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Kuru Kshetra

FEBRUARY 1953

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Dear Reader,

We are sure you are aware that the success of the Community Development Projects will ultimately depend upon the voluntary co-operation of the people who are to benefit by them. You too can give a hand in this great endeavour, so vital to the destiny of the nation. We shall be very happy indeed to consider articles by you for publication. We shall of course be happier if you can illustrate them too with photographs or sketches. Only they must bear upon the Community Projects or any other scheme that relates to the economic development of our country. It is your duty as much as it is ours to enthuse our people to help themselves. If we were to pay you for your contributions, we shall really be depriving you of your rightful claim to participate in this programme. We shall be grateful for anything you can send us — a serious article, a light-hearted reminder to the people of their duty, a sketch or a photograph.

Please send typewritten copies of your contributions to:

**The Editor, Kurukshetra,
Community Projects Administration,
(Planning Commission),
Rashtrapati Bhawan,
NEW DELHI.**

*Yours faithfully,
Editor.*

WATER FOR WESTERN FIELDS

VILLAGE SCRIBE

"Mind the cobras, there are a couple hereabouts." With these cheery words the Collector welcomed me to the Inspection Bungalow at Karjat, in the Thana-Kolaba project area. One look at his Wellington boots convinced me that he meant what he said. Happily, there was no reptilian visitation that night!

Water or rather the lack of it is one of life's little worries in this otherwise pleasant spot in the Western Ghats between Bombay and Poona. From the modest basinful for domestic purposes to the aqueous requirements of a field, there is a shortage. No wonder then that irrigation is being given priority in the Community Projects scheme for the area; and in several ways the people are giving their co-operation in the fight against water shortage. Take, for instance, the canal at Vaijnath, two miles in length. Some miles from Karjat, Vaijnath can be reached by a jeep over what is certainly not India's best road! The canal was dug by the village people themselves. Their labour was partly voluntary and partly paid out of the Project funds. The amount thus paid was in the form of a loan which had to be repaid in instalments by the authorities. Previously this water used to be wasted in large parts of this area. About 150 acres will now be brought under a second crop of paddy by this co-operative endeavour.

The Raja Nalla irrigation project is an ambitious scheme and will take off from below the power house at Bhivpuri in the Ghats. By combining this scheme with 'lift' facilities, the area under irrigation is expected to rise to 10 per cent of the total as against four per cent for Bombay State as a whole. The amount to be spent on irrigation will take the form of loans to be paid back to the State in full with interest. A substantial portion of the people's contri-

bution to the construction of the Raja Nalla is expected to be in voluntary labour.

Near the Vaijnath canal, there is a model farm where improved methods of cultivation are demonstrated to the villagers. The Japanese method by which the crop yield is enhanced considerably is proving popular, and it is proposed to cover a third of the area under cultivation every year by this method.

Other jobs which have been completed include 300 compost pits, repairs to 320 old pits, 11 approach roads to the villages, cleaning and repairs of roads and the distribution of improved seed.

The development of the dairying industry is a feature of the programme. The Project authorities propose to spend nearly Rs. 5 lakh on this industry. The educational programme provides for 120 new schools in the project area, the emphasis being on primary education with agriculture as the basic craft. Existing schools will also be converted into agricultural craft schools. It is also proposed to establish a residential high school in the Khalapur block and one or two hostels in each block to accommodate children who are receiving secondary education.

The construction of roads is based on the principle of "villagers' community undertaking". About 120 miles of a major and connecting roads are planned for the three blocks. The organization of multi-purpose co-operative societies is being undertaken, and the commodities required by the agricultural extension service will be distributed through them. However, owing to the backwardness of the area, the development of co-operative habits is not without its difficulties.

The three blocks in this area cover 544 square miles. Their population—a little over 2,09,000—is spread over 500 villages, the

smallest of which consists of 20 people. There are few villages with a population of over 1,000, although the largest has a population of 4,000. Popularly known as the Konkan tract, it is a rugged and broken country with an annual rainfall of 80 to 100 inches. The ratio of the cultivated land to the total area is small, and is only 23 per cent. Paddy is the main crop, but the yield is comparatively low, ranging from 1,500 to 2,000 lb. per acre. The average holding is only half an acre as against four to five acres in some other districts of Bombay State. A considerable proportion of the population is made up of Backward Classes and the standard of education is probably the lowest in the State. Nearly 80 per cent of the cultivators are tenant farmers who have now lost the ownership of the land. The Tenancy Act, however, is a safeguard against absentee landlordism. Owing to their extreme poverty, the Project authorities feel that it may be necessary to pay lower wages in many cases rather than expect free labour from the villagers.

About 250 miles south-east of Thana-Kolaba lies the Belgaum Community Project area. The three development blocks which comprise the project are in Hukeri and Gokak, the two adjoining talukas. A number of villages selected for development are near the rivers. The 44-mile long Ghataprabha Left Bank Canal should also prove a boon to agriculturists, particularly as the annual rainfall is only about 25 inches. The main crops are cereals, pulses, oil-seeds, tobacco, cotton, sugar-cane, potatoes, vegetables and chillies.

An interesting experiment I came across in my 80-mile drive by jeep was the construction of houses on a co-operative basis by the members of the backward tribe. Known as the *wadaras* of the Kunnur village, these people are stone-cutters, and their skill has stood them in good stead in house-building. To demonstrate the "before and after" effects the villagers keep on view a disused, low thatched hut beside its improved, roomy counterpart built of stone. The co-operative society is lodged in a neat little house. In

the office there is a community receiving set and in the evening the villagers gather to listen to broadcasts from the Dharwar Station of AIR. This experiment, though not strictly a part of the Community Project Programme, has the sympathy of the Project Officer and is being conducted under his advice.

On the bank of a river, also at Kunnur, the villagers themselves are building a ghat for bathing and other purposes. They themselves carried the stones to the location and the building is in progress.

In a number of villages, the people have constructed approach roads, varying in length from one to three miles. Since these roads were built by co-operative endeavour, they did not entail any litigation which normally accompanies land acquisition operations. At a meeting I had with the elders in the village of Mudalgi, they told me about their plans for building a school with eleven rooms. Later on I saw the actual site where work is now in progress. At other places, wells have been dug, compost pits prepared and measures taken to improve sanitation. Classes in adult literacy, night schools and gram banks are also being opened.

There is a training centre for Village Level Workers' in the village of Arbhavi, the headquarters of the Project, run with financial assistance from the Ford Foundation. A course of three-month's duration for training in agricultural extension, animal husbandry, veterinary science, co-operation, public health, village panchayats, housing, etc., is organised for village level workers. After the short theoretical and practical training they are posted to different areas.

Situated in the grounds of a Government agricultural farm, the Centre offers several facilities for training. Among others, there are sections devoted to poultry rearing, dairy farming and cattle breeding. The use of tractors is also taught. The villagers are taking readily to the breeding of white-leg horn poultry because they lay more and larger eggs. For the cooking pot, however, they prefer the country fowl!

HAND-MADE PAPER

P. M. MATHAI

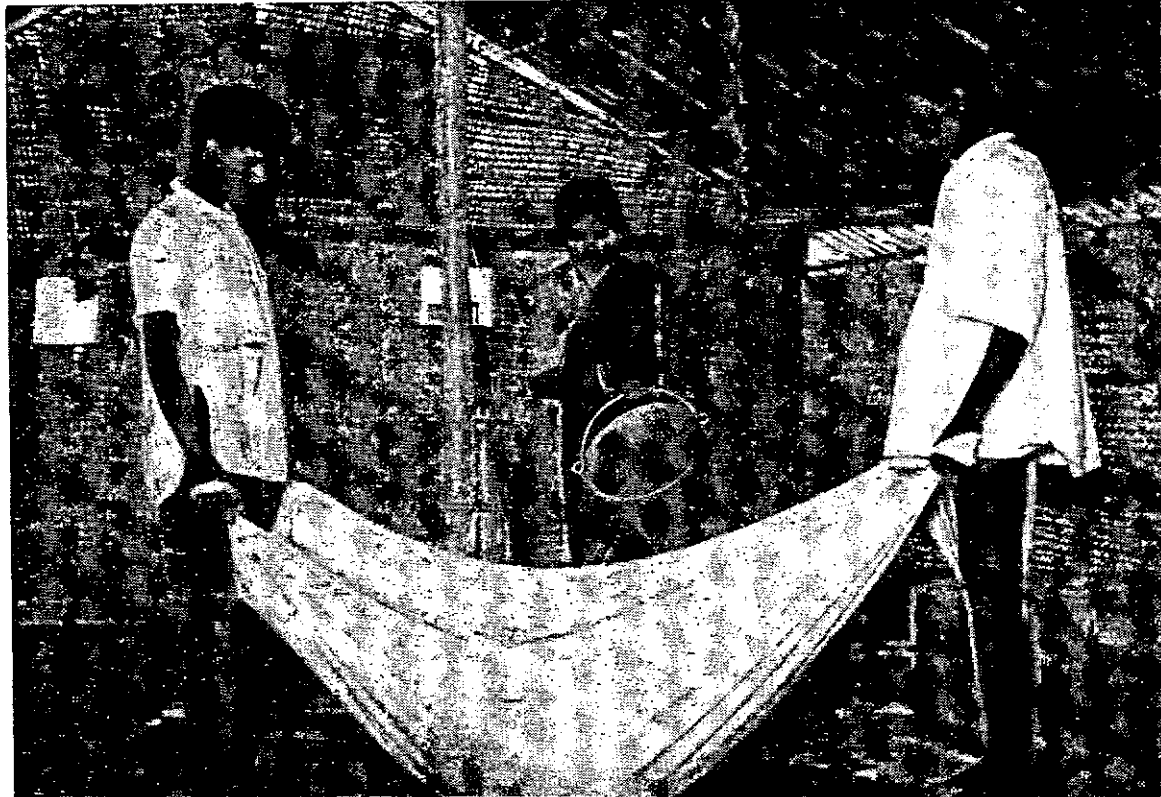
It is generally believed that paper was invented by the Chinese some two thousand years ago. From them the art of paper-making spread to Turkistan and then to Arabia. The Moghuls brought the art with them to India and soon after, the paper industry became well established in various parts of the country. Till almost the middle of the nineteenth century, the industry continued to flourish notwithstanding imports of paper from China. But thereafter, machine-made paper from Europe almost completely displaced hand-made paper. Understandably enough, the indigenous product of cottage industries was not as fine as machine-made paper nor was it glazed. The local industry would have disappeared altogether but for the fact that there persisted some demand for coarser varieties of paper which were still used for certain special purposes. Hand-made paper was then

used to make ledgers, religious books, horoscopes, invitation cards, etc.

