

CHAPTER IX**Conclusion**

Process of development is the greatest casualty of nineties as far as Bihar is concerned. While the beginning of the first two decades of the twentieth century found emergence of Bihar as an independent state and symbolised growth of nationalism and integration of forces to consolidate the nascent state, the last decade of the century found complete apathy towards process of consolidation. Deliberate attempts to disintegrate the integrated state of Bihar through use of state power is the hallmark of the closing years of 20th century. The neglect of Chhotanagpur Division ultimately paved the way for creation of new Jharkhand State towards the end of the century. Nineties saw emergence of such forces which relegated the process of development in Bihar. Development has been sacrificed at the alter of divisive forces. That state's economic growth is concern for elite and not of government appears to be the basic weakness of the comprehension of development administration since the closing years of the Seventh five year plan. That state had to receive central fund be it through constitutional devolution under award of Finance commission or be it under discretion of Planning Commission as a necessity for governance, therefore, semblance of steps for implementing Eighth and Ninth Plan were enacted. This enactment was without any commitments towards causing good to the people through process of development. It was without any serious attempt to execute plan of fixed outlay. Higher size of plan outlay helped in receiving higher central plan assistance, but lack of preparedness to execute that size of plan found the state lacking in utilising released funds and defaulting in submission of utilization certificates. In order to avoid overdrafts expenditure was restricted. During both Eighth and Ninth Plan state could not execute any annual plans from its own resources it failed to take any substantial step for

raising additional resource measures. Revenue receipts were sacrificed on calls of rallies and industrialists who fed the revenue receipts used to become victims of kidnapping. Migration of industries continued without any attempt to arrest this flight of capital from state.

Nineties in Bihar is marked by fodder scam. Bureaucracy has become demoralised partly by lessons from fodder scam and mainly by process of marginalisation in governance of the state. Execution, monitoring and implementation of development programme found absence of commitment among bureaucrats.

And this adversely effected planning. It is concern of none if the poor man continues to sleep with cattle in thatched leaking roofs, as housed under Indira Awaas Yojna could not be built and provisions allowed to lapse. The sufferer is belly-sunken poor old man who could not be provided with old age pension or grains under Anyoday scheme or free grains under Annapurna Yojna, BDOs appear to have no concern in interest for genuine identification of families living below poverty line, because they remain busy on pleasing local representative or obeying the dictates of the retirees of the political parties. The starving millions are left uncared. Poverty is allowed to linger on without active support from government to influence its decrease. Lumpen administration has reduced poor as beggars rather than claimants for survival under schemes of food security or poverty alleviation programmes. People have become used to such apathetic situation. Those who cannot sustain this position and have spirit left for survival, have left the state in search of employment be it in Leh or in Sikkim or in Surat.

This state has been witnessing flight of capital-industrialists, seeking favourable places for investment, flight of qualified persons in absence of employment opportunities, and flight of students seeking places where

examinations are held regularly, where results are monitored on consideration of merit only and where studies are not disrupted by participation of teachers in extra-academic activities. Even flight of bureaucrats is also taking place. Most of them want for central deputation and resist return to State Government. Caste riots and political tensions in villages have over shadowed the interests of agriculturists who feel shaky to invest. Private investment is done for sustenance and not improvement. Public investment in agriculture is under Central Plan and Centrally Sponsored Scheme. Work on renovation of Sone Canal suffer because of non payment of rangdari tax to persons who are sons of the soil and who are direct beneficiaries of its renovation. Development projects like construction of buildings of District Institute of Education and Training can not materialise because EDCIL contractors cannot venture to work in Bihar or state cannot find a contractor suitable to undertake the work which involve Rs. One Crore each for seven districts. And the state is satisfied that money released by centre on such human development projects is working as cushion against overdrafts.

Development in Bihar has suffered not because of absence of funds to execute the programme. The implementation of programme suffers for want of timely release of funds, the beneficiaries have suffered due to wrong identification of families below poverty line as the identification was done in routine manner. None is bothered if the PDS dealer does not open shop daily, does not exhibit the stock position and keeps the shop Closed for months. The entire delivery system has become corroded. Delay in release of funds from apex secretariat level to block level has fed corruption, opacity and unaccountability in implementation of programmes of development.

However people of the state are stronger than the administrative system. A person by nature grows and can not live aloof from the happenings around him, Bihar's hope is now its people only. Decade of absence of development and of negative growth has not put its people in distress. Search for progress has continued. Advancement has not looked back. There has been growth in literacy. Population however continues to grow more than the national growth rate. Rise in literacy has however, put a brake on the choice of number of children among literate and educated parents. Process of acquisition of knowledge has grown among educated people who now constitute substantial portion of the people in the state. The urban population of the State is around 10.47 % of the total population. In urban areas 81 percent males 63 percent female i.e. 73 percent people are literate. Thus out of 8.68 million people residing in urban areas of this state 5.33 million people (excluding 0-6 age group) are literate. In rural areas 26.3 million people are literate. Thus the number of literate people in Bihar is 31.7 million which is the total population of Kerala (31.8 million) State. The number of literate people in this state is nearly equivalent to the total population of Kerala State. These literate people have helped reduction in the infant mortality rate at 62 as against national average at 70. They have helped growth in number of couples adopting smaller family norm and in adopting family planning methods both in rural and urban areas. 32 million literate people of Bihar are source of the strength of this state. These people have helped the growth of middle class in this State and of reduction in poverty. The growth in the quality of live among people of Bihar largely owe to the growth of the literate section of its people.

The result of five decades of planning is hardening of people's belief that development programme can be done only by Government. People have slowly but completely withdrawn themselves from process of development. People consider development programme as governmental. People have become dependent upon governmental activities only. This mindset has resulted in non participation of people in the process of development. People

of a tola cannot bring out a list of families living below poverty line in his tola. Even this requires to be prepared by a Panchayat Sevak/ VLW who might not be residing in that village.

Panchayat Raj Institution has now become functional. Its success depends upon its attempt to bring more and more people to participate in formulation and execution of development programmes.

Change in mindset of people can be accomplished through Panchayat Raj functionaries. PRI only can make the administrative System function for the welfare of the people. No additional infrastructure of fund is required in this task. For teachers to teach, doctors to attend the Primary Health Centre and BDO to execute development plan, no additional fund is required, because these paid units of administration already exist. The requirement is of a master who pays salary and tasks work. Perhaps Panchayat Raj functionaries would meet this requirement. However it is essential that these functionaries are properly trained. They should be motivated toward the necessity of helping economic growth of the state through process of development.

State Government has empowered Panchayats but has yet to frame rules for their functioning. Sooner it is done, better it would be for the development of the State. Participation of people in development programmes would mitigate the existing evils of development administration.