

CHAPTER - IIIANTYODAYA : A micro-level Approach

A major criticism of the development programmes so far taken, has been that of all the benefits, which are mainly meant for desired, the community could not be benefitted. All most all are eaten up by the affluent into ever-growing disparity between the haves and havenots. Almost all the good things in Rajasthan are mainly monopolised by the dominants, which is a serious problem of the state.¹ In order to overcome the weaknesses of past programmes, the government had formulated an Antyodaya (a Adarsh Gram Yojana) movement in the State on 2nd October 1977. Antyodaya scheme is a movement which ends till the relative poverty would be removed. This scheme replace the rural poors above the poverty line. The plan may be called as planning from below or planning from the grass roots. It is a technique which analyses human relationships and co-ordinates human activities by establishing or co-ordinating link between different places with different functions. Antyodaya is of this kind with family as the unit of development has been adopted. The scheme was initiated to tackle the 'problem of poverty on man to man basis.' Antyodaya had completely departed from all the past schemes. A novel feature of the scheme is that unlike



the previous programmes for removal of poverty, Antyodaya does not look at the problem from a macro-angle. Therefore, this kind of a pragmatic approach could improve the economic condition of even a particular category of people on a sustained basis from year to year, which yet not thought of. That would be a sufficient achievement in the direction of covering a large mass of our poor population in course of time.

The word 'Antyodaya' was came up from the original Hindi Word 'Antyaj'. By 'Antyaj', it means the people who live outside the village. Most of these people are untouchables. These backward class people were deprived by the present society since long year ago. Their standard of living is very poor. They live relatively low in the income group of the society. The concept of the last man was defined in Rajasthan as a person who earn his income below Rs. 60 per month at 1977-78 prices. On this basis, 56 per cent of the rural population is under the poverty line.

The concept of 'Antyodaya' was initially framed by Dr. M.L. Mehta,² who is called as 'Father of Antyodaya Movement' and is the founder of scheme. The term 'Antyodaya' means upliftment of the 'last man'. The poorest of poor families were benefitted through various facilities to place them above the poverty line.

The credit to initiate this Antyodaya programme goes to the Valod Group, a voluntary organisation in Gujarat during 1975-76. The primary objective of the scheme was to improve socio-economic status of the poorest of the poor tribals. The group had laid strategic emphasis on generating more employment to tribals, enhancing their family income, diversifying their occupational pattern and imparting skills and knowhow. These tribals carry on new occupations efficiently.³ The group also estimates that an average family of 5 to 6 persons requires an annual income of Rs. 3000/- for their minimum needs. Those families, who earn less than this income are treated as 'below poverty line family'.

In Rajasthan for the social and economic upliftment of the poorest of the poor, the Antyodaya was announced by the new Government (Janata Government), while presenting the first budget in the Assembly in September 1977. The five poorest families were selected in each village of the state. The selection of Antyodaya families would be brought under irrespective of caste, creed, religion and domicile. The programme envisages providing of economic support to the selected families to make them economically self-reliant, employment to those who are unemployed, land is allotted to landless cultivators, loaning programme for allied activities, old-age pension to old etc. are the main items of the programme. The various programmes like D.P.A.P.

S.F.D.A., D.D.P. have been added to the scheme. A qualitative change of society has been preferred by this scheme.

The real inception of identification of poor families was started on 2nd October 1977. Nearly 1.6 lakh families were identified at the end of December 1977.

There are four features of Antyodaya approach to rural development which deserve special emphasis.

- 1) Under this approach poverty does not remain a statistical abstraction. The poor family is identified as a concrete human reality.
- 2) Emphasis is given to the delivery of productive assets so that the poor family begins to get regular income from self-employment.
- 3) The administration goes out, identifies and assists the poor people, instead of waiting for people to come for assistance.
- 4) The criterion of identification is strictly economic (income below the poverty line which has been defined as about Rs. 3600 per family per year in Rajasthan).

All these features are obviously commendable and represent important departures from past practice. Only deserving families will be selected for this programme.

3.1 The Programmes :

Antyodaya programme mainly depended on the line of identification of each Antyodaya family. The identification is essentially done at micro-level against the facilities allotted under macro-level, and leaving it to the concerned family to react and utilise the facilities allotted to them.

