisation of administration and democratisation of power. Its main objective are to bring about a change in the mental outlook of the people, install in them an ambition for higher standards of life and the will determination to work for such standards, it seeks to build up the community and the individual and to make the latter a builder of his own village and centre and of India on the large sense. The recommended the formation of hierarchic three-tier system of rural local government to be called Panchayati Raj. These three tiers are Gram Panchayat, to be located at local level, Panchayat Samiti, to be located at intermediate level, and Zilla Parishad—to be located at district level (Ghosh, 1997).

During the late 70s a change of government came at the national level and consequently there has been a change on policy formulation also. During this period the blocks have been gaining importance in lieu of districts. The 6<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan again highlighted the importance of block level planning for eradication of poverty through the provision of gainful employment opportunities to the poorest of the poor (Ghosh, 1997).

With the introduction of Panchayati Raj Institutions the Collector was no longer the only eyes and ears of the government. And with the advent of democratic decentralisation, decision making, even in administrative matter has shifted from administrators to the elected politicians (Mukhopadhyay, 1990). There has been an increasing demand of the need of the people's participation in the administrative process, in economic and social administration of the district (Mishra, 1996). In West Bengal an act has been passed (October, 1999) which takes away the function of the collector relating to revaluation of land entrusted it on the Finance Secretary of the state (Ananda Bazaar Patrika, 4<sup>th</sup> October, 1999).

However, despite these changes and reduction on status and prestige of his office, the collector has continued to be the principal officer of the state government at the district level. As B. Sivaraman observes, the role of the collector and the emphasis on the type of work he was to do at a certain period in history has changed from time to time. But all along he has been the Head of the Administration in the district and he has been the representative of the Government at that level (Mishra, 1996).

## **Section - II**

The history of district administration in Sikkim has been started from the period marked by the reign of Phuntsog Namgyal. He has divided the entire territory of Sikkim into twelve Dzongs (fort areas—as the administrative units) and placed them under twelve Dzongpens (Shina, 1975). The traditional life was simple in Sikkim and administration also devoid of any type of complexity. The society was feudal and feudal lords provided the administrative machinery by performing regulatory functions. The abolition of landlordism in 1949 necessitated the reorganisation of the administrative system. As a first step to

this direction, Sikkim was divided into two tehsils (revenue districts): East and West. These tehsils had been created for the purpose of revenue collection (Chhetri, 2012).

After the introduction of Seven Year plan (1954-1961), as a result of Indo-Sikkim treaty of 1950, the administration had to be geared to meet the exigencies of implementing this plan. Consequently, Sikkim was divided into four districts, namely, East, West, North and South with the headquarters at Gangtok, Geyzing, Mangan and Namchi respectively. Again the three districts each are subdivided into two subdivisions – the West into Geyzing and Sorong; the North into Mangan and Chungthang; the South into Ravangla and Namchi. The East district is sub-divided into three subdivisions namely, Gangtok, Pakeong and Rangli.

From the name itself it prevails that the East district is located in the eastern portion of the state. In the west of this district there is South district of the state, in the north there is North district, in the north – east there is China occupied Tibet, in the south – east it is Bhutan there and in the South there is West Bengal. According to the census report, East Sikkim had been populated with 281,293 persons of which 150,260 were male and 131,033 were female. There was a change of 14.79% in the population compared to the population as it was in 2001. Average literacy rate of East Sikkim in 2011 were 84.67 compared to 74.67 of 2001. If we intend to look into the things at gender basis male and female literacy were 89.22 and 79.41 respectively. Total number of literates in this district was 215,675 of which male and female were 121,881 and 93,794 respectively.

