

## P R E F A C E

Rural development administration in India, at present aims at bringing about a change in the pattern and direction of the functioning of the democratic state in which affluence of the few has grown in the midst of mass poverty, deprivation and destitution. There is now a consensus among the policy-makers, planners, administrators and scholars that without trying hard to provide the poor the basic needs for their survival, such as, food, shelter, drinking water, medical and health care, and educational services, no viable and vibrant democracy can be established. The countries like India, where a vast majority of the people in absolute or relative poverty live in rural areas, rural development has become a matter of concern for all. Although the need for a well-defined public policy in this regard is felt by all, a radical policy and structural reforms, it seems, are not in the offing in the immediate future owing to the nature of the Indian polity. Hence, the need for improving performance in the implementation of development programmes has been the main plank for wiping out the scourge of poverty. But the organisation and management system, with a tradition of colonial bureaucracy based on Weberian model and the lack of people's participation, have hindered the success of the developmental plans and programmes. In view of the accent on distributive justice, equity, minimum basic needs and a decent quality of life, the humanistic and participatory thrusts in development administration need to be emphasized. Such attempts

have been made to a significant extent in West Bengal through the revitalization of the Panchayati Raj in 1978. In the context of the study area, recent political upheavals in the form of the "Gorkhaland Movement" and the formation of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council added new dimension in development administration.

In the light of the broader perspective outlined above, the study seeks to go into the some of the basic organisational and management issues of rural development. The detailed plan of the study has been provided in Chapter I. But at this juncture, it is worthwhile to mention that Chapter V the lengthiest of them all, is a very important and significant part of the present dissertation as it analyses empirically the working of the developmental agencies in the hill areas of Darjeeling in the light of the theoretical framework developed in Chapter II and on the basis of the operationalisation of some of the crucial organisational concepts in that Chapter.

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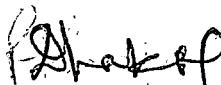
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