Before devising the profile of benefit programme under Antyodaya, a pilot survey was conducted in five districts.* Five villages** were selected in each district. In each village a Gram-sabha meeting was held. In the meeting poorest families were identified for the devised programme of upliftment. The result of the pilot survey revealed that most of these families were without land and had per capita monthly income below Rs. 20/-. Almost half of the families were below poverty line. Further statistics showed that about 10 per cent families were Muslims and about 40 per cent belonged to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe. Almost all selected families were very interested in land allotment, though less than 20 per cent were engaged in agriculture. But the knowledge that land is not available has forced them to opt out. Among the poor families 54.4 per cent wants to engage in animal husbandary (cattle 25.6 sheep, 14.4, goat 13.0 and poultry 0.8 per cent). Another 10.6 per cent need animals

for carts and other means of transport. 12.9 per cent need help for crafts and manufacturing. 1.6 per cent families are economically unemployable and hence need pension. And 20.8 per cent insisted on getting land. Land resource being limited, even though being the first choice of the identified families - land in rural India confer status in the village community and regardless of its economic value is highly favoured. The next choice of the identified families was subsidiary occupations based on animal husbandary.

The following programmes were undertaken in the light of the above pilot survey.

- i) Work to 50,000 families in Rajasthan canal project;
- ii) Allotment of land to Rajasthan canal project to these families;
- iii) Preferential employment to 10,000 Antyodaya families on public works;
- iv) Loans for 2 cows/buffallows and S.F.D.A. and Dairy scheme patterns;
- v) $2/3 : 1/3 = \text{loan} : \text{subsidy}$ for 30 sheep + 1 ram unit;
- vi) Subsidy up to 33.5 per cent for one goat unit (10 goats);
- vii) Poultry units, piggery on limited scale;
- viii) $2/3 : 1/3 = \text{loan} : \text{subsidy}$ for purchasing carts;
- ix) Preferential employment of Antyodaya families in mines and
- x) Help in establishing an innovating small-scale and

cottage industries within the existing schemes.

The criterias for identification were prescribed in the degree of poverty prevailing in the State. In the first round of identification the bottom amongst the poor families were selected. The process of selection was commenced in October 1977, as a part of the suitable Revenue campaign in which Revenue and Panchayat Raj Officers camped in the villages.

In the first round of identification graduated scale was preferred for selection linked to the population of villages. That is selecting larger number of families in bigger villages. But this system was dropped and a common criteria of five families per village irrespective of its size (only in the first round) were selected.

The State government prescribed the criteria for identification of Antyodaya families.

- a) Families under severe destitution having no economic assets like cattle or other investible property and no member in the age group 15-59 years capable of economic activity due to oldage, disability, etc.
- b) Families having no economic assets but having one or more persons capable of economic activity, where annual family earnings do not exceed Rs. 1200/-.
- c) Families with some assets whose annual income is below

Rs. 1800/- per annum.

- d) Remaining families having some land and assets but are below the poverty line i.e. below per capita consumption level of Rs. 55/- per month.

In the first stage the village patwaris (VLWs) were required to draw up in advance a tentative list of at least 10 to 15 families eligible under above criteria.

In the second stage, it was prescribed that the identification of Antyodaya families should be done in a meeting of Gram-Sabha (village Assembly). The B.D.O. in consultation with Tahsildar was required to draw up a programme for holding such meetings. The M.P. and M.L.A. would be invited to attend these meetings. These meetings were supervised by an officer nominated by Collector, the proceedings were signed by Sarpancha, M.P., M.L.A. and officers present in the meeting.

A tentative list would be provided in the meeting. The Gram-sabha is free to accept or reject any or all the names presented by patawaries (VLWs). In this meeting the final selection and choice of programmes by Antyodaya families is done.

At the blocklevel a plan of action would be prepared by vikas Adhikaris. These block level plans would then be consolidated to form district Antyodaya plan.

Each selected Antyodaya family was provided with an identity card.

Keeping the aforesaid facts and assumptions in view, the following programmes have been included in the programme of the Antyodaya project.

- 1) Old-age and disability pension to those having no economic assets and having no person capable of any economic activity in the family due to infirmity, disability and old-age. The rate was fixed at Rs. 30/- per month for a single person and Rs. 40/- for a couple. Later it was increased to Rs. 40/- per month for a single person and Rs. 60/- per month for a couple.
- 2) Allotment of land was firstly preferred in the plan devise. But the fact is that availability of government land for allotment is limited in most of the areas. The preference was given to those families who decide to live in R.C.P. command area.
- 3) Under the agriculture section of the programme outline, some of the Antyodaya families having land or those after allotment of land are being assisted under the normal pattern of S.F.D.A., M.F.A.L., D.P.A.P. programmes under the prescribed subsidy rates for small farmers (25%) and marginal farmers (33%). Following types of benefits were allotted to the Antyodaya families :

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- i) assistance to phasphatic and potassic fertilizers to the enrolled participant farmer member;
 - ii) assistance for storage bins and agricultural implements provided under S.F.D.A., D.P.A.P. project;
 - iii) assistance for purchase of bullocks, bullock-carts at the said rates on the total investment cost by S.F.D.A., D.P.A.P., D.D.P. projects;
 - iv) camel and camel-carts, Donkey-carts, buffalo-carts were also provided under special schemes with subsidy of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ per cent through S.F.D.A., D.P.A.P. etc.
- 4) The facilities for minor irrigation projects were provided by loan assistances. Under this scheme construction of wells, installation of pump sets were given to the Antyodaya families.
 - 5) Land development credit was also provided to whom it was concerned.
 - 6) Animal husbandry programmes were implemented, which was mostly favoured choice after land allotment to the antyodaya families. In this programme cattle loan, sheep breeding, goat rearing, poultry, farming, piggery, etc. were devised in the project.
 - 7) Small-scale and cottage industries programme was provided to antyodaya families. Because most of the families are rural artisans possessing various skills

but lacking proper tools and implements or working capital to make a decent living. The credit was provided for tailoring, basket-making, niwar-making, manufacturing of Palmyrah mats, churi-making and Manihari, small shop keeping, etc.

- 8) Under the wage employment on government and other works, antyodaya families were provided employment or regular government jobs and employment on unskilled jobs in public and private industrial units were given preference.

Almost all selected antyodaya families have lived in abject poverty. Lot of them are missing even basic human urge to improve the living standard. Operationally the programme is based on the individual beneficiary (subsidiary) occupations.

The economics of these individual beneficiary scheme indicating total investment, loan and subsidy components, gross income and net surplus are given in Table-1.

Here it should be noted that, only economic units are being provided to antyodaya families ensuring a minimum return which would enable them to repay loan instalment, and would leave enough for consumption purposes. It has been estimated that after repayment of loan, these families would generate enough income to cross the poverty line.

Other schemes based on local resources were also

considered under Antyodaya Movement. For example Salt-pans, Mining rights, river training programme, etc. All these are specially covered in a specified districts, where such schemes have greater demand. Because initially the families were engaged in specified schemes. Such schemes may not cover all districts of the State. For example saltpans are found in Nagour district, Mining rights on quarries in sawaimadhopur and Udaipur districts, fish programming in only three districts.***

In the next year of the plan's implementation, the working was successfully around its end corner. So, government thought to extend other social benefit scheme to whom it was so far concerned. Under the extended benefit scheme :

- i) educational facilities to antyodaya families were undertaken. In which school going antyodaya children has been exempted from payment of free up to 11th standard;
- ii) grant of scholarship to antyodaya students;
- iii) allotment of school dressess to antyodaya students; and
- iv) school books, etc. were provided under extended social benefit scheme. To the cattle demanding family the benefit of cattle and cattle insurance was provided. Other facilities like housing, free legal aid, exemption from levy of stamp-duty were then announced for the total welfare of identified antyodaya families.

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* Jodpur, Kota, Chittorgarh, Jhunjhun and Jaipur.

** Bhadsoda, Kotkhawda, Hanumantpura, Hunawaskalon,
Undawa.

*** Bhilwara, Ajmer and Tonk.