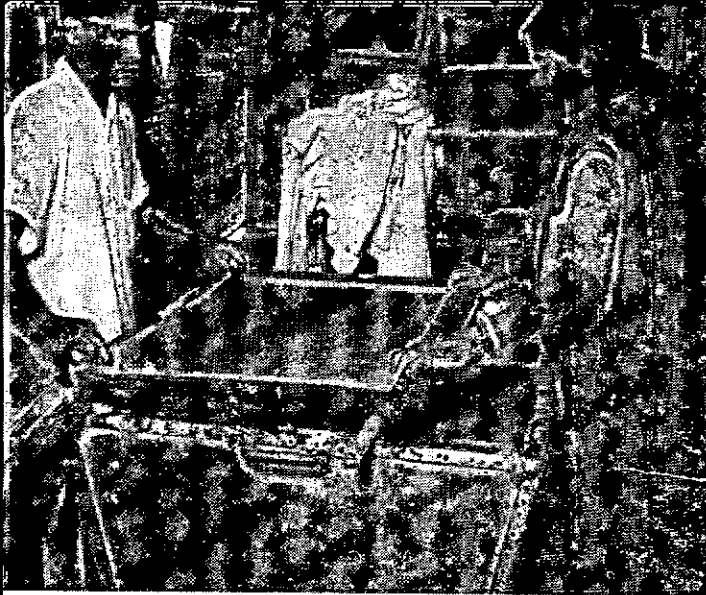
In recent times, the hand-made paper industry has been the subject of a good deal of discussion in official and non-official quarters. In fact, it is one of the ten village industries which have been recommended for intensive development by the Planning Commission. In view of the fact that this industry can produce stamp, drawing and wrapping paper and other papers required for legal documents, mounting boards, etc., there is considerable scope for its development. Incidentally, it will further provide supplementary employment for the cultivators.

The Planning Commission has drawn up a four-year development programme to develop certain existing important centres of manufacture, where skilled artisans make paper by hand; they require help and direction on scientific lines. When fully developed, these centres will provide special

P. M. Mathai, Officer on Special Duty in the Community Projects Administration, is in charge of cottage industries and co-operation.



The pulp is washed free of impurities



This mat is used to take out sheets of paper from the diluted pulp

types of paper which are now imported. It is intended to produce the following varieties of paper at these centres and it is hoped that their products will be able to hold their own against other substitutes in the market: (a) rag paper, commonly known as parchment paper; (b) paper for account books and ledgers; (c) filter paper; (d) drawing paper; (e) blotting paper; (f) album paper and file boards; and (g) water-mark paper for use by insurance companies, and as share certificates.

The Forest Research Institute at Dehra Dun, the All India Village Industries Association at Wardha, the H. B. Technical Institute at Kanpur and the Hand-made Paper Research Centre at Poona are carrying on research with a view to improving tools and techniques. Simultaneously, extensive research is also being conducted on the raw materials used by the industry. In particular, the Institute at Kanpur has been doing specialized research on hand-made paper.

The process for the manufacture of hand-made paper consists briefly of the following stages:

(1) Cutting, cleaning and sorting of the raw material, (2) boiling or digestion, (3) pulp-making, (4) sheet-lifting and (5) drying, sizing and glazing.

In U.P., paper was hitherto made by primitive methods using *dhenki* and other locally available raw materials. But the Kanpur Institute has now improved machines to make the production of hand-made paper appreciably cheaper and more efficient. The paper made with these machines possesses all the peculiar qualities of hand-made paper. Further, the digester-beater, the glazing machines and the strainers, etc., have been specially designed for use by industries functioning on a cottage scale. Besides, improved types of wire mesh-moulds, deckle-edge moulds, couching tables, lifting vats, etc., have been designed to make the process quick and efficient. The new technique of sheet-lifting which was evolved recently will make the paper stronger and more durable.

The Kanpur Institute has also conducted various experiments on the exploitation of cheap cellulosic raw materials, such as grass, rope cuttings, etc., for the manufacture of hand-made paper. Also, it has been recently discovered that paper can be made from *kans*, a wild grass which grows in U.P. A pulp containing a mixture of *kans* and sunn-hemp rope can yield paper of high quality on a commercial scale. But for this novel use of this wild weed, it is otherwise being destroyed.

The papier mache work is a very interesting branch of the hand-made paper industry. The old system of making toys and other articles from papier mache has been considerably improved upon and new techniques are now employed at Faizabad and Kalpi in U.P. to make a variety of attractive goods.

The Research Centre at Poona has been conducting a series of experiments with a view to evolving new machines for use by cottage industries such as beaters, screw presses and calenders. A new paper-lifting vat called the "Vico" was built at the Centre and it eliminates the need for skilled labour. The Centre has also discovered that waste sisal fibre, stumps of banana trees, sunn-hemp

and rameta bark can be used as raw materials for hand-made paper. Samples of kraft paper have been produced successfully by the Centre from a pulp made of stumps of banana trees and waste gunny.

Processing

Mature banana plants are cut very close to the soil in order to conserve as much of the fibre as possible. The leaves and stalks are discarded, the stumps then cut open and the sheaths peeled off one by one. When the sheaths have been separated, they are dried if they have to be put away for future use. If, however, they are to be used immediately, they are beaten on a stone with a wooden mallet so that they can be twisted and squeezed. They are then cut into small pieces of one to 1.5 inches long and about an inch wide. Generally, a freshly cut stump consists of about 93 per cent water and 7 per cent of dry matter. A sample of the dry fibre is tested by drying it in the sun or heating it near the fire. Once the process is standardized, it will not be normally necessary to repeat the tests.

The dry material together with caustic soda is then cooked in a digester. Waste gunny from discarded sacks is also cut similarly, but cooked separately. Six parts of the banana pulp are mixed with four parts of the jute pulp and the mixture sized with rosin.

The paper-lifting is done on "Vico" vats with cloth pieces used for couching. The sheets should be kept pressed for a few



The sheets being glazed with smooth stone

hours and then dried on ropes. The paper will dry overnight if pieces of cloth are spread over them.

The sheets are then glazed by passing them through the rolls of the calender, interleaved with zinc or galvanized sheets. The sheets are now sorted and cut. The discarded sheets and the cuttings are soaked in water and put in the beater for reconversion.

A short training lasting a couple of months will be necessary for personnel who wish to make paper by hand. The Hand-made Paper Research Centre at Poona offers to train three or four persons at a time provided the trainees either come from an existing paper unit or undertake to start a new venture. The Poona Research Centre also helps in procuring the necessary equipment.



STORY OF NAGLA BALJU

VILLAGE WORKER

The small hamlet of Nagla Balju owes its origin to Balju. Balju was not such a legendary figure that the village should be named after him. He was a member of the so-called depressed class, which came and settled outside the Brahmin dominated village of Vyaspur, some three generations ago. His descendants—16 families in all—now constitute the whole population of Nagla Balju.

This small place in the Etawah District of Uttar Pradesh is significant in more than one way. It stands for an idea translated into action. It demonstrates, in miniature, how education can influence even people who begin at the bottom rung of society. It also demonstrates man's yearning for a better living—no matter how or where he lives. After a visit to the village, Dr. Armin, a visitor from Germany remarked: "I have never seen such a clean spot in India."

Nagla Balju is really a little bright gem among the villages of Uttar Pradesh. The well, which is situated at one end of the village, is cemented and fitted with a pulley for drawing water, thereby making it easier for women to use the well. The village lanes are tidy and are provided with a drainage system; some of the drains are built with bricks. There are no pools of stagnant water for mosquitoes to breed in and no heaps of rubbish and garbage.

The clean kitchen, all the houses have one, is a treat to see. At one end of the kitchen there is a cupboard for keeping the utensils. The washing arrangements are such that the mud floor is not damaged and the water is drained away into the drain running outside the house. This arrangement, made at the instance of the sanitary inspector working in the Etawah Pilot Project, is based on experiments conducted at the Partabgarh Health

Unit and has now become quite popular in the villages.

If you happen to visit Nagla Balju, you will be greeted by little boys and girls running up to you to say *namaste*. There are about twenty of them and they all belong to the Kindergarten school.

The school is at the entrance to the village. *Jai Hind* is written in Hindi on one of the walls and on a small pole the Union Flag flutters in the breeze. Every day the students salute the Flag before beginning the day's work. They sing three or four songs expressing the ideas in pantomime. One of them contains these lines: "Let us carry the rubbish and place it in the proper place; after that we should wash our hands and clean ourselves before we start any other work."

Naima Begum is the full-time teacher of the kindergarten school. She loves her work and takes a keen interest in her pupils. Parents, particularly the mothers, are happy to see their children in the care of a qualified mistress. They get more time for their daily chores while their children learn to read and write.

The inhabitants of Nagla Balju belong to the *Dohre* sect of *chammars*. Most of them are landless peasants; only three families follow the profession of their forefathers. As agriculturists, they have shown great promise. They are quick to learn new techniques from the village level worker and have consequently been rewarded with rich harvests. Their produce has gone up by 50 to 100 per cent in the course of the last three years. They have experimented with seed dribblers and improved ploughs to great advantage.

A visitor feels quite at home in the midst
(Continued on page 30)

Letters to the Editor

From Shri C. Rajagopalachari

If we desire to develop a community sense, and if we wish to debunk false values that have unfortunately come into being and effectively to remind men and women of the real values of things, and last but not least, if we wish to create the urge to produce and conserve something which other people around us would like to have, every project area administration will initiate and encourage barter instead of money payments for the simple needs of the villagers in that area. This is not a backward movement, but really an educative programme. Men should be made to realize that money is a mere symbol and a mathematical device, not wealth in itself. Unless we get down occasionally to the concrete reality, symbols are apt to deprive us of common sense.

From Shri B. Shiva Rao

I received some days ago a copy of your journal entitled Kurukshetra. I read it with some interest; but if you will not misunderstand me, I would like to say that the journal should be a reflection of the activities of the various community projects inaugurated some months ago in different parts of the country. For instance, I would like to see an article on what has been achieved in the sphere of fish cultivation in ponds and rivers rather than an essay on the desirability of such cultivation. The time is surely past for the expression of pious hopes and wishes. We must show some impatience to see results achieved. I would, therefore, suggest that all essays of an academic nature should be cut out. Articles should be brief and contain either accounts of what has been done or is being done, or practical hints of what to do.

SUGGESTIONS BY U.N. EXPERT MISSION

The U. N. Expert Mission on Community Organization and Development, which has been in India since the first week of December, 1952, met the Planning Commission and the Community Projects Administration in New Delhi on January 28, 1953, after touring some of the community project areas in the country.

The members of the Mission said that they were "greatly impressed" by the progress made in some of the community projects.

The Mission which is on a study tour of south-east Asia and Oceania to survey and promote community organization and development is composed of Professor Horace Belshaw, Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand and Economic Adviser to the Government of New Zealand, the leader of the Mission, Dr. John B. Grant, Associate Director, Rockefeller Foundation, New York and an ex-Director of the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health at Calcutta, and Mr. H. C. Chang of the Community Organization and Development Unit of the Department of Social Affairs in the United Nations Secretariat at New York. Its object is to study community development work in areas where it has been undertaken and to examine the possibilities of extending it to other areas in pursuance of a recommendation made by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

In the course of its seven weeks' tour of the country, the Mission had discussions on the community programme with officials and non-officials, both at the Centre and in the States and also visited a few projects in the Punjab, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Travancore-Cochin, Madhya Pradesh and Madras.

Suggestions

A number of useful suggestions were made at the meeting by the members of the

Mission. These related to the need for a wider realisation of the proper economic and social basis of the programme, modernisation of the administration including that at the village level and training of personnel for directing community work.

The Mission felt that in some of the areas which they had visited, the importance of the community programme had not been fully realised, it was considered to be just another programme which the Government had launched. Its economic potentialities and significance as a model for promoting rapid development through self-help supplemented by State assistance had yet to be realised in many quarters. Changes in the administrative approach to the community programme with a view to integrating the existing services into the project administration and revision of the rules and procedures to eliminate delay were essential. It was pointed out that the execution of the programme was being hamstrung at certain places by the rules which had been drawn up years ago and were intended for "a status quo state". The rules have now to be modified to serve the programme for a welfare state which the community programme symbolises. It was necessary to make the administration realise that the community programme for the first time provided the people with an opportunity for service on a scale not attempted in the past.