We can show the facts and figures regarding urban rural population of East district through the table below:

**Table—4.1****Urban- Rural Population of East District-Facts and figures**

Description	Rural	Urban
Population (%)	57.07%	42.93%
Total population	160,543	120,750
Male population	86,661	63,599
Female population	73,882	57,151
Sex Ratio	853	899
Child Sex Ratio (0-6)	963	923
Child Population (0-6)	15,496	11,075
Male Child(0-6)	7,893	5,758
Female Child (0-6)	7,603	5,317
Child Percentage (0-6)	9.65%	9.17%
Male Child Percentage	9.11%	9.05%
Female Child Percentage	10.29%	9.30%
Literates	117,256	98419
Male Literates	67,894	53,987
Female Literates	49,362	44,432
Average Literacy	80.84%	89.74%
Male Literacy	86.19%	93.34%
Female Literacy	74.48%	85.72%

**Source:** Census Report of India, 2011

The West district of Sikkim is bounded Nepal (located in west), North district (located in north), South district (located in east) and West Bengal (located in south). In 2011 the West district of Sikkim had population of 136,299 of which male were 70,225 and female were 66,074. There is a change of 10.58% in the population compared to the population as per 2001.

Average literacy rate of west Sikkim in 2011 are 78.69 compared to 58.80 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 84.86 and 72.12 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 66.82 and 50.11 in west Sikkim District. Total literate in west Sikkim District were 95,481 of which male and female were 53,084 and 42,397 respectively. In 2001, West Sikkim District had 60,628 in its district.

In case of Sex Ratio in West Sikkim, it stood at 941 per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 929. In 2011 census, child sex ratio is 950 per boys compared to figure of 966 girls per 1000 boys of 2001 Census data According to the Census 2011 data regarding child under 0-6 age in West Sikkim there were total 14,957 children under age of 0-6 against 20,153 of 2001 census. Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 950 compared to 966 of census 2001. In 2011, Children under 0-6 formed 10.97 percent of the total population of West Sikkim District compared to 16.35 percent of 2001.

The facts and figures on rural and urban population in West Sikkim can be shown through the following table:

**Table—4.2**

**Urban- Rural Population of West District-Facts and figures**

Description	Rural	Urban
Population (%)	96.16%	3.84%
Total population	131,060	5,239
Male population	67,522	2,703
Female population	63,538	2,536
Sex Ratio	941	938
Child Sex Ratio (0-6)	952	899
Child Population (0-6)	14,469	488

Male Child(0-6)	7,412	257
Female Child (0-6)	7,057	231
Child Percentage (0-6)	11.04%	9.31%
Male Child Percentage	10.98%	9.51%
Female Child Percentage	11.11%	9.11%
Literates	91,202	4,279
Male Literates	50,777	2,307
Female Literates	40,425	1,972
Average Literacy	78.22%	90.07%
Male Literacy	84.47%	94.32%
Female Literacy	71.57%	85.55%

**Source:** Census Report of India, 2011.

The North District in Sikkim is located in the northern part of the state. In the west of this district there is Nepal, in the north as well as east there is China occupied Tibet and in the south there are three districts of Sikkim—West, South and East.

In 2011, North Sikkim had population of 43,354 of which male and female were 24,513 and 18,841 respectively. In 2001 census, north Sikkim had a population of 41,030 of which males were 23,414 and remaining 17,616 were females. There was change of 5.66 percent in the population compared to population as per 2001. Average literacy rate of North Sikkim in 2011 were 77.39 compared to 67.21 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise. Male and female literacy were 83.03 and 69.92 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 75.69 and 55.39 in North Sikkim District. Total literate in North Sikkim District were 30,084 of which male and female were 18,392 and 11,692 respectively. With regards to Sex Ratio in North Sikkim, it stood at 769 per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 752. In 2011 census, child sex ratio is 897 girls per 1000 boys compared to figure of 995 girls per 1000 boys of

2001 census data. In census report, 2011, the district of North Sikkim has 4,479 children under age of 0-6 against 5,958 of 2001 census. The Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 897 compared to 995 of census 2001. In 2011, Children under 0-6 formed 10.33 percent of North Sikkim District compared to 14.52 percent of 2001.

The following table describes the population in the North District by showing it as it is in case of urban and rural areas.

