



# The legacy of Govind Ballabh Pant: Mountain and Rural Development Issues

Premier Pant is a wonderful old man. He was described to me as a saint, as so many of these devoted leaders are. A rich man originally, he has been in prison so much, that he is all but penniless. His degree of expectation of me is touching, and he has a remarkable, almost poetic and artistic grasp of the planner's mind and planner's job, of which he has no technical knowledge at all.

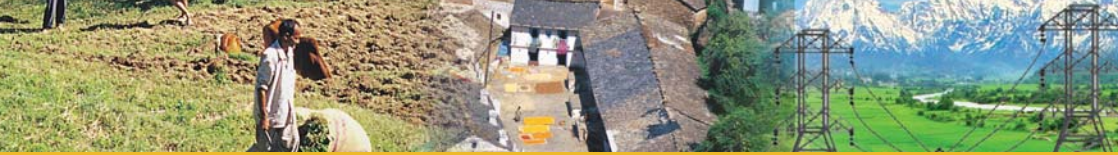
**Albert Mayer: October 27, 1946<sup>1</sup>**

This Institute, with its broad charter of 'environment and development', is named after an eminent public figure who commenced his public career as a lawyer, underwent periods of trials and tribulations as a political worker, suffered state sponsored suppression of demand for political independence from a foreign power and incarceration for many years, spent the best part of his public life as a legislator, parliamentarian and later moved on to hold highest public offices both at the State level and at the Centre. It is only natural to be inquisitive about his views on these two major themes viz., environment and development, on the one hand and his multiple legacies for the posterity, on the other.

## **GOVIND BALLABH PANT: 1887-1961**

My curiosity to know the views and concerns of our former Union Home Minister, perhaps more importantly our first Premier and Chief Minister, made me read whatever was readily accessible, to supplement what I knew already about him as a former civil servant of Uttar Pradesh. It is indeed very surprising that for a person who was in Indian public life for nearly fifty years, one of the top Congress leaders in Gandhi's hierarchy for over thirty years and one who was in the highest policy-making bodies of the Congress and in the governments of UP and the Centre<sup>2</sup> so little has been researched and written about his life and time.<sup>3</sup>

In particular, there seems to be an inexplicable dearth of in-depth studies and evaluations of the various initiatives which were undertaken both by the Governments in the then United Province (later Uttar Pradesh) and the Centre, during his stewardship. Some of the initiatives



which certainly merit our attention relate to various development disciplines like tenancy and land reforms, forestry, rural development, poverty alleviation, co-operatives, panchayati raj, pharmaceutical-manufacture etc. on the one hand, and those related to governance and regulatory regimes like re-organization of Indian States, official language, law and order etc., on the other.

May I, therefore, at the outset venture to suggest that GBPHIED, dedicated as it is to the memory of Pandit Pant, consider commencing a Fellowship grant, to fill this want of academic investigation, focused on various Himalayan social science themes, as an ex-mural activity ?

### **KUMAON: AN INCUBATOR OF ADMINISTRATIVE INNOVATIONS**

Kumaon, the northern-most division, situated almost entirely in the Himalayas, extending from the borders of Tibet to the damp submontane tract of Turai, was part of erstwhile U. P. when Pant was born. Under Gorkha rule, which followed the rule of the Chand dynasty, the people enjoyed no civil liberties so when in 1815 this territory came under the British there was a new kind of rule. It was not only different from the feudal rule of the Gorkha court but distinct even from the rest of the Ceded and Conquered Districts (as the newly acquired territories were then known). In view of the inaccessibility of this nearly uncharted Himalayan tract, it was put under a Non-Regulation regime of administration. This Non-Regulation character of administration, kept flexible, ruled by local Orders and a few hand-picked able officers; made this region a veritable incubator of administrative experiments. When Pant was born its sixth Commissioner, Sir Henry Ramsay, had retired three years ago, in 1884 after 28 years of uninterrupted tenure; still residing at Binsar, quite close to Almora .<sup>4</sup>

British administration, as mentioned was an advance on Gurkha rule and British rulers sought the services of able natives to aid them. In Badri Dutt Joshi Commissioner Ramsay found such a man and according to a biography part of success of Ramsay's rule was attributed to Joshi. The Joshis of Danya had risen in the sixteenth century and they supplied a succession of Dewans for various ruling families. Badri Dutt, son of Trilochan Joshi, and maternal grandfather of Pant, served as a Sudder Amin (1879 – 84) under Commissioner Ramsay. Pant is reputed to have inherited many of Joshi's qualities.<sup>5</sup>