The composition of a project covering nearly 300 villages with a population of about 2 lakhs was approved by the Mission as it felt that this population could sustain the necessary administrative and other agencies required for running the programme.

On the question of the people's participation the Mission felt that organisations to enlist popular support for the programme should be built from the bottom and not from the top even though such a procedure might

(Continued on page 12)

LEADERSHIP AND CO-OPERATION IN VILLAGES

S. N. B.

Dr. Spencer Hatch in his book *Towards Freedom from Want* concludes that "the Indian villager is not much benefitted unless he is helped simultaneously in every phase of his life, and in regard to every relationship he bears to others. Working more specially with the poorer portion of the rural population, we have experienced this fundamental principle". The slogan of the movement launched by Tagore for improving the conditions in the villages was: "In the keeping of the village, lies the cradle of the race". The Community Project has also for its objective "Destination Man". It visualizes a scheme whereby a man will have all round development, material and spiritual.

In fact, this is the policy embodied in the Constitution of India under the "Directive principles of State policy". It envisages the participation of the people in all the schemes for the common good. Unless their potential enthusiasm is realised no project can be a success.

The Committee appointed by the Government of India to examine the Grow More Food campaign also records its findings in the following words: "No plan can have any chance of success unless the millions of small farmers in the country accept its objectives, share in its making, regard it as their own and are prepared to make sacrifices necessary for implementing it. . . . The economic aspects of village life cannot be detached from the broader social aspects. Agricultural improvement is inextricably linked up with the whole set up of social problems." The reports of the Bombay and Madras Governments on the Sarvodaya and Firka Development Schemes, the reports on the Etawah Project, and the reports from Baroda State, all point to the importance of the individual in any scheme of economic development. Our

Welfare State has the tremendous task of creating among 60 million families living in five lakh and fifty thousand villages, a burning desire to improve their way of life and to acquire knowledge.

This desire should be mobilised and maintained through proper incentives. The agriculturists must be made to feel that they have a vital role to play in the national economy and that the Government is determined to assist them in their effort to achieve a better standard of living. In the economic fields, the Grow More Food Enquiry Committee suggests a two-fold programme: firstly, rationalization of agriculture, i.e., maximization of production in terms of yield per acre by steadily improving agricultural methods and promoting an intensive system of mixed farming and secondly, drawing away the surplus labour force from the land into cottage and small-scale industries as well as large-scale industries. The Committee further emphasizes the importance of an organization for intensive rural work which would reach every farmer and assist in the co-ordinated development of rural life as a whole. Intensive rural activity can be possible only through a co-ordinated agricultural extension service. Extension services, as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations have the following inevitable functions—instructing farm people in agricultural practices and domestic science; bringing the latest results of research in these fields to them and teaching them improved techniques of farming and rural living; calling the attention of research institutions to agriculture and home problems that require study; providing opportunities for farm people for meeting together for the purpose of learning from each other and developing leadership.

A village level worker under the extension services will be in direct touch with the village people and will be one of the most important factors in any programme of rural development. He will come in daily contact with the agriculturists; know their problems, discuss improvements, arrange for the supply of seeds, fertilizers, etc., and assist in every possible way. This means the village workers, whose primary qualification should be experience of rural life and interest in it, should be selected carefully. After selection they should be trained for village work which is now in full swing. The Ford Foundation is financing 25 training centres which will train 3,500 workers every year. When they start actual field-work they will, with the assistance of leaders in the area, secure local co-operation, stimulate local initiative, promote community activities and ensure that the sources of unutilized energy in the villages are harnessed to works for the benefit of the community. The co-operative movement will play a vital part in improving rural life. The aim, therefore, of a village worker should be to see that there is at least one multi-purpose society in every village or group of villages on which practically every agriculturist family is represented. It is only in this manner that the villagers can improve their condition by their own effort. There are other village institutions, such as panchayats that can be set up where they do not already exist, and those that are in

SUGGESTIONS BY U.N. EXPERT MISSION — *(Continued from page 10)*

involve some delay. They would, however, be more democratic and would ensure a more permanent structure. The Mission was pleased to observe that in some of the project areas, particularly Madhya Pradesh, the work was being done on correct lines.

The Mission suggested the need for mopping up savings to the maximum extent in the rural areas so that they could be used for self-financing projects. Such mobilisation, it was felt, could be done effectively through co-operative societies.

Another suggestion was to promote the growth of small but efficient industries in

existence should be a living organ of the community. The setting up of village production councils recommended by the Planning Commission should also be encouraged. But a point that cannot be over-emphasised is that unless the masses under village leadership co-operate fully, no programme can be successful. No programme should be imposed on the villager. He should play an active part in framing the programme and should feel that it is his. A beginning should be made to meet those needs which are most widely felt. Other programmes should follow as the villagers' confidence is won.

A wise village level worker will accept wider responsibilities, but will start with one village. In the initial stage this may mean restricting the scope of his programme to a limited number of people.

Getting his hands dirty is an important part of a village level worker's job. He should not only know how to make a compost pit, but should also show the villagers how to do it. He must know all that a villager knows—and more than that. He should enthuse the people with a desire to improve their condition. Once this desire has been aroused, they will look to one of their own group for leadership. The wise village level worker will not himself select the leader. He will leave the choice to the people.

the community project areas which along with the other schemes in the programme would help considerably in relieving unemployment and under-employment in the rural areas.

Associating universities with community project work was another suggestion. Universities could take up a particular project and work it as a model through its affiliated colleges. The project could also serve as a training centre for workers. The proper training of project workers, was most important as through them alone execution of the work on the right lines could be ensured.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS IN BASTAR AND RAIPUR

OBSERVER

Recently I had the opportunity of visiting two community project areas in Madhya Pradesh, those in the districts of Bastar and Raipur. Although the aim of this article is, in the main, to indicate the progress of work there, the places through which I passed and the people I met there are so picturesque that a passing reference to them should not be out of place.

Madhya Pradesh has four community projects, one each at Raipur, Bastar, Amravati and Hoshangabad. Bastar is rather difficult of access, not being connected with any main railway line. It was the picturesqueness of the place and perhaps its inaccessibility which made me go there first.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of January 16, I left Raipur, accompanied by Dr. Zargar, Deputy Director of Veterinary Services in the State and my friend, the photographer, on the 184-mile trip to Jagdalpur which is the headquarters of the Bastar district. We were warned that it was not safe for us to leave so late in the day. We did not appreciate the significance of this till eight in the evening, when one of the tyres of our station wagon burst, providing us the rare thrill of waiting in the heart of the jungle for 45 minutes, listening to the cries of panthers, not far away. In fact, even a few miles earlier, we had come across a panther on the road.

Bastar was one of the Chhattisgarh States which were the earliest to benefit from the merger scheme initiated by the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. The Chhattisgarh and Orissa States were subsequently merged in the neighbouring provinces of C.P. and Berar

(now called Madhya Pradesh) and Orissa in 1947. The administration of Bastar thus came to vest in the Government of C.P. and Berar with effect from January 1, 1948.

Bastar is a plateau covered almost entirely by forests and can be reached after climbing the Ghats, which are about 3,000 ft. high. It is connected with the rest of Madhya Pradesh by a road passing through thick jungle. Small rivers flow across the plateau and during the rainy season, the wooden bridges become unserviceable or are washed away. Sometimes, the district is thus cut off from the neighbouring areas.

It was probably the remoteness of its situation that contributed to the survival of the feudal system in this region even after it had come to an end in other parts of the country. In Kanker, which is contiguous to Bastar and along with it, has also been merged in Madhya Pradesh, I was shown a flag-post on top of a hillock. I was told that the flag-post marked the spot from where the criminals sentenced to death used to be hurled down nearly 300 ft. before a whole crowd of on-lookers! Those days are no doubt gone, but the memory of them still survives.

The People

It is probably to the relative isolation of the area and its jungle terrain that the people owe their exclusive character. For the best part, the State is populated by aboriginals, numbering nearly eight lakhs out of the total of nine lakhs. Their only contact with civilization is when they see a passing motor car on the Raipur-Bastar road. Inside the district, except for a few bullock carts, there is hardly any other means of communication. It is dense jungle all round where all the animals except elephants are to be found. The place is virtually infested with

The author of this article has toured the project areas in Bastar and Raipur.

tigers. In recent months, a man-eater has struck terror in the area by claiming nearly 150 lives. It is still at large, although several shikaris are on its track. Incidentally, the area produces rice and is besides a rich source of forest products.

The Community Project Programme has accordingly to be adapted to the needs of a population which is still unfamiliar with the ways of the civilized world. The Raja of whom the villagers had all heard no longer rules. Authority has passed to the State Government and the villagers have mentally accorded the State Government the status of a new Raja. It must be said, however, that the change has taken place smoothly.

Faith in Government

I saw evidence of this faith in the Government when I visited the Dewra market—a weekly market frequented mostly by the aboriginals. Men, women and children walk as many as 39 miles from their forest homes to this market. Towards the afternoon, when the buying and selling are over, it becomes a place of merriment. The villagers celebrate the day's transactions, successful and unsuccessful, and country-made liquor flows freely on the occasion.

With the help of a friend who agreed to play the role of an interpreter, I talked to some of them. I was very surprised to learn that the aboriginals had not heard of the Community Development Programme. On the other hand, I had been told earlier that the people of Bastar were actively participating in the Programme. It was only the English name, I discovered, that they had not heard of; for when I explained to them what the Programme sought to achieve, they all nodded assent. Quite a few among them came forward claiming that they had been working in various Community Programmes. I asked them if they were satisfied with the Programme and if it would help to solve their problems. This brought forth a salvo of lusty affirmatives. I proceeded to ask them if there was any other scheme which they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Programme,

they looked at each other and remained silent. I repeated my question and an elderly man stepped forward and declared: "Whatever the Raja wishes, we will do."

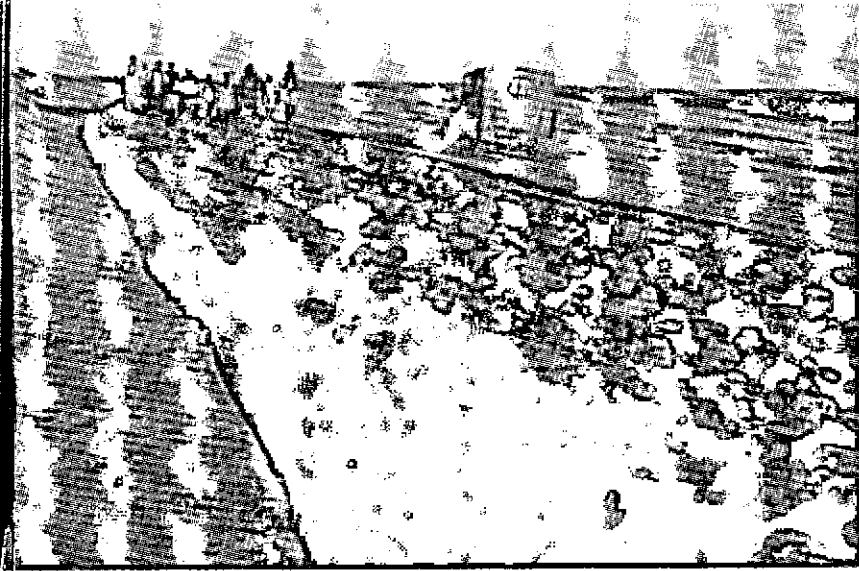
This attitude is the key to the community development programme in Bastar. Here are a very simple people, still unaware of the complexities of a politically sophisticated life. They are ready to work with the Government but they have to be approached with sympathy and understanding. They need to be told that there is no Government apart from its people and that people don't have to work for it. Even if they do, they are in fact working for themselves.