**Table—4.3**

**Urban- Rural Population of North District-Facts and figures**

Description	Rural	Urban
Population (%)	89.28%	10.72%
Total population	38,706	4,648
Male population	22,052	2,461
Female population	16,654	2,817
Sex Ratio	755	889
Child Sex Ratio (0-6)	898	894
Child Population (0-6)	3,907	572
Male Child(0-6)	2,059	302
Female Child (0-6)	1,848	270
Child Percentage (0-6)	10.09%	12.31%
Male Child Percentage	9.34%	12.27%
Female Child Percentage	11.10%	12.35%
Literates	26,700	3,384
Male Literates	16,503	1,889

Female Literates	10,197	1,495
Average Literacy	76.73%	83.02%
Male Literacy	82.54%	87.49%
Female Literacy	68.87%	77.99%

**Source:** Census Report of India, 2011.

The South district is bounded by West district, North district, East district and West Bengal those are located in west north east and south respectively. This district had population of 146,742 in 2011 of which male and female were 76,663 and 70,079 respectively. In 2001 census, South Sikkim had a population of 131,525 of which males were 68,241 and remaining 63,284 were female. There was change of 11.57 percent in the population compared to population as per 2001.

Average literacy rate of South Sikkim in 2011 were 82.06 compared to 67.31 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender wise, male and female literacy were 87.06 and 76.57 respectively. For 2001 census, same figures stood at 74.29 and 59.72 in South Sikkim District.

With regards to sex Ratio in Sikkim, it stood at 914 per 1000 male compared to 2001 census figure of 927. In 2011 census, child sex ratio is 948 girls per 1000 boys compared to figure of 969 girls per 1000 boys of 2001 census data. In south Sikkim there were total 15,070 children under age of 0-6 against 20,674 of 2001 census. Child Sex Ratio as per census 2011 was 948 compared to 969 of census 2011. In 2011 Children under 0-6 formed 10.27 percent of south Sikkim District compared to 15.72 percent of 2001.

The population in South district in Sikkim as it is in rural and urban sectors can well be depicted as under:

**Table -4.4****Urban- Rural Population of South District-Facts and figures**

Description	Rural	Urban
Population (%)	85.63%	14.37
Total population	125,653	21,089
Male population	65,887	10,776
Female population	59,766	10,313
Sex Ratio	907	957
Child Sex Ratio (0-6)	956	891
Child Population (0-6)	13,166	1,904
Male Child(0-6)	6,730	1,007
Female Child (0-6)	6,436	897
Child Percentage (0-6)	10.48%	9.03%
Male Child Percentage	10.21%	9.34%
Female Child Percentage	10.77%	8.70%
Literates	91,240	16,814
Male Literates	51,072	8,935
Female Literates	40,168	7,879
Average Literacy	81.11%	87.64%
Male Literacy	86.33%	91.46%
Female Literacy	75.32%	83.68%

**Source:** Census Report of India, 2011

Sikkim was a feudal state till 1949. During this feudal period, the landlords including the monk landlords had both judicial and economic rights over their subjects. After the abolition of landlordism and creation of four districts, the District Officer as the head of the districts had some magisterial powers along with the regulatory functions—as the District Collectors of other

districts in India enjoyed. However it is to be mentioned that there was another officer at the district level in Sikkim, Inspector of Land Revenue, responsible for collecting land revenues which was one of the most important functions of the District Collector. Apart from District Officer and Inspector of Land Revenue, Deputy Development Officer was also placed in district service in Sikkim. The Chief Secretary of Sikkim who was the head of the state administrative system had to function through the District Officers of respective districts.

In a country where monarchical form of government is there, the districts are created just to sustain and maintain the autocratic rule uninterruptedly. Sikkim was not an exception to this direction. Before merger, the district administration in Sikkim was carried out only to maintain the rule of the Chogyal. However, after merger, the concept of democracy was introduced for the first time in the history of district administration in Sikkim. Now the purpose of district administration there is to serve the people to maintain the people's government, to administer development for the people and to develop the administration in turn. In order to carry out the administration properly, at the district level the District Magistrate and Collector has the Additional District Magistrate, the Superintendent of Police, the Deputy Superintendent of Police, the Sub-divisional Magistrates, the Deputy Director, Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department, the Revenue Officers, Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department  
([www.http://southsikkim.nic.in/districtadmin/dstadmin](http://southsikkim.nic.in/districtadmin/dstadmin)).