Kumaon's early Non-Regulation period (1815-62) was home to several home-grown innovations like demarcation of celebrated 'san assi' village boundaries (1823), officially defining village boundaries for the first time, creation of posts of hill-patwari (1819) which eventually grew into a highly innovative and cost-effective revenue police system (surviving





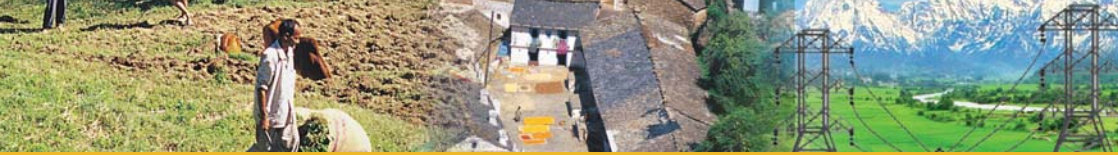
to this day), periodical annual and triennial revenue settlements (as many as seven during the first 20 years) while the rest of the new province groped for an effective substitute to Permanent Settlement of the Lower Provinces, and so on. British Kumaon was indeed fortunate to have had some very able and sensitive administrators from 1815 onwards and Sir Henry Ramsay was practically the last one who was able to rule in a paternalistic mode. Ramsay's tenure of 28 years saw transformation of Company administration into one which was monitored closely from Allahabad, the new capital of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, after 1858.

### FOREST CONSERVANCY VRS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS

That the headquarters of an Institute dedicated to 'environment and development' should be located in Kumaon is justified in more than one sense. It is a matter of record that Major Henry Ramsay, the then Commissioner of Kumaon, was the first Conservator and that it was he who abolished the contract system in 1858 and gradually introduced a better arrangement, by which the cultivation of patches of land in the forest proper was discouraged and the cultivators were induced to take up lands between Haridwar to Barmdeo, "leaving the valuable forest land to the north untouched". For me, it is no less a matter of far greater coincidence that the only report Commissioner Henry Ramsay ever wrote was on Forests, as indeed was surprisingly the case with Pandit Pant.<sup>6</sup>

'Forest Problems in Kumaon', Forest Problems and National Uprising in the Himalayan Region, as an academic critique of British Forest policies prior to the enactment of the Act, which continues to this day i.e. the Indian Forest Act, 1927, stands tall all by itself. To what extent this report influenced the recommendations made by the official Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee, chaired by Commissioner P. Wyndham (1914-24), and ultimately even the new Indian Forest Act of 1927, certainly deserves a full-fledged and independent investigation.

Divided in 9 Sections and 48 paragraphs 'Forest Problems in Kumaon' provides an authoritative Introduction of the forestry discipline and sector as it evolved in the Himalayan region, emphasizing that "administration of forests in Kumaon has been a source of constant friction, annoyance, hardship and misery...(and) .. the people of Kumaon have been consistently opposed to what is known as the Forest Policy from the very start". He pointed out that the local Government was not responsive until May, 1921 when it was forced by political reasons to appoint a committee to enquire into the grievances of the people of Kumaon, arising out of the forest policy of 1911. The constitution of the committee and the terms of reference given to it being "equally illiberal, the announcement failed to arouse any enthusiasm." Thus there was no option left but that the matter "be tacked by the intelligent public of these provinces" and if necessary raised in the local legislative council. It was the context which necessitated



preparation of this report on the Forest Question. The report concerned itself 'principally with the hilly tract' as the local conditions of the 'hilly portion of Kumaon differed materially from those obtaining in the rest of the province and as of the people residing outside Kumaon, only a few came in close contact with rural life in these parts'. Thus besides being a report on the Forest problems it was equally a contemporary investigation into the rural life in the mountains.

This report discloses how even as early as in 1921 Pant was highly conscious of not only the importance of forests in the life of the mountain people but how deeply the rural mountain communities were influenced and affected by official policies relative to the natural resources like forests. In the hilly tracts land was mostly held in ryotwari or bhai bant system and most of the cultivators were proprietors of their holdings. The zamindari system of large landed estates owned by individual proprietors was quite unknown in these quarters and even these proprietary rights were in continuous state of sub-division. Pant mentions that the expression 'forest conservancy' was heard of for the first time in 1858 and a beginning was made in that year in Burma and Madras and it was in 1865 that the first Indian Forest Act was passed. This Act authorized the Government to declare 'forest and wastelands belonging to the Government' as reserved forests. It was, however, clarified at the outset that 'it was not the desire of the Government to affect or abridge petty rights over the soil or the produce of forests which had been prescriptively acquired by the individuals, villagers or wandering tribes'. When this Act was replaced by the one of 1878, which remained in force at the time Pant prepared his report, it was pointed out during discussion in the Council that on an earlier occasion determination of the forest rights of the people to a department which had shown itself eager "to destroy all forest rights except those of the Government and that these were the rights which belonged to the poorest, the most ignorant and the most helpless classes of the people."

Pant brings to our notice how it was due to Sir John Strachey's intervention and misgivings about the possibility of some of the forests in Kumaon being declared as reserved forests under the proposed legislation, that the provision related to 'protected forests' was included, even though the draft bill for the Act of 1878 had no such provision. John Strachey had served Garhwal as its SAC and later became Lt .Governor of North Western Provinces (1874-76), had admitted that the term reserved forest has been applied in some cases to forests which never deserved the name and where the rights of the Government were comparatively unimportant and where the people have from time immemorial been in the enjoyment of large and admitted rights. He held that 'the forest officer ought to be an expert performing duties under the control of revenue authorities of the district, he ought not to exercise powers independently of such control, powers which may seriously affect private



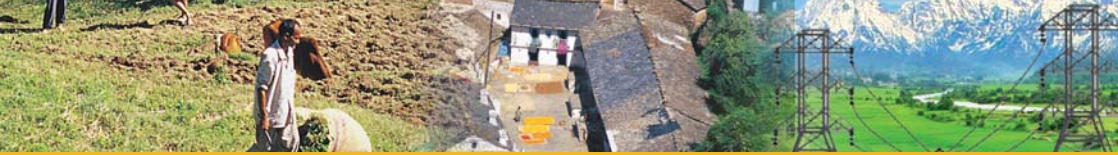


rights and interest, the protection of which may be more important than the protection of the forests themselves.' This is how the provisions relating to 'protected forests' (Chapter IV) and Chapter V directing the local Government to declare the forests and waste lands then under its control for the purposes of forest conservancy, to be reserved or protected forests, according to justice, equity, and good conscience were embodied in the new Forest Act. Discussing the then Forest Act of 1878 Pant also mentions that this Act also contemplated establishment of village forests definitely owned or enjoyed by village communities, which 'after settlement as reserved forests, were to be restored to the villagers subject to the conditions of management and use laid down by the local Government' but how these provisions had 'remained inoperative'.

This chapter also compares forest situation of NWP with that of Madras, Burma and Assam, where the Indian Forest Act did not apply and where they had separate legislation, and explains that the main difference lay in the treatment of 'unoccupied Crown lands not included in reserved forests'. The local laws, he explained, does not class such areas as protected forests but subject them to such protective regulations as they deemed proper. In Assam and Burma there were large chunk of lands under this category and they are known as 'Unclassed areas', not subject to Forest administration.

In his masterly treatment of the history of Forest Administration in Kumaon, in the third section, Pant divides the period leading up to 1878 into four clear periods. He goes on to show how during the first period (1815-1865), leading to management of forest by Commissioner Ramsay from 1858 to 1868 as the first Conservator and their handing over to the forest department in 1868 and their demarcation as reserved forests under Act VII of 1865, was not resented by the people as these changes did not touch the daily life of the average hill-men. Further, when forests round Municipalities like Naini Tal (1850) and cantonment like Rani Khet (1873) were also gazetted, as protected forests, for meeting the fodder and fuel requirements of the urban areas, again there was no serious objection as 'the rights and property of the villagers living in the interior' was not seriously prejudiced by these forest operations.

It was during the second phase (1878-1893), he points out, that the unfortunate process of disappropriation of the people advanced and these commenced with reservation of forests for the Kumaon Iron Company, Gagar and Niglat as reserved and Adnala, Manadal and Patli Dun (1886-1890) and a large number of ranges like Machor, Bhatroj Khan, Chaubatia etc as protected forests (1885-1890); later all these protected forests were reserved (1893 and 1910) and while Almora and Garhwal were not much affected by this change; in Naini Tal it became quite excessive. Although these changes were claimed to have been confined to the



so-called ‘rarely frequented higher ranges’ and the rights were claimed to have been scrupulously allotted, it turned out that it was really not the case and the consequences proved to be quite disastrous.

Pant particularly mentions the ‘momentous step taken by the Government in the year 1893’ when by Notification No. 869 F/638-44 of 1893, “all the forests and the waste lands of the districts of Almora, Naini Tal and Garhwal, not forming part of the measured areas of the villages or of the reserved forests were declared to be protected forests under section 28 of the Indian Forest Act.” Thus by “a single stroke of pen a far reaching change of a sweeping character was affected to which Kumaon owes most of the misery and distress rural parts.” Pant goes on to show how “no elaborate arguments were needed to expose the illegality and impropriety of this action”, as the mere reading of section 28 of the Forest Act would have shown. Not only does Pant demolishes the rationale for the issuing the said unfortunate Notification but he goes on to show how the rules framed for the management of the district protected forests further restricted and regulated the use of enjoyment of the forests, banned fishing in the various lakes and how different treatment was meted out to the common man. In 1903 the process of disappropriation was further intensified in the name of “better management of the protected forests, for the benefit of the residents of Kumaon”.

In 1903, informs Pant, a fresh set of instructions for the working of the rules sanctioned for Kumaon district protected hill forests were issued on 5th April 1903, and in the name of ‘benefit of the resident of Kumaon’ the protected forests were further divided into two classes, (a) closed civil forest, and (b) open. The closed civil forests were to comprise of such tracts which Government considered fit for closing for ‘reproduction or protection of trees’ and before any civil forest was to be closed the Deputy Commissioner was to make a settlement showing the rights of villagers etc in the area closed. The closed civil forests were to be managed by the Deputy Commissioner through ‘the expert agency of rangers’ and open one through patwaris etc. In his report Pant goes on to openly name the British officials who in his view were responsible for the ‘ultimate annihilation of the immemorial rights of the local population’, as he termed it. He holds Sir John P. Hewett, the Governor of United Provinces, the then Commissioner Kumaon, Sir John S. Campbell (1906-13) and Clutterbuck squarely responsible for this most retrograde step, i.e. further closer of areas for reproduction and protection of trees out of the ‘protected areas’. This proved to be the proverbial last straw when 350 sq. miles in Garhwal, 450 in Almora and 100 in Naini Tal were declared to be suitable for this purpose.

Public perception of Sir John Hewett and Sir John S. Campbell, the then Commissioner Kumaon, was that of, as Pant put it, “the well known types of the hide-bound and sun-dried bureaucracy

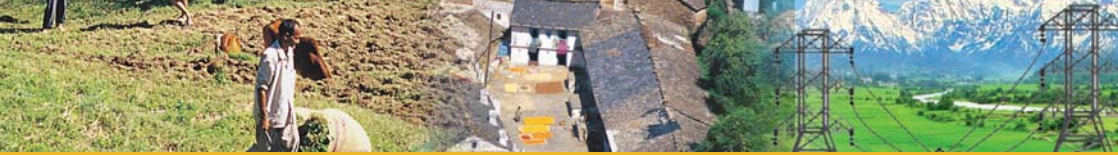




of the Indian Civil Service... (and Sir John Campbell was)... even amongst his countrymen (who) easily stood first in the distrust and condemnation of Indians.” According to Pant “these officers were not satisfied with the policy laid by their predecessors but resolved to go further and far beyond the limits laid down by the latter... Sir John Hewett, Sir John Campbell and Mr. Clutterbuck were fast friends. All the three were well known for their love of sport, and often they went out together in the dense forests for shikar. Away from the human habitation, and in the darkness of thick jungles, these two knights in league with their expert adviser laid their plans for carving out extensive reserves out of the protected hill forests.” This, according to Pant, was the culmination of policy launched in 1893 and in 1911 the utter annihilation of the immemorial rights of the local population was introduced.

The simple and confiding Kumaon villager who had quietly borne the steady encroachment into his sacred rights now was forced to give vent to his anguish and this resulted in widespread discontent and the forest policy of Government was condemned all over the division. In 1907 in a meeting held at Almora under the chairmanship of Major General Wheeler emphatic protest was lodged against this policy on the motion of Rai Bahadur Badri Datt Joshi. Pant gives benefit of doubt, in the beginning to Governor Sir Hewett by saying that earlier he had no opposition to withdrawal of restrictions imposed later but subsequently he also backtracked on his Bareilly Darbar announcement of 1908, allegedly under the influence of Commissioner Sir Campbell and Clutterbuck. Certainly no one knew the English officers better than Rai Bahadur Badri Datt Joshi, and through him, Pandit Pant, who by that time had become chairman of Naini Tal District Board ; so there could be no doubt as regards identification of the officials responsible for aggravating the forest and Kumaon peoples' problems.

In the remaining chapters of his superbly argued and well marshaled brief on behalf of the people of Kumaon Pant (i) shows gaping holes in the forest settlement of Naini Tal conducted by Deputy Commissioners Stiffe and Nelson, respectively of Almora and Garhwal, who divided Naini Tal between themselves for the purposes of forest settlement; and (ii) the mind-set of the officers settling peoples' rights through such comments as “ this forest cannot bear more ” or “I have no more to give” as if they regarded “the children of the soil as undeserving supplicants seeking doles”, or (iii) how these two officers unilaterally eliminated Class B altogether, which though managed by forest department but under less rigid control than Class A area, thus further disappropriating the various rights and concessions which had been promised to be retained during the proposed settlement. This section also provides evidence of the painstaking efforts which Pant made to marshal his evidence and quote precedents from other states e.g. he quotes how the Madras Government had ruled that such forests should not be allowed within half a mile from any village and how the Madras Council



did not consider even this as sufficient and insisted on keeping it at least one mile, referring to the complaint of the people that the boundary pillars of the forest had come inconveniently close to the village. This report is also a testimony of Pandit Pant's erudition, as he freely quotes from various Government Reports, Gazettes, Gazetteers, and Council Proceedings. Paragraphs 17 to 27 of this chapter bear testimony of the deep insight Pandit Pant had developed of the hill men's daily life, travails and living conditions, from a reading of official reports.

Sections V and VI being respectively Exorbitant Price of the Forest Rights and the inhuman aspects of the implementation of the Forest Policy are based on local knowledge, inputs collected during his investigations, providing meat and substance to the academic case he had built up in the preceding sections. The report fully reflects his legal training and argumentative skills in pleading a case and no wonder these very traits were to prove his main strength, when time and again it was he who would be asked to mediate negotiate and plead a case, whether in the political arena or the floor of the legislature. In Section VI of his report he illustrates the baneful effects of the forest policy and demarcation of reserved forests on cultivation and population, next to these forests; and next he questions the very rationale and philosophy behind promulgation of the policy itself in Section VII and before suggesting a solution he also refutes the assertion, quoting official reports generated during the British rule itself, that during the pre-British days people had neither any rights in the soil or in forests.

## THE MINIMUM DEMAND

Criticizing the history of forest administration as a grim narrative of "successive breach of faith, or promises often uttered to the ear and as often violated in practice", he summed up the policy of Forest Department in just two words, namely "encroachment and exploitation". Pant considered the forest policy in Kumaon as utterly indefensible as also oppressive, vexatious and futile. He did not advocate petty palliatives, declared the notification of 1893 "simply preposterous", did not think that withdrawal of Notifications was going to rehabilitate the forests and firmly believed that "the disturbance of the san assi boundaries and the efforts of the Government at the disappropriation of the people in respect of lands within these boundaries were (the root cause) of the present muddle."

*"The memory of san assi boundaries," reminded Pant, "is green and fresh in the mind of every villager and he cherishes it with a feeling bordering on reverence; he is simply unable to see his way to accepting the claim of the Government to the benap lands comprised within the village boundaries and regards every advance in that line as nothing short of encroachment and intrusion. Let san assi boundaries be vested with their real character instead of being looked upon as merely nominal, and, to remove misgivings, let*





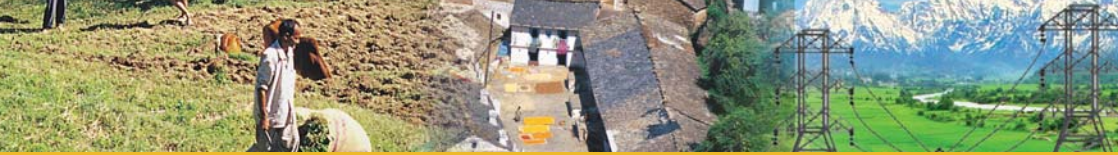


*the areas enclosed within these boundaries be declared as the property of the villagers and all the benap lands included within these areas be restored to the village community, subject to such conditions as impartibility, etc., as may be desirable in the public interest.... The simple fact should not be forgotten that man is more precious in this earth than everything else, the forests not excepted.... This is the minimum demand of the people and there seems to be no other rational and final solution.”<sup>7</sup>*

In the final section of his report concluding with as many as four recommendations Pant pointed out that ‘supercilious disregard of public opinion and popular sentiment (had been) responsible for many of the woes of this unfortunate land...greased cartridges (1857) ...partition of Bengal (1905)...the Rowlatt Act (was) at the root of universal unrest.. and the Government had to give in ultimately in every case, but only after it had been too late and leaving bitter memories behind. The collective intelligence of a people (could) not be treated with contempt. if the village areas are restored to the villagers the causes of conflict and antagonism between the forest policy and the villagers will disappear and a harmony and identity of interests will take the place of the present distrust and the villager will begin to protect the forests even if such protection involves some sacrifice or physical discomfort.. every... individual is instinctively interested in the preservation of his property. if the above suggestion is accepted a natural system of conservancy will come into vogue...the regulation of this areas will be subject to the control of village panchayats...if the district boards are to benefit by the income of these bodies (spare land within a few villages raised as forests and leased to district boards) (the district boards) will have a strong incentive for managing hem economically...the district boards are in charge of many departments, administered through expert agencies...they can similarly take over the Forest Department (para 43). He also strongly pleaded for the release of all those villagers who had been incarcerated in connection with the forest fires of 1921...and said even assuming the convictions were warranted what could not be denied that those unfortunate people have been the victims of wrong policy foolishly adhered to in the face of unanimous and constant opposition on the part of the people whose life had been rendered intolerable by that policy (para 48).

### **KUMAON FOREST GRIEVANCES COMMITTEE REPORT, 1921**

The Government appointed a Committee in 1921 after the new policy had resulted in a massive resentment and burning of more than 30,000 hectares of forests between 1911 and 1917, under the chairmanship of Commissioner P. Wyndham (1914-24), known as Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee. While the Chief Conservator Forests, the Secretary of the Committee, considered these recommendations as a “serious set back to the conservation of forests in Kumaon and (that) their general results (would) probably be gradual destruction of excluded forest by burning, grazing and lopping”; the Government were convinced “that the



people of Kumaon would have been satisfied nothing less than the steps which the Committee recommended...there was no alternative therefore to putting the Committee's recommendations into force as early as possible”.

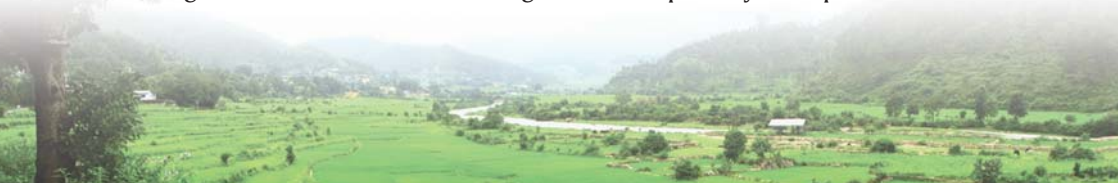
The hard-hitting Report prepared by Pandit Pant on the Forest Issues obviously cornered the official Committee, and the Government so comprehensively that they were left with just no option but to roll-back reserved areas and address various complaints raised by the affected hill- people. Suffice here to point out that that the enquiry by this Committee brought forward eleven major grievances and these related to:

1. Demarcation; forest boundary pillars often came too close to cultivation or buildings,
2. Lopping restrictions,
3. Restrictions on grazing,
4. Exclusion of sheep and goats from the reserves,
5. Employment of forest guards to enforce numerous rules and regulations and their constant interference with women and children, who under the custom in vogue in Kumaon are chief people to exercise on behalf of the villagers such rights as lopping, collection of minor forest produce, grazing etc.,
6. Large number of forest cases which have either to be compounded or fought out in a criminal court.,
7. Unsatisfactory method of dealing with indents for timber,
8. Rules regarding fire protection,
9. Strict restrictions on the exercise of minor rights to those which are formally recorded in the rights list,
10. Measure land was taken up within the reserves and in some cases inadequate compensation was given or none was given, and
11. Prohibition of all extensions of cultivation within the reserves.

## BIRTH OF VAN PANCHAYATS/COMMUNITY FORESTS

A comparison of the two reports in question shows that the official Committee covered most of the grievances which had been noted in the said report and its recommendations, by way of four general remedies, addressed most of the grievances raised. These four general remedies were:

1. Isolated forests to be excluded from forest management and converted to civil and ultimately to become panchayati,
2. Revision of demarcation by the Deputy Commissioner as forest settlement officer,
3. Enquiry by the Deputy Commissioner into complaints as to measured land having been included in reserves under land acquisition Act or by agreement, admitted or implied, and
4. Removal of rules and regulations over reserves still maintained under forest department management where such rules and regulations can possibly be dispensed with.





Community Forests, called Panchayati Forests (Van Panchayats) in U.P. hills, emerged out of the abovementioned Four Remedies suggested by the Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee, as far back as in October 1921. Surprisingly what has remained completely unnoticed so far in any critique of the Kumaon Forest Grievances Committee's recommendations and which assumes great relevance in context of the 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution, 1992 is its last recommendation, namely:

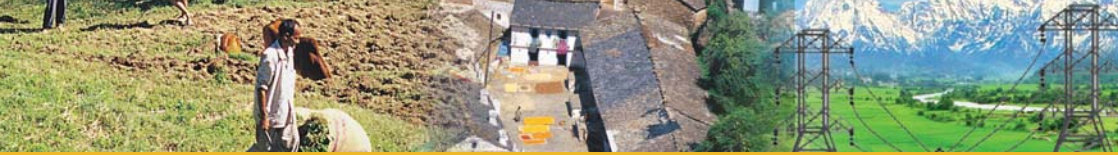
*“If in the future Government are satisfied that the management of excluded forests has been successful, it is suggested that Government consider the ultimate handing over of these Class I and Class II reserves to District Boards for management.”<sup>8</sup>*

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION

If during the colonial period restoration of the disappropriated forest rights and concession back to the marginalized hill people was accepted as a major challenge by Pandit Pant, which resulted in rolling back of forest boundary-pillars and creation of community forests/van panchayats; in free India Premier Pant played a most crucial role in laying the foundations of our future National Extension Service or the Development Blocks of today.

## EARLY ATTEMPTS AT RURAL REJUVENATION

During Premier Pant's U.P. Congress Ministry (1937-38), after the Government of India Act, 1935 elections, even when there were divergent opinions over the rural or industrial approaches, the Congress ministries had an integrated picture not only of the rural and industrial aspects but of rural development as a whole. There were rudimentary rural development schemes, on which small sums were spent. Emphasis was laid on voluntary cooperation and personal contacts and the entire province, not merely selected areas, was to be covered in five years. A Rural Development Officer was appointed to coordinate operations and S.K.D. Paliwal (who later became a Minister after Independence) was appointed to the post; a Provincial Rural Development Board was appointed and advisory rural development associations were formed in each district with non-official majorities, leading to composite boards of officials and non-officials. By 1938 twenty rural development centres in each district, each consisting of 20 to 30 villages, with an organizer in charge was in place. Later these Better Living Societies had a panchayat ghar each, a hospital, a seed-store, a radio house, a preparatory school and a veterinary hospital. By 1938 as many as 93 Better Living Societies had been registered and more than 80 lakh rupees were spent on rural development;



improved water supply, libraries and adult schools, veterinary work and new dispensaries received attention; there were improved methods of agriculture and a part of the farm itself was reserved for experiment. Premier Pant was to acknowledge later that his Ministry was fully conscious of “the deterioration in the conditions of rural life and (it) realized the dangers that would follow if that state of affairs were allowed to continue unchecked... (this) rural reconstruction program had not proceeded very far when the Second World War intervened and the Congress Government resigned.”<sup>9</sup>

The Congress Government came back to office in 1946 and in accordance with the cardinal principles of Congress policy, the task of revitalizing life in the villages was again taken in hand. It was at this stage that Albert Mayer, who was an architect and town and rural planner, entered the scene. Mayer had served in India as a United States Army Engineer from 1942 to 1945 and later was involved in planning of the cities of Bombay, Kanpur and Chandigarh.

In 1945 Albert Mayer was advised by one of his friends that he should meet Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru before he left for home. Mayer, in context of India’s imminent freedom offered a few suggestions as priorities, as he saw them, when he ultimately met Nehru as his guest at Anand Bhawan. Provoked by Nehru Mayer had suggested that he would ...try out various pilot projects just as fast they could be thoroughly thought out, formulated, and carried out...when India gained her freedom, there was (bound to be) a tremendous upsurge of demand for a better life, and work would be needed to be done on a tremendous scale... only by this initial experimentation, by finding out what would work and what wouldn’t and why, could one prepare for this tremendous scale...and only by that first experience, gained as quickly as possible, could there be a reasonable chance of success in the later big, inevitable program...and only if in the course of these pilot project work ...success could be achieved in training personnel, these could in turn train other trainers, then alone could a large program later succeed. The idea was to generate what is called a critical –mass of trained personnel. Mayer broached the idea of establishing “some model villages”, which would emphasize good housing, sanitation, and sound community structure...he was more keen to ... ‘make some specific things work well as radiating demonstrations’ rather than give high-level advise which was not tried out anywhere...these were the embryonic ideas which were discussed between Prime Minister Nehru and Albert Mayer, in those formative days.<sup>10</sup>

Mayer went back to US and six months later he received a letter from Prime Minister Nehru inviting him to India and try out some of the ideas which they had discussed at Allahabad. Nehru also discussed Mayer’s proposal with Premier Pant and the latter cabled back to Mayer.

Nehru’s idea was to adopt a wholistic view...raising living standards of people ...train them

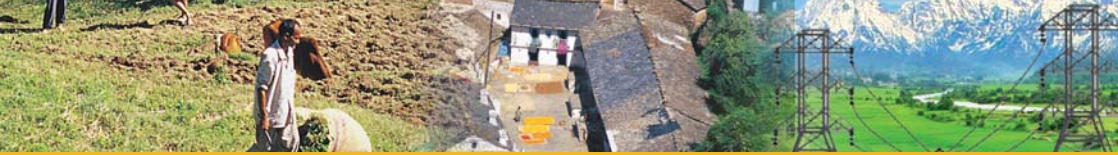




and utilize them to the full...build up community life on a higher scale, without breaking up the old foundations...utilize modern technique and fit it into Indian resources and Indian conditions...(it was appreciated that) the resources were limited and the conditions were very different from the Western countries...(however)...Nehru was convinced that it could and should be done...a number of experiments (would) have to be made before...one hit upon the right method of tackling the problem.<sup>11</sup>

Mayer responding to Premier Pant's cable spelled out his detailed plans and thoughts 'on housing and rural reconstruction' in August 1946, 'based on his talks and letters between him and Prime Minister Nehru, supplemented by some thinking and work he had been doing'...It was this communication, containing exchange of ideas between Prime Minister Nehru, Albert Mayer the American volunteer planner which was given shape to under the vigilant and experienced eyes of Premier Pant and was to become the celebrated Community Development project for rural reconstruction of an impoverished India....waking up after centuries of subjugation from foreign rule. In a nutshell:

- The basic objective was...to formulate a practical program for functional planning and physical rebuilding of rural community life in such a way as to improve its quality and performance...also to remove...the handicaps to the proper development of the individual and the community, positively to foster such development,
- Such program was to be based on and tested some actual specimen projects...these had to be of two kinds...first, an evaluation of any previous experience of U.P. and else where; and second, actual experimental work to be initiated in U.P...work initiated in U.P. was to be in several groups of villages whose 'characteristics-geographic, economic, social—would be sufficiently different to permit general conclusions to be drawn'...actual concrete work in situ were to be very important in order, (a) to test out, in actual practice, ideas that had been adopted; to check their advantages and weaknesses, and their reception by people for whom they are intended, and based on these findings, either to adopt generally or to modify the original program; and (b) to get an actual check on anticipated initial and recurring costs...
- In the formulation of the program a most essential element was to relate costs and timetable of accomplishment to the economic status of the people affected and to the budget and resources of the U.P. and local governments...How (to) resolve this matter (was) to be one of the principle elements determining whether (there was) something laudable but unfeasible, or whether (it was possible) to evolve a real program that (could be) carried out successfully year after year..
- In so far as the 'purely physical and functional phase, the items which were to be



provided for, as a priority (were) to be, (i) better housing, in physical space, arrangement, quality and permanence, (ii) intercommunicating system of simple but all-weather roads to some center for regular reliable disposal of produce, (iii) Sanitation-personal hygiene, sewage disposal, drainage, (iv) Water supply and distribution, (v) mosquito and malaria control, (vi) Maximum local irrigation obtainable, and tie-in with any larger schemes, either existing, being developed, or proposed, (vii) Dispensary, clinics, hospital, (viii) School or schools, (ix) Community house and recreation center may be in the same physical building as the school, (x) Meetinghouse for local council (panchayat) or other local governmental or administrative unit (may occupy same physical space as community house), (xi) Warehouse if required, and (xii) Possibly small building for small machines, looms, and so on, which may be justified by local cottage industries; possibly also for central storage of cooperatively used farm implements.

Has he over-done his wish-list, Mayer wondered? Mayer immediately checked himself... 'may be that in the above (he has) either suggested more than is feasible or less... But (he believed that) for a minimum standard of well-being and productivity, each item definitely merited consideration... probably in a relatively few experimental cases, (they should) try to accomplish all or nearly all of these items... in the eventual entire program, trying to accomplish them all will almost certainly too ambitious... to accomplish such a list was going to require the maximum of ingenuity... attempts (would) have to be made to use locally available materials to the maximum, use of local labour by the people themselves so as to reduce cost... to do this research (would) be necessary on these levels... (to be checked) carefully (was to be) what others (had) done in India and (in UP), in improved earth construction, in cheap waterproofing methods, in stabilizing earth roads... test their adaptability to (U.P. conditions)...

So much for what (Mayer had) called the physical and functional phases of the undertaking... undoubtedly a proper physical and functional framework '(was) indispensable, it (was) a necessary condition precedent to accomplishing (the overall) objective. But that alone (was) only a first step. If people (did not) know how to use these, or (did not) care to, then however fine the framework, the value in use (would have been) small or negligible... To assure most fruitful acceptance and use, (these had to be) provided: Education and information in the use of these facilities. People (had) to understand why such innovations (were) of benefit to them, and (these had) to be used... Some skilled personnel (would have to) be provided, initially from the outside, to operate certain facilities... simple machines and tools, cesspools, septic tanks, wells, and irrigation tanks these personnel (had to be) selected and trained... Improved agricultural practices to stimulate cooperative action... important to raising the level of production...



Mayer concluded...This (was) a very brief note or outline of the problem as (he saw) it from this distance (America). It may be far from what (Nehru) (had) in mind, or it may not...But (Mayer hoped) that it (would have) expedited (their) arriving at what (was to) soon become a practical and yet a worthwhile program.<sup>12</sup>

### THE TINGLING ATMOSPHERE OF EXPECTATION