Non-official workers have thus a special responsibility in evoking peoples' co-operation. Talking of responsibility, the name of Shri Suryapal Tiwari comes readily to my mind. He has taken a very keen interest in community project work in Bastar. Formerly a Member of the Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly, Shri Tiwari is a farmer who has about 40 acres of land. He is now growing the Burma Cross Rice, a new variety evolved in Madhya Pradesh which is capable of giving high yields. This variety of seed is becoming increasingly popular all over the State. Shri Tiwari has been lending able assistance in an honorary capacity to the Deputy Commissioner who is himself the Project Officer.

Work Done

The record of work already done is quite impressive. In a village in Bastar a big two-acre tank was dug by the villagers in a record time of about a week. Elsewhere, a road five miles long, was constructed in the picturesque hilly region lying between the four villages of Bastar, Gufni, Umargaon and Retaund.

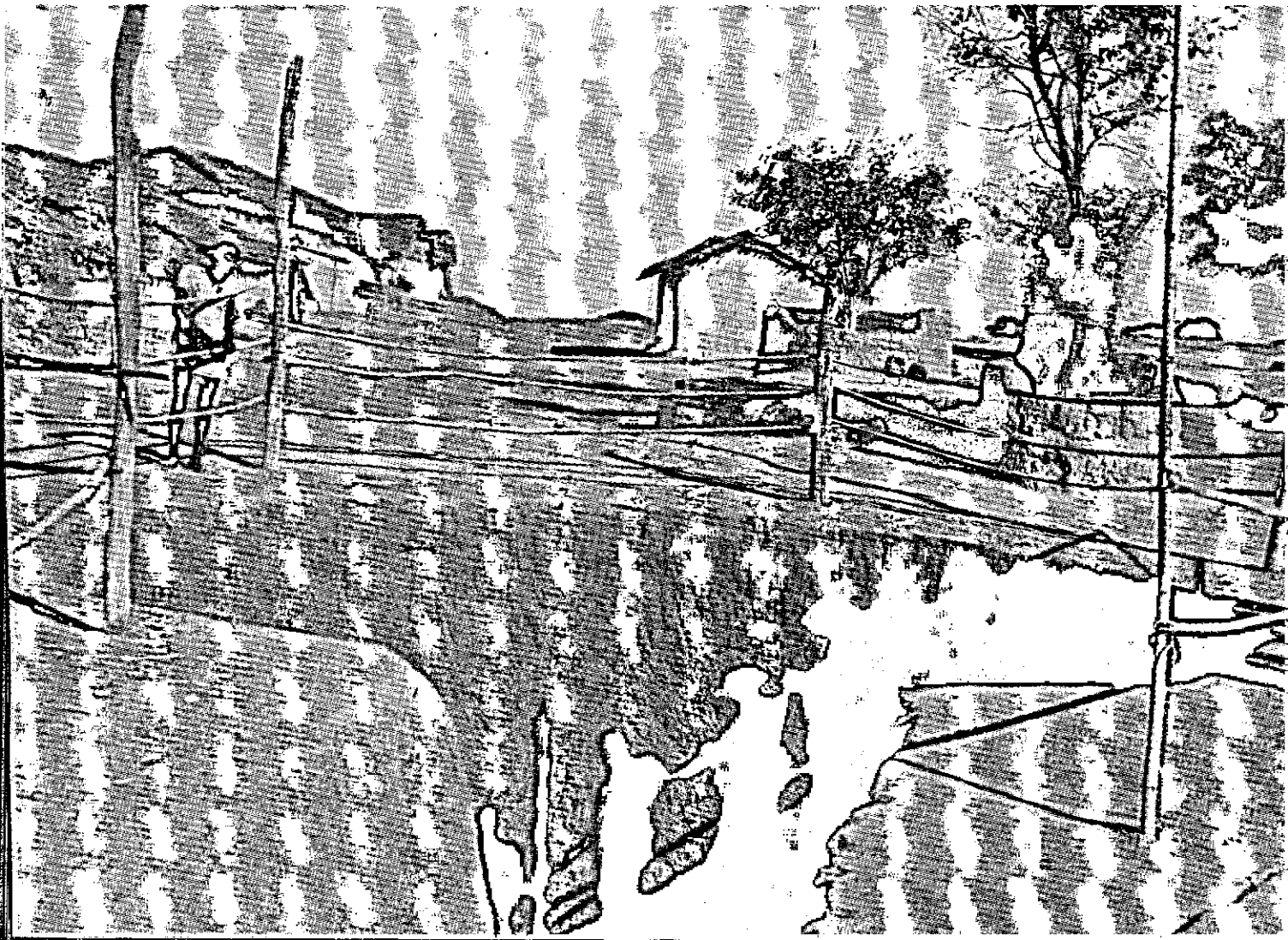
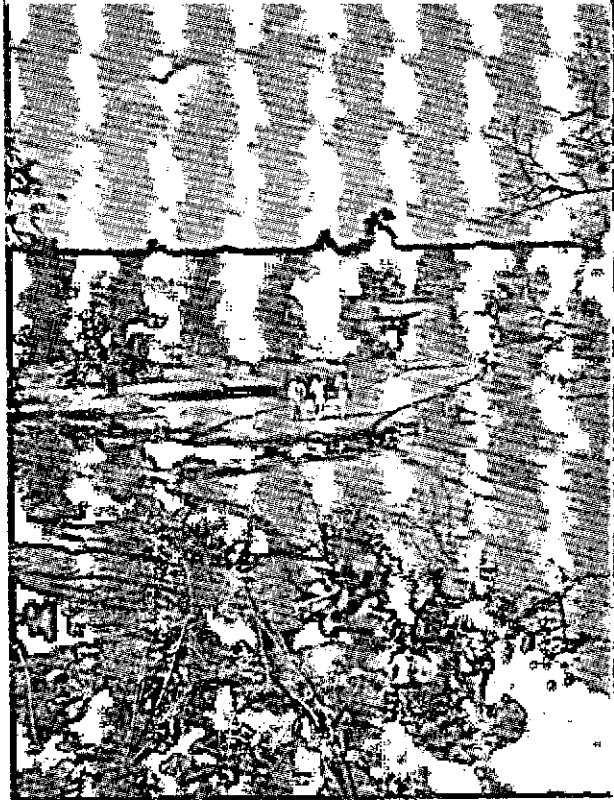
Enthusiasm in the projects is a novel feature of the programme in the Bastar district. About a mile away from Bastar, I saw about a dozen thatched huts. I later discovered that this was the outcome of a cottage-making competition in which about

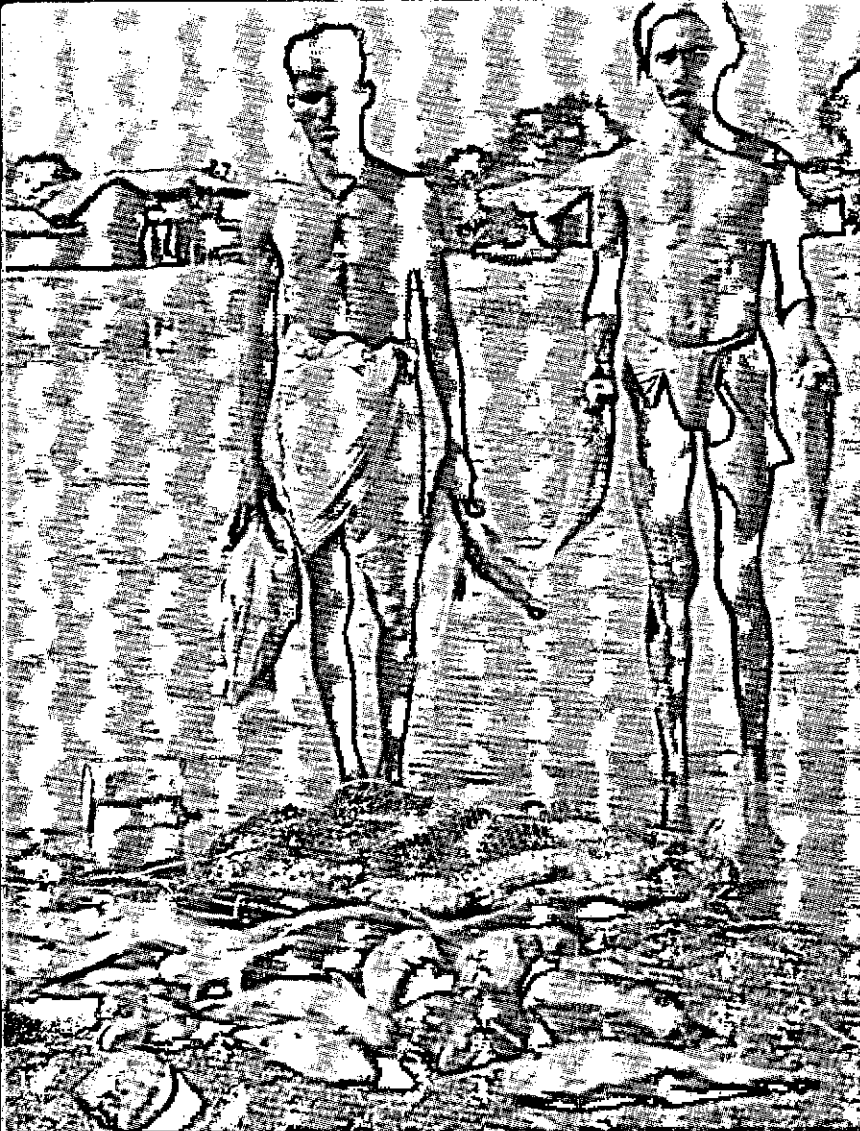


A road being built by the villagers in Bendri

This road, joining four neighbouring villages, was constructed by voluntary labour

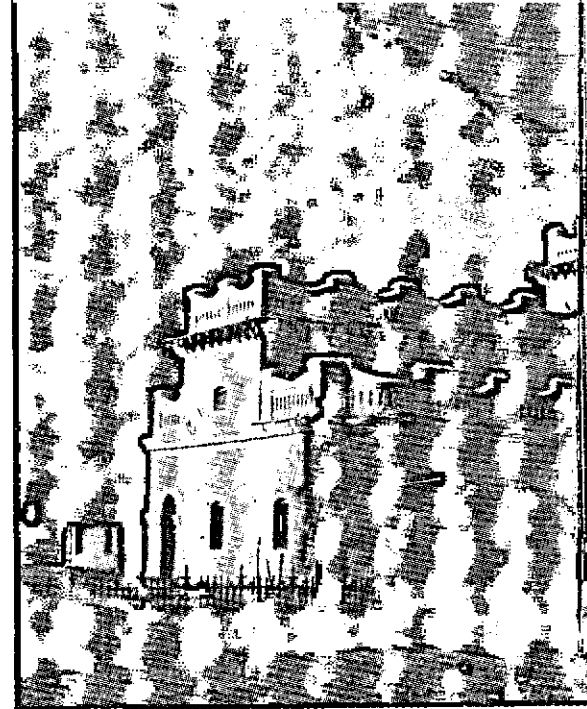
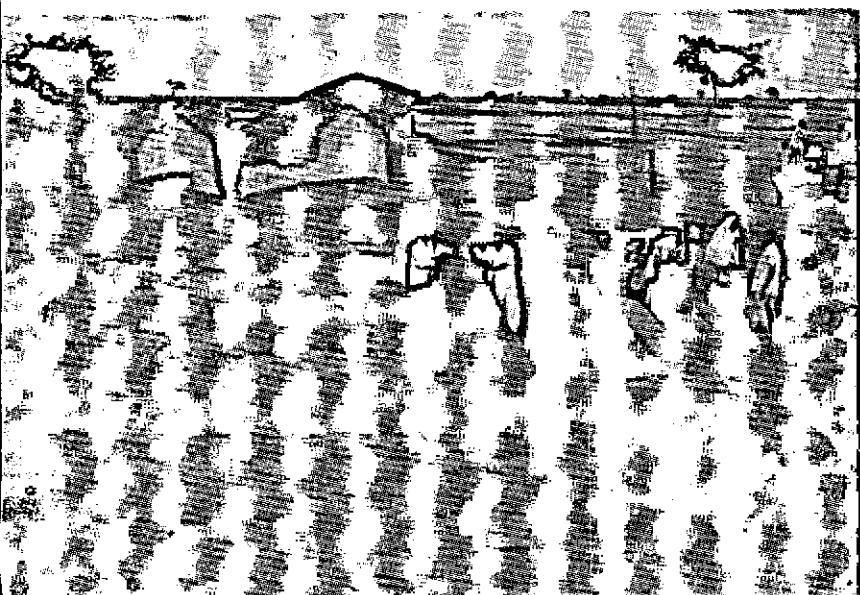
A well being dug by villagers. Having dug 15 ft. deep, they came up against rocky surface and have asked the project authorities for help





Fish from the village tank in Kurdi

The villagers of Bendri building a panchayat ghar



Hospital at Kurdi

*Fingerlings introduced
now used*





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Market-day in Dewra

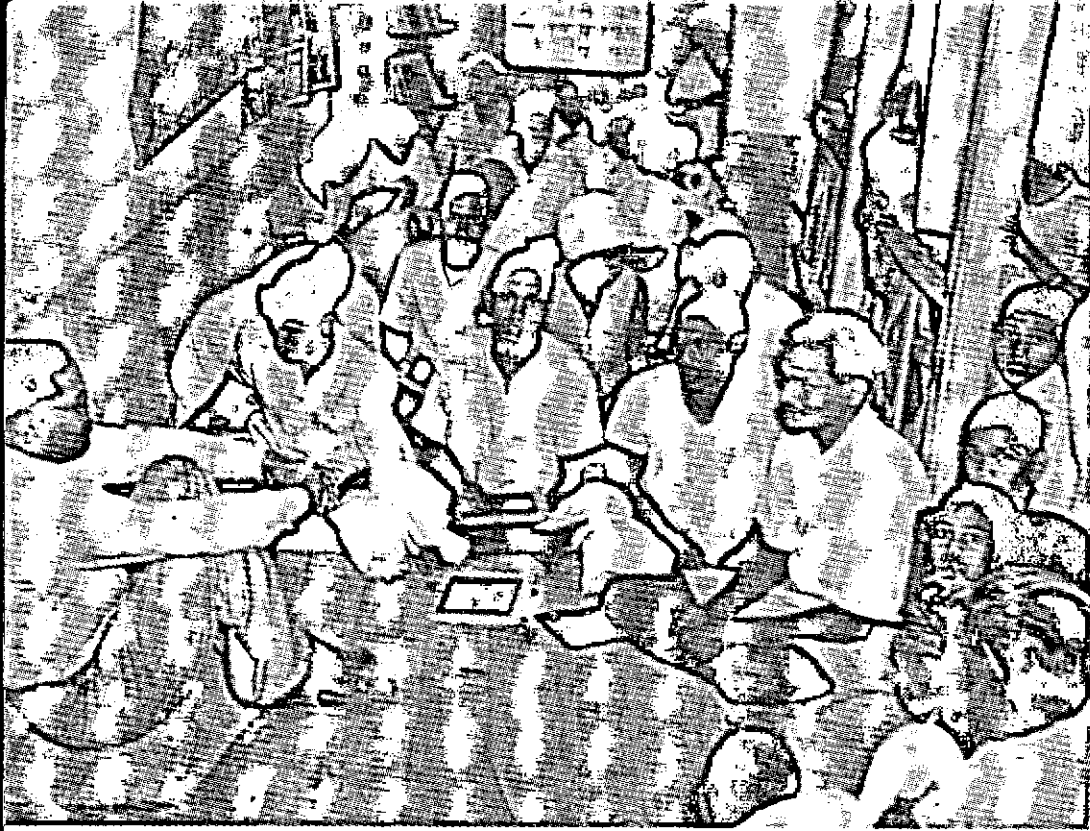
Built by voluntary labour, this two-acre tank at Bastar was completed within a week

*ed in this tank four months ago,
h about a seer each*



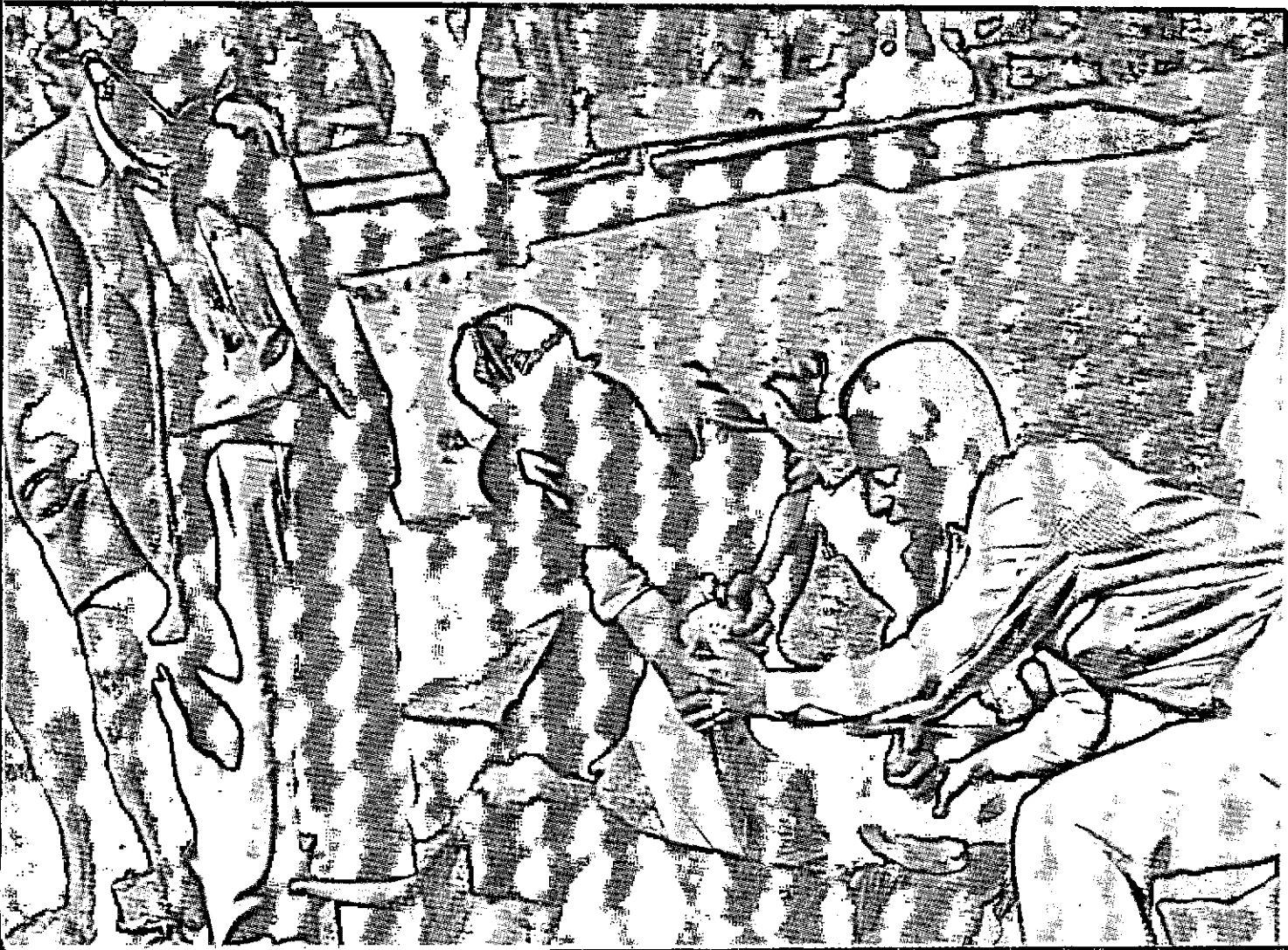
Village level workers discuss their problems with the authorities in the project area





A meeting of the
Vikash Mandal at
Bendri

A buffalo being
inoculated against
rinderpest - in the
Dhamtari cattle market



700 school children took part. They built these houses from material obtained from the neighbouring forests. The experts say that these cottages—which incidentally have a bath and kitchen—are quite strong. They will become fit for habitation when the walls have been plastered with mud.

Raipur Project

I visited the Raipur project area on my return from Bastar. Work has been started in one of the three blocks in the project area. Unlike the people in Bastar, the people here are politically conscious. It was this constituency which returned Pandit Ravi Shanker Shukla, the Chief Minister of the State, to the Legislature.

The Project Officer of this district, a young I.A.S. officer, is always ready to help when his services are required. He believes that no work can be done by ordering people about. When I visited one of the villages in the Raipur block with him, some of the villagers complained that there were a few people in the village who would not participate in community work. They wanted the project authorities to exert some pressure on the non-participants so as to bring them round, but the Project Officer thought it unwise to do so.

Vikash Mandal

In the project areas of Madhya Pradesh, there are no executive orders on the people; this old institution is in fact being slowly changed. Instead, people's organisations have come into existence. The Vikash Mandals, as they are called, guide the local people in the work of rural welfare, draw up programmes and distribute the work among the villagers.

The Vikash Mandal, if it is to be effective, should be a fully representative body. This will be possible only if the programme is exclusively economic. If the programme of the Mandal has any political bias, its members will be advised along partisan lines. On the other hand, if it is widely realized that the Community Programme aims

exclusively at the economic and social reconstruction of society, politics can then be kept out of it. In Madhya Pradesh, however, this new institution appears to be functioning reasonably well. Most of the work in these areas has been done by the villagers themselves, the project authorities merely offering the necessary guidance, equipment and finance. In a village in Raipur, I saw a typical example of such co-operation. The villagers had dug a well 24 feet in diameter and 15 feet deep when they came across a surface of rock which needed blasting before work could proceed. They have now therefore approached the project authorities for help.

The villagers are doing every thing to put the Vikash Mandals on secure foundations. Quite a few of the villages I visited had schemes for constructing panchayat ghars. In the village of Bendri, the panchayat ghar is being built on an ambitious scale; three feet of the building has already gone up. Moreover, roads are being built, schools opened and literacy classes and maternity centres started. Here I must mention the example of Shri Daoji from the village of Bendri who has given away a part of his house to lodge a maternity centre, a children's school and an adult literacy class. For the best part of the day, his house is a busy centre of community activity.

Fishery Scheme

The fishery development scheme and the mass inoculation drive against rinderpest in Raipur deserve to be mentioned in the community programme for the Raipur block.

Nearly two lakhs of fingerlings were brought from West Bengal and introduced in a number of tanks in the area under the supervision of the Deputy Director of Veterinary Services, who is taking a keen interest in the development of fisheries in the State. Within four months the fingerlings have grown on an average to the weight of about a-seer each. The main concern of the department is water because some of the tanks in which the fingerlings have been

stocked do not have enough water all round the year. Fish from those tanks which dry up during the summer will have to be transferred to other tanks. Technical assistance for fisheries constitutes another major problem and expert fishermen trained in scientific methods of catching fish are difficult to find.

Control of Rinderpest

Rinderpest, a highly infectious cattle disease, is a serious problem in the State mainly because cattle which migrate from areas affected by drought in the west find shelter in Madhya Pradesh. A programme of mass inoculation against rinderpest has been launched. While this entails more staff and equipment—and at present both are inadequate—the problem is one of preventing evasion of regulations regarding inoculation. Inoculation is evaded not because cattle-owners do not know how fatal rinderpest can be, but because moneyed middlemen deal in cattle and for them, atrocious as it may sound, selling diseased cattle provides a quicker turn over. With a view to enforcing regulations, the Veterinary Department has not only to watch the frontiers of the State, but also to

maintain liaison with the neighbouring State Governments.

Need for Awareness

To me, it has been a pleasure to meet the people who are working for the Community Development Programme. Some of them are most enthusiastic about their work but their enthusiasm has to be sustained for the work before them is an arduous one. Inevitable delays in the supply of material and lack of active co-operation from other departments of the Government can no doubt cause a certain amount of frustration. The Community Programme incorporates the activities of all the departments of the Government which have development for their objective. In fact, what is necessary is an awareness of the urgency of the problem all round and the vital nature of the programme that is in progress. In Madhya Pradesh, I saw some evidence of this awareness. But I also heard a few complaints of the lack of co-operation and the existence of red tape. These must, of course, be overcome. Nothing could be more injurious to the Community Programme than to look upon it as "just another" rural development programme.



MAN-POWER—OUR GREATEST ASSET

We in Uttar Pradesh have reason to feel a just pride in being the pioneers in many fields of development. In October 1948, a pilot development project was launched in Etawah as an experiment in rural planning. Much pioneer work was done there and invaluable experience in rural reconstruction gained. The success of the Etawah project was in a large measure responsible for the scheme of community projects which finds a prominent place in the all India Five Year Plan.

* * *

In Uttar Pradesh, work on community development has already begun in nine blocks and after a period of nine months four other districts will have community projects in addition to the nine districts in which these projects have already been started. At present, work has been taken in hand in about 1,500 villages and it is proposed to go on increasing the area and to bring more and more villages within the scope of the community projects scheme.

I have pointed out some of the tasks that we are out to tackle. I have brought to your notice some salient aspects of the Plan. But this is not all that the State Government has in view. Just as we in Uttar Pradesh, were the pioneers in the field of community projects, similarly we have taken the first step in tapping the man-power resources of the State for the common good. A detailed plan for man-power mobilization has been prepared which will soon be implemented in all the districts of the State to enable the residents of all parts of the State to have the privilege and the opportunity to work for the benefit of the community. We have not enough capital with which to undertake schemes of development, but the enormous man-power that is available to us can be forged into a tremendous weapon for progress. In some countries in recent years an acute problem has arisen because of under-

population. Countries have planned to increase their population so that they may be in a better position to exploit their natural resources and certain countries have launched a programme of increasing population in order to wage war or in order to be in a better position to defend themselves. So our vast man-power, properly utilized, can prove one of the greatest assets that we have. We need this man-power to develop our resources in time of peace and to act as a bulwark.

Broadly speaking our scheme of man-power mobilization has been worked out in this manner. There are 419 Panchayat Inspectors' Circles in the State, while the sanctioned strength of Prantiya Rakshak Dal zone workers is 870, so that two zone workers can be available in each Panchayat Inspector's Circle. A team of two zone workers, one panchayat secretary and such other field workers of the area as are available will concentrate on the efforts in one Adalati Circle for a period of two months. Development Departments, local workers of Prantiya Rakshak Dal, i.e., halqa sardars, group leaders, section leaders and rakshaks, and other public spirited workers will be organized in the selected Adalati Circle to speed up the work. In the first month the camps will cover at least half the number of gram sabhas included in the circle. After two months when they have completed their work in the first Adalati Circle, their activities will be expanded to cover the second adjacent Adalati Circle on the same lines. Thus 800 zone workers will be able to work 800 Adalati Circles within four months. Every Adalati Circle consists of four or five gram sabhas and every gram sabha consists of three or four villages. In this way, about ten thousand villages will be covered within a period of four months. After the team has moved to another circle of operation, the field staff permanently attached to the circle will look after the

work done and continue to make further progress.

The Prantiya Rakshak Dal team and the staff of the various development departments will need the labour of the people of the areas where they will be working on schemes bringing benefit to the area. What is envisaged is work in which all will join, and there is plenty of work which requires labour for its fulfilment. . . . There is a good deal to be done in the villages where over 80 per cent of our people live. There are drains to be made, tanks to be deepened, inter-village roads to be constructed and repaired, canals to be dug, health and sanitation measures to be undertaken, adult education to be spread—all around there is scope for development. This mighty work can only be fulfilled with the active co-operation and participation of the people.

* * *

The task before us is colossal but our people who have regained their freedom can now make full use of this great opportunity to build a happy and prosperous new India by their unflagging zeal, sustained labour and organized team work. Not money, but man is the creator of wealth and prosperity. So let every citizen make his or her maximum contribution so that our ancient land may rise to her full height and stature and every man and woman may lead a good, full, clean and happy life.

Broadcast by PANDIT GOVIND BALLABH PANT, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, from the Lucknow station of all India Radio.

I now come to a development in recent months of considerable significance to the future of the country, and that is that Community Projects Scheme. Here is a field for public co-operation over a wide area. The Plan makes an integrated approach on a wide front to improving rural life in all its aspects—human, economic and cultural. The project staff when they visit the villages enquire from the people what they want most. When they list the items, they ask the people what they are prepared to do for these? And then they seek to

supplement the people's efforts with a little aid from public funds but the effort and contribution will be largely of the public, who reside in the area, so that they may reasonably take pride in saying that they, with their effort and labour and will, effected the transformation of their environment in many desirable ways. It is only in this way that we could make a little, go far. We are a poor nation at present, but we are rich potentially. Nature has endowed us well but our greatest wealth is our manpower. The latter may be our weakness at present in many ways, but it can be and must become our greatest asset if we are to go forward rapidly. And the great value of the Community Project Scheme lies in its recognition of this fact, and the attempt it makes to use the small resources of Government as a lever to draw out the abundant surplus energies of the people and to create self-confidence and the desire for self-help.

* * *

I have mentioned the value of the Community Project Scheme as a means of drawing out the energies of the people. History may well prove this to have been a development of crucial importance in the economic and social progress of the nation.

Broadcast by MR. SHRI KRISHNA SINHA, Chief Minister of Bihar, from the Patna Station of All India Radio.

. . . Our real resources are ultimately the large number of men and women capable of applying themselves to the task of national reconstruction. This human material has to be suitably trained, organized and assisted by other factors before it can make any substantial contribution. We have to do all this and to enlist it for constructive work. An excellent opportunity in this direction has been provided in the Five Year Plan in the scheme of Community Development Projects. We can multiply such instances of voluntary co-operation in various other directions outside the community project areas and increase our effort.

Broadcast by SHRI MORARJI DESAI, Chief Minister of Bombay, from the Bombay station of All India Radio.

(Continued on page 31)

SUGAR-CANE CO-OPERATIVES

Today 13 lakh sugar-cane growers in 26,000 villages of Uttar Pradesh are themselves finding solutions to their problems. They own roads, buildings, bridges and tube-wells; they run their own schools, colleges, hospitals and maternity centres and they have restored the faith of the cultivator in his own ability to do things. This has been achieved through the development of sugar-cane co-operatives.

When protection was accorded to the sugar industry about 20 years ago, a large number of sugar factories were started in Uttar Pradesh. They were soon faced with the problem of getting fresh cane with a high sucrose content to meet their requirements, but there was no organised agency for cultivating cane or for marketing it. Zamindars, money-lenders and even village ruffians acted as purchasing agents and dictated terms to the cultivators whom they harassed and exploited.

In 1937, when the Congress Government came into office it was faced with the problem of realigning a primitive agricultural economy to meet the needs of a growing sugar industry and also of protecting the interests of the cultivators of sugar-cane. The Sugar Factories Control Act was passed in 1938 and gave a great fillip to the growth of cane co-operative societies, a few of which were already in existence. Areas were demarcated and reserved for supplying cane to the factories. It became necessary to organise the growers in the "factory zones" into co-operatives and the Cane Commissioner and his staff bent all their energies to this task.

The Commissioner and his band of enthusiasts travelled to every district, organising co-operatives and preaching the gospel of "getting together". The response from the villagers was most heartening. They saw in the movement an opportunity

for relief from their distress. But some of the factories were hostile to the movement. They made attempts to wreck the co-operatives and cited the law to challenge the right of the cultivators to form co-operative societies. But the movement had already captured the imagination of the cane growers; the slogan of "ganna society" (cane growers' co-operatives) caught on in the village-like wild fire. In 1936 there were 36 cane co-operatives with a membership of 1,00,000; today there are 110 societies with 13,00,000 members covering 97 per cent of the factory areas.

Objectives and Achievements

The cane co-operatives were originally started with the object of marketing cane and the cultivation of cane was added to



A member receives instructions from his co-operative regarding the supply of sugar-cane to the factories.



Sugar-cane being sent to the factory

their functions soon after. Today their work has assumed the proportions of a village movement. It now embraces almost every aspect of village life including health and education. The term "community development" had not then come into vogue, but the co-operative spirit had permeated into the lives of the simple village folk.

Measures taken to increase the cultivation of cane include the supply of improved seed, manures and fertilisers, better irrigation facilities and the control of sugar-cane pests and diseases. As a result of these measures the State today produces cane of improved varieties. About 30 lakh maunds of seed and manures and fertilisers worth Rs. 1 crore are distributed to the cultivators every year. Twenty-two tube-wells have been sunk and thousands of masonry wells built in the cane areas. Numerous pumping plants and Persian wheels have also been installed.

The cultivator, however, needs not only better crops but also better facilities for

marketing his produce. For this the society undertakes a survey of the fields of each cultivator plotwise, prepares statements of yield and enters into contracts with factories which have an assured supply of cane. On the basis of these contracts, a roster of daily supplies is prepared and 'chits' issued to the growers giving details of the amount they have to supply to the factories. This system helps to avoid shortages or gluts in cane. The societies employ both permanent and seasonal staff to safeguard the interests of the growers at every purchase and weighing centre. Over 90 per cent of the staff is drawn from the rural areas and a majority of them are the sons of cultivators.