The District Collector represents the state government at the district level. Within the district he is the leader of the administrative set up. The administrative machinery of the district looks up to him for his order. He has to lead all the government officials' work within the area of his jurisdiction. The presence of effective leadership of the collector can bring about a sea-change in

the attitude of the people who work with him. The District Collector has a crucial role in executing and monitoring the developmental programmes within the territory of his district. The relief camps have to be organised under the supervision of the District Collector. He is also empowered to control the law and order situation, with the help of the Superintendent of Police, within the boundary of the District.

The Superintendent of Police, Inspector General of Jails, the Surgeon General, the Chief Conservator of Forests and the Chief Engineer had to inform the Collector of every activity in their Departments. Though the Additional Commissioners of Income Tax are important officials of the district they do not have to send a report to the collector as they work for the central government and not the state governments.

The District Collector is entrusted with a wide range of duties in the jurisdiction of the district. An Indian district has between 11,054,131 to 7,948 residents, with an average of two million residents. The area of land in a district also varies widely, from 45,652 sq. Km. (larger than Denmark or Switzerland) to 9 sq. Km ([www.http://en.wikipedia.org/District\\_collector](http://en.wikipedia.org/District_collector))

While the actual extent of the responsibilities varies in each State, they generally involve:

As Collector

- land assessment
- land acquisition
- collection of land revenue
- Collection of income tax dues, excise duties, irrigation dues etc.
- distribution of agricultural loans

### **As District Magistrate:**

- maintenance of law and order
- supervision of the police and jails
- supervision of subordinate Executive magistracy
- hearing cases under the preventive section of the Criminal Procedure Code
- supervision of jails and certification of execution of capital sentences

### **As Crisis Administrator**

- Disaster management during natural calamities such as floods, famines or epidemics
- Crisis management during riots or external aggression

### **As Development Officer**

- Ex-officio chairman of the District Rural Development Agency, which carries out various developmental activities
- Chairman of the District Bankers Coordination Committee
- Head of the District Industries Centre  
([www.http://en.wikipedia.org/District\\_collector](http://en.wikipedia.org/District_collector))

He is assisted by the following officers for carrying out day to day work in various fields:-

1. Additional deputy commissioner
2. Assistant commissioner (general)
3. Assistant commissioner (grievances)
4. Executive magistrate
5. District revenue officer
6. District transport officer

7. District development and panchayat officer
8. Civil defence officer
9. Urban ceiling officer

As a collector, the main task of the District Collector is the collection of land revenue. Revenue and excise go together, and are concerned with the assessment and collection of taxes and duties of different kind (Khera, 1992.) The collector has to maintain and update the land records. He is the registrar of land documents also and being the registrar he has to collect the registration duty. He is the head of the revenue court. He has to resolve the disputes relating to mutation, boundary of the pieces of land acquired by some person or persons. Acquisition of land for public purpose is also to be done under the supervision of District Collector. Again he is responsible for sending relief for all types natural calamity. Consequently, the District Collector is the head of the administration of natural calamity relief fund and force. And when we describe the functions of District Collector relating to the collection of revenue it can be mentioned that in Sikkim land reform has not been done till date. Sikkim has its own land laws. Their existing land and revenue laws flow from the Chogyal himself. The treasury officer works under the control of the District Collector and forms a part of district administration.

District Collector in Sikkim has to act as the District Magistrate also. District Collector, as the District Magistrate is the legal head of the criminal administration in a district. This is the provision as it is in the Indian Police Act (1861). In that sense, one may expect that the District Collector has tremendous functional role in the police administration. However, this was true until the Criminal Procedure Code was amended in 1973. This amendment separated the executive functions from the judicial functions at the district level.