Many-sided Development

The growth of cane co-operatives has been a slow but steady process. Financial aid has come almost entirely from the resources of the cultivators and in a few cases from the mills as well. When the scheme was started a levy of one pie per maund was made for crushing cane; this has steadily

risen to the present rate of 9 pies per maund. With the increase in funds rural welfare schemes have been undertaken; roads, culverts and bridges have been built to provide better facilities for transporting sugar-cane and schools, colleges and hospitals have sprung up one by one. Today cane co-operatives run two intermediate colleges, 14 high schools, 106 aided schools, nearly 100 schools for boys and girls, 12 libraries, and 18 hospitals. There are also several maternity centres and over 40,000 villagers are treated for minor ailments. Medicines are distributed by village headmen who have been put in charge of medicine chests.

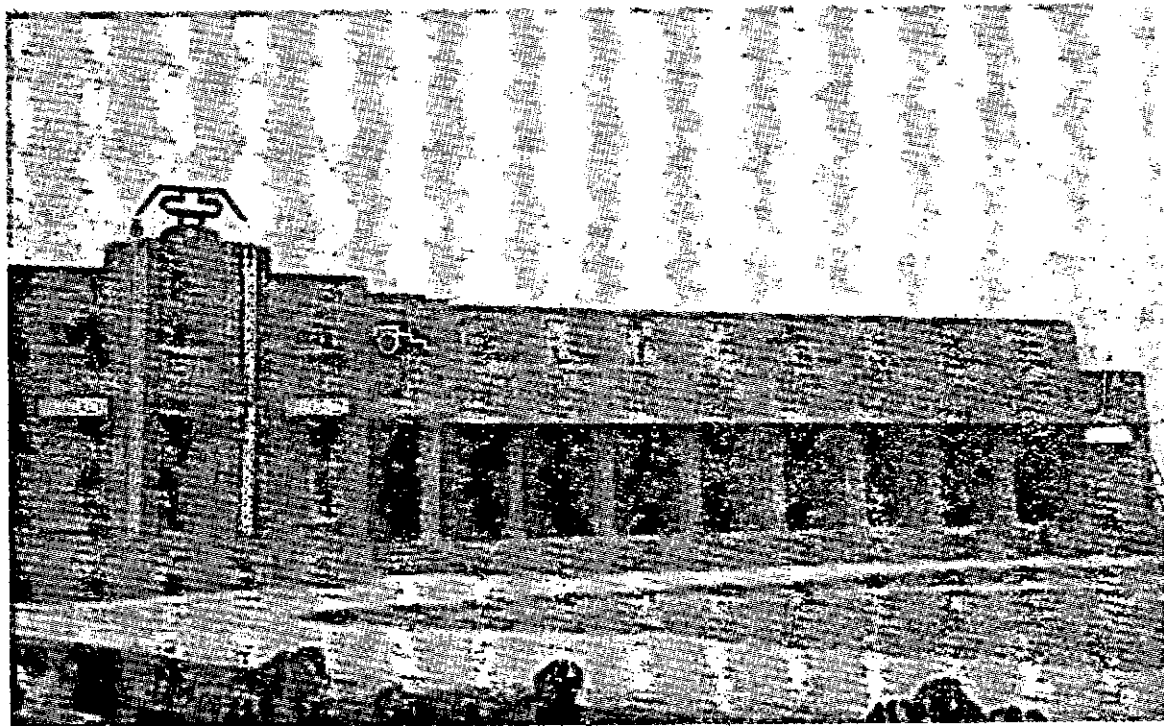
In one factory zone the co-operative has built 122 culverts, 27 bridges and 54 miles of pucca road. The villagers have contributed in land, money and voluntary labour.

In 1948 the cane co-operatives formed themselves into a State federation called the

"U.P. Co-operative Cane Unions Federation". The function of this federation is to pool the resources of the various unions and to launch schemes for the benefit of cane cultivators. It has so far purchased manures, fertilisers and improved implements. The Federation has already acquired its own building at a cost of Rs. 2 lakh and a printing press which does all its printing. Its cash reserves amount to Rs. 6.5 lakh and its manure fund which is to be used for setting up a manure mixture plant to Rs. 2.5 lakh. All the profits have come through the elimination of middlemen, and the manure mixture plant is expected to add substantially to the income of the Federation.

The work done by the U.P. cane co-operatives is a pioneering attempt to solve the long-neglected problems of the villager. Judging from what has already been accomplished, the "ganna society" experiment may prove to be one of the most worthwhile projects in rural reconstruction.

This is only one of the 100 schools started by the co-operatives in sugar-cane-growing areas



PROJECT CORNER

Extract from Professor D. G. Karve's covering note dated Jan. 30, '53 to his preliminary report on Community Projects.

There is one vital point applicable to all developmental effort which has been noticed by me, and has also been urged by several independent observers in all areas. Unless special efforts are made to bring persons of small means within the scope of developmental assistance, the beneficent results will accrue mostly to persons who already have an adequacy or surplus of resources. Such a development will deflect the social and economic balance in the wrong direction. A special effort is, therefore, called for in all areas for helping the less substantial sections of the community to participate in sacrifices as well as benefits on just and equal terms. The relevance in this context of a suitably designated and aided co-operative organization should be brought prominently to the notice of all concerned.

Madras

"The Community Projects are only three months old, but the villagers of Madurai, one of the six project areas of Madras State have already demonstrated what self-help can achieve in the face of heavy odds, poverty and the crippling effects of successive failures of the monsoons. In village after village, one sees striking evidence of the people's effort to help themselves, they have laid the foundations for school-buildings and hospitals, prepared manure pits and opened adult education centres." This comment in a Madras newspaper may be said to apply to the Community Project areas throughout the country. A strong and disciplined leadership has sprung up in these areas and village committees have been formed to make the Community Projects programme a success.

Uttar Pradesh

In 31 districts of Uttar Pradesh, 188 camps

including 166 development camps and 22 development-cum-training centres have been started. The villagers' response to these camps has been encouraging. Through voluntary labour and other assistance, a 49-mile long road in Meerut district, a 26-mile long kuchcha road in the Bulandshahr district and a 27-mile long road between two villages in the Kanpur district have been built. Another 15 miles of kuchcha roads connecting small villages and hamlets, have been built in the Lucknow district by various camps organized in the Panchayat Adalat circles, under the man-power mobilization scheme. These camps cover a population of about 20,000. In each Panchayat Adalat Centre, foundation-stones for panchayat ghars have been laid and construction work is in progress. The land for the panchayat ghars and the roads has been donated by the villagers.

In the Ganga Khadir, Kashipur, Tarai and Dunagiri colonies, co-operative seed stores and buildings for the staff quarters are being constructed. These buildings will cost Rs. 1,68,500 and will help to rehabilitate displaced persons, political sufferers and ex-servicemen.

Considerable progress has also been made in the other project areas of Uttar Pradesh.

Faizabad

About 700 residents are now engaged in constructing 1.25-mile long feeder road. A co-operative brick kiln at Chaurabazar has also been started. This is the people's first industrial enterprise in this project area and has provided employment to 110 adults. At the kiln 31,000 bricks have already been moulded and about 2.5 lakhs of bricks are being burnt.

Almora

Community works costing over Rs. 18,000 were constructed in this area during the first fortnight of December. The voluntary

labour contributed by the villagers, panchayat secretaries and zonal workers has been valued at over Rs. 17,400. The community works comprise *diggis* for irrigation, compost pits, repair and construction of roads and soakage pits. A *diggi* in the village of Adhuria in the Bageshwar area was built by 376 people, who dug 3,000 cubic feet of rocky earth in a day, thus effecting a saving of Rs. 2,000.

Jhansi

Two pumping sets, obtained from the Agriculture Engineer at Kanpur, were installed in the villages of Mirauna and Mond Koan of Chirgaon block and two co-operative societies were formed to pump canal water in order to irrigate these villages.

In the Moth Block 50 maunds of ammonium sulphate was used on a plot of land to demonstrate to the villagers the use of fertilisers in the cultivation of wheat.

Tehri Garhwal

The construction of a 17-mile long road from Dang Chaura to Gaddiya in Tehri Garhwal has been taken up with great enthusiasm by the people who have offered to provide voluntary labour for this work. When completed, this road will connect Tehri with Kritinagar by a direct 30-mile long motor road and will unite the two Garhwals.

Badaun

In Rijola circle, five gram sabhas have successfully completed a 7-mile long canal which had been silted up and was not being used for the last 15 years. For this work on an average, 100 men turned up daily, and about 10 lakh cubic feet of earth was dug through voluntary labour. Twenty-five thousand bighas of land in 25 villages will be irrigated by this canal.

Ghaziipur

The Higher Secondary School, Qasimabad, has fixed certain periods, during which the students take active part in moulding bricks to be used in the construction of a well in the school. So far they have moulded 3,000 bricks.

Mainpuri

Four and a half bags of ammonium sulphate and four maunds of castor cake have been distributed to the cultivators in this area. One Persian wheel has been installed in Rajwaria, and one small bund has been constructed in Mahawatpur Circle.

Banaras

About 3,000 persons have constructed three miles of inter-village roads through voluntary labour. A bund 300 feet long has also been constructed.

Bihar

In the Pusa-Samastipur Shakar Project over 3,000 manure pits and compost heaps were prepared in the month of November, and nearly 500 trees have been planted in this area. About 43 miles of village roads have been widened and repaired. Steps are being taken to organise youth leagues and gram raksha dals.

Bengal

Several agricultural demonstration centres have been opened in the Mohammad Bazar development block. A youth group for doing voluntary manual labour once a week has been organised in the village of Muranagram. In the Shaktigar development block, the construction of the village roads by voluntary labour has been undertaken. In the Fullia Block, a mobile anti-malaria unit stationed at Krishnanagar, conducted D.D.T. spraying in several villages.

Madhya Pradesh

In Madhya Pradesh, Village Development Councils have been set up in all the villages of the first block of the Amravati Project, and 37 villages of Raipur and 33 villages of Hoshangabad. The villagers of Amravati Project have made several offers to do community work and to bear half the cost of such work.

In the district of Raipur the villagers have repaired the old Raipur-Rajeem road and have put up a small temporary bridge over a shallow stream near the village. The

approach roads in 12 villages of this project area have been repaired and six villages have laid the foundations for their new school buildings.

In Raipur and Bastar, pisciculture is being taken up as an important village industry and fish fingerlings are being transplanted in two village tanks.

Experiments in the State with a new variety of rice, known as Burma Cross have yielded good results and the paddy now being cultivated will be used in areas suitable for its growth.

Model dairies have started functioning in the Hoshangabad project area and key village centres in Raipur and Amravati. In the Morsi area people have taken upon themselves the task of building roads in the villages, preparing soakage pits, digging drains, and improving wells on a mass scale. The Vikash Mandals are helping to bring together divergent elements in the villages for the common programme and are thus laying the foundation for the building up of Bharat Sevak Samaj.

The Vikash Mandals with the village level worker functioning more or less as a secretary are gradually developing into a nuclei organization for the village production councils visualized in the Five Year Plan. The Vikash Mandals are preparing a record of all agricultural plots in the villages and by mutual discussions on a community level are deciding as to what crops should be sown and the nature of help required from the Government. They are also trying to evolve an integrated plan for the all round development of the villages, including the allocation of priorities, their contributions in cash, kind and labour and the placing of supplementary demands with the Government for materials, technical assistance and finance.

PEPSU

Malerkotla

Consolidation work, started in all the 378 villages, has been completed in 40 of these.

In 25 villages, cultivators are competing to grow more wheat through the use of better seeds and proper manure and it is expected the yield per acre will be 50 to 60 maunds. A primary school in each of the 26 villages has been opened and over a thousand boys and girls are now being educated in these schools. Twenty-six Adult Education Centres have also been started.

Bhopal

In Bhopal, the Project Advisory Committee has decided that each village will have one good well and in each patwari circle there will be one school. The committee has also decided that for all construction and repair works, villagers will provide free unskilled labour and the Government will provide material and skilled labour. In 15 villages in the State, construction work for schools has already started. Training is also being given to people from different villages for the manufacture of palm-gur.

Bombay

Kolahpur

The Extension Training Centre in Kolahpur is now imparting training to 50 students in the Village Level Workers Course and 10 Agricultural Officers are undergoing training in the Supervisory course. These trainees, in addition to attending lectures, are also receiving practical training in the villages.

Mysore

In the Shiralakoppa Community Project in Mysore State six villages have undertaken to construct buildings for schools in the Sorab-Shikaripur area. The names of these villages are Aralihalli, Kappanahalli, Kortigere, Karenelli, Ulavi and Amatekappa. In this project area films are being shown to the villagers to explain to them the objectives and scope of the Community Project Programme. The Project Executive Officer and his assistant have been touring the project area and have visited a number of villages in the interior. The village-level workers who were being trained at Shiralakoppa, have completed their course after

intensive practical training in the villages. While under training, they helped the villagers in clearing up drains, making new approach roads and whitewashing the school buildings. The Project Advisory Committee is now drawing up plans for the various works to be undertaken in the project area.

Coorg

Village-level workers in the community project areas of Coorg have been advocating the selection of good paddy seeds by *rayots*. Propaganda is being carried on to popularize the use of iron ploughs and the cultivation of green manure crops. The importance of compost making is also being stressed and suitable dimensions for compost pits have been suggested. To those who have taken up paddy cultivation in summer the importance of treating seed with saline and agrosone has been explained.

To improve the breed of cattle, artificial insemination is being advocated. Efforts are being made to increase the yield of the local breed to that of Sahiwal and Sindhi breeds from the North. Under the key-village scheme, systematic work has been taken up in 12 selected villages. Poultry farming, fisheries, bee-keeping and sericulture are being popularized.

Steps have also been taken to improve the means of communication. The villagers have reconditioned and reconstructed nearly 60 miles of *kuchcha* roads. Thirteen miles of new roads have been laid out. The villagers also helped in the construction of a seven-mile road in the village of Maragode, thus effecting a saving of Rs. 10,000 for the Government. The Government will now spend this amount to build a bridge in the same area.

Donations both in cash and kind to the extent of about Rs. one lakh have been received from the public for building schools and hospitals in the project areas. A co-operative Housing Society has been set up at Kodlipet to encourage the villagers to build houses. In the village of Dundalli, the villagers have started on co-operative lines the grow-

ing of cardamom. The villagers themselves cleared the land, raised nurseries and planted cardamom seedlings.

Kutch

In the Kutch State various steps have been taken to increase food production in the Bhuj-Nakhatrana Community Project block. About 70 maunds of ammonium sulphate and super-phosphate have been distributed to the cultivators. Twenty-seven compost pits have been prepared and 21 of these have already been filled. The State Government have sanctioned Rs. 15,000 for the construction of an irrigation tank in the project area. The tank is likely to irrigate more than 75 acres of land when filled during the monsoon. The construction of five other irrigation tanks will soon be started by the villagers. Additional acreage is being brought under wheat cultivation. As a result of increased acreage under wheat and the use of improved seeds and chemical fertilizers, it is hoped that the production of wheat in the area will increase by about ten per cent. A "Farmers Day" was organized at Kera, one of the principal villages in the block area. The cultivators who participated on the occasion, were taken round demonstration plots. About 82 applications for agricultural loans have been received so far.

The Chief Commissioner of Kutch State made an extensive tour of the Bhuj-Nakhatrana block and saw villagers co-operate with the community project staff in completing various schemes.

After the construction of the Nankuva-Bharasar Road, the work on the Sukhpar-Vallakhavas Road is nearing completion. A primary school has been opened at Kotda under the Community Project Scheme. The people of Virani have started the construction of a school building through their own effort. Night classes at four places Nirona, Manjal, Vighodi, and Vandhay have been opened, bringing the total of night schools to five.

A lady worker has been posted at Nakhatrana. She has organized with the help of

Mahila Mandal activities such as adult education, knitting, sewing, embroidery, care of children, house-keeping, etc.

The villagers of Kera, Todia, Manjal and Sukhpar have been cleaning the village streets regularly. The villagers at Amara and Gandani have decided to clean their village once a fortnight.

The spraying of DDT has been started as an anti-malaria measure in the principal villages of the project area. Mobile dispensary vans are regularly visiting places such as Sukhpar, Mankuva, Samtra, Desalpar, Vandhay, Meghpar and Dehisara.

Village committees have been formed in 13 more villages in the project area. The names of the villages where the committees have been formed are: Kera, Desalpar, Dahisara, Devpar, Sairya, Vithon, Anandpar, Morgar, Paliwad, Bhadli, Morjar, Nana-Angia and Anandsar. So far, in all 19 village

committees have been formed in the project area.

Himachal Pradesh

In the Kunihar Community Project block in Himachal Pradesh, the people of the village of Dhaila have offered to construct a building for a primary school. In the villages of Kunihar and Arki, a children's day was observed. Sweets were distributed to nearly 400 children in the *illaqa*. The expenses were met from contributions by Government officials and the public. Nearly 800 people of the villages of Kunihar, Majhit, and Arki are now busy constructing a motorable road in the project area. After having completed 660 yards of this road in October, the villagers constructed another 80 yards during November. The school children also took part in the construction of this road. An irrigation engineer who has been touring the project area is now exploring the possibilities of ensuring the supply of drinking water for the villages.



STORY OF NAGLA BALJU—(Continued from page 8)

of these simple homely people. So long neglected, they nurture no grievances. If anyone offers to help them, they co-operate with him. They are eager to improve their lot and are hard working. The improvements they have made in the village have evoked a healthy rivalry, if not a sense of jealousy among the people in the neighbouring areas.

The descendants of Balju still do not know where he came from. He started life with little or no help anyone. Beginning from scratch he created the nucleus of a village. From that nucleus these men are trying to build a model village. And already it is developing into one.

"UNIQUE IN ASIA"

Development at the very roots is the main emphasis in India's programme for Community Development. Among other things, it shows the Indian peasants how to improve their lot through co-operative methods. It is more than a programme; it is a new approach to life. If successful—there is no doubt that it will be judging from the tremendous enthusiasm it has aroused—it is bound to usher in a better society.

Commenting on the Community Projects immediately after their inauguration, the *Manchester Guardian* in an editorial entitled "An Indian Experiment" said: "India has just launched a Community Project which is so far unique in Asia. Blocks of villages stretching over wide areas are systematically developed under special boards and by co-operative methods. Improvement is to be many-sided and simultaneous, and to include promotion of farming techniques and cottage industries, reclamation of land, village road betterment, and the setting up of health centres and schools. . . . There is no doubt that this way lies the solution of India's age-old problems of food shortage and peasant misery".

Though the emphasis is on food production, the programme also covers other aspects of life in the villages, such as :

- (a) raising the standard of living with special emphasis on sanitation, health, housing, education;
- (b) training the people for leadership and participation in village welfare schemes;
- (c) improving the system of communications; and
- (d) developing cottage and small-scale industries.

In short, the maximum use of both human and material resources is aimed at. In fact, the *Christian Science Monitor* has called this "the boldest programme of village uplift ever attempted in Asia".

The *Malay Mail* has also commented: "Never in this country have the means of making a dream come true been so carefully planned and assembled as for these Community Projects. . . . The beginning thus made may have seemed small as compared with the country's vast needs. But these beginnings were a demonstration of a new faith in India's rural masses that would have gladdened Mahatma's heart".



MAN-POWER—OUR GREATEST ASSET — (Continued from page 22)

The key-position in the task of national reconstruction is occupied by the village worker, for it would be his job to carry the inherent message of the Five Year Plan to the inhabitants of the many villages of our Pradesh. It will be his task to win the hearts of the very people who are to reap the benefits of these schemes. He will have to work in the spirit and with the zeal of a missionary. I think, I am not over-stating this important aspect of the matter, when I say that the measure of success, which we achieve, would depend on the extent to which our politicians, our services and our

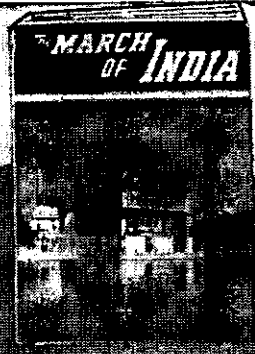
village workers succeed in inculcating a feeling of healthy impatience amongst our rural folk living in far flung villages, to learn by precept as well as by example and be ready to do their share to improve their lot. This is thus a challenge equally to the services—no matter to which department they may belong, as also to all sane-minded, political elements in the country. I would, therefore, like to express my fervent hope that this challenge will be accepted, and that we shall all play our part in implementing the Plan in Himachal Pradesh.

Broadcast by Major General HIMATSINGHJI, Lt. Governor of Himachal Pradesh.



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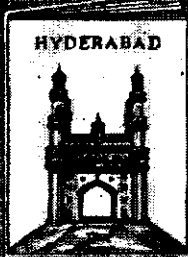
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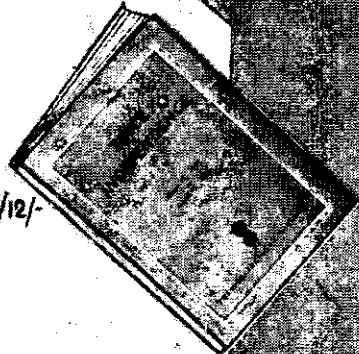
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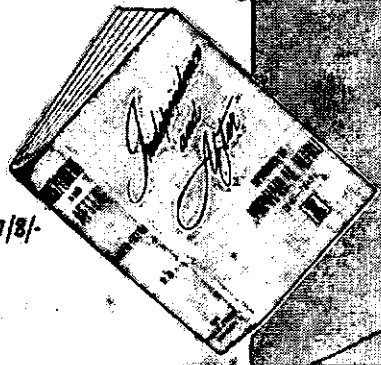


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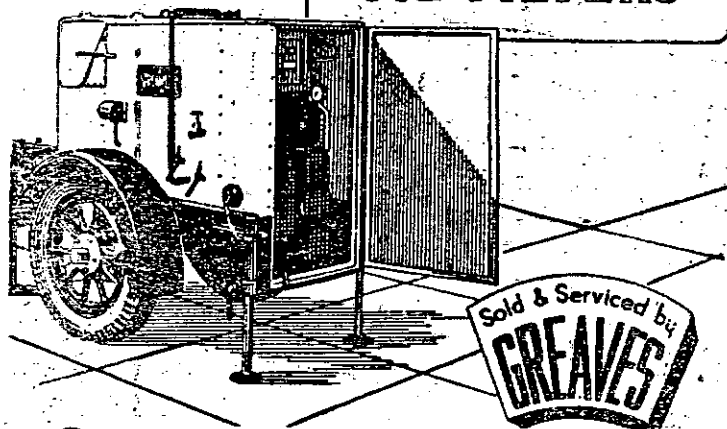
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