Prior to this separation, resulting from amendment of Criminal Procedure Act, 1973, the District Magistrate tried IPC and other criminal cases in his court. So the police administration was expected to head to legal orders of District Magistrate. With the separation of judiciary, this judicial functions were taken away from the District Collector and entrusted with the Judicial Officers like Judicial Magistrate, Chief Judicial Magistrate and session Judges.

In the present day scenario, one can say that District Collector is, at best, a nominal head of the Criminal Administration. As the District Magistrate he carries out the duties of an Executive Magistrate under the Criminal Procedure Code like security proceedings, disposal of unlawful assemblies, removal of public nuisance etc. The police administration has to convince the District Collector and seek his orders to the above ends.

As far as day to day running of police administration is concerned, one must realise that uniformed force should have one undisputed leader who can command them. This role is played by the District Superintendent of Police. The District Collector cannot interfere in this task. In short the rules of the District Collector and the District Superintendent of Police are complementary to each other. Both of them need to develop a mutually respecting relationship to achieve the common objective, i.e., objective of maintaining law and public order.

Other important functions that have to be carried out by the District Collector are the functions relating to Development Administration. The District Collector acts as the Member-Secretary of Zilla Parishad. According to the Sikkim Panchayat Act, 1995, which has been passed following the footsteps of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Act, 1992, the District Collector is the Sachiva of the Zilla Parishad while the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the

Zilla Parishad are to be the elected members. However, all rural development schemes are administered under the supervision of the District Collector.

In addition, the District Collector has to ensure the civil supplies of essential commodities for the people of a district (Khera, 1992). The district administration is also concerned with the running of all elections to Parliament as well as state Assembly and also to the local bodies. There is usually a District Election Officer. The Collector of a district is responsible for the proper conduct of the election process, with the help of the staffs which he very often draws from all other departments of the district. The District Collector has to act as the District Electoral Registration Officer as well as Returning Officer in the district.

It is the District Collector who has to administer various relief funds. It may be flood draught earthquake or fire—it is the duty of the Collector to send the relief funds to the affected area and to see that the funds are distributed to the affected people properly.

In Sikkim the District Controller is the Chairman of the District Consumer Protection Council. A District Council is a part of the executive and judicial governments in some jurisdictions, which are formed by the Central Government of the country. The north eastern states of the nation are mostly characterized by these kinds of councils. In the country of India, these District Councils are mainly formed to maintain and restore the original customs and lifestyles of the native tribal population

The main features of this Council can be grouped as under:

1. It aims at promoting and protecting the distinct consumer rights.
2. Apart from carrying on meetings as and when required, a minimum of 2 meeting are to be held in a year.

3. Being appointed as the Chairperson of the District Council, the District Collector is the in-charge of the district administration.
4. This Council are to be constituted of several other non-official and official members, who represent the same interests prescribed by the Government of the state.
5. It formulates and forwards plans for balanced and secured development of the state.
6. It timely reviews the implementation of the suggested proposals.
7. It also reviews the expenditure of the state.
8. Again, it reviews the maintenance of public order and security of Sikkim.

Apart from these, the District Collector in Sikkim has to play his role as the Chairman of National Rural Health Mission, Chairman of District T.B. Control Society, Chairman of District Cancer Control Programme Chairman of the Disaster Management Committee, Chair of the Prime Minister's Employment Generation Scheme, Chairman of the District Coordination Committee and District Consultative Committee, Chairman of the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Chairman of the District Level Monitoring Committee under Rule 16 and 17 of Sc/ St(Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995. He is also the Certificate Officer of Sikkim Public Demand Recovery Act, 2006. And last, but not the least, the District Collector has to exercise powers conferred by sub-section (1) of sec. 21 of Sikkim Anti-Drug Act, 2005.

Keeping all these factors in mind, the working of development administration at the district level in Sikkim is going to be discussed in the next chapter.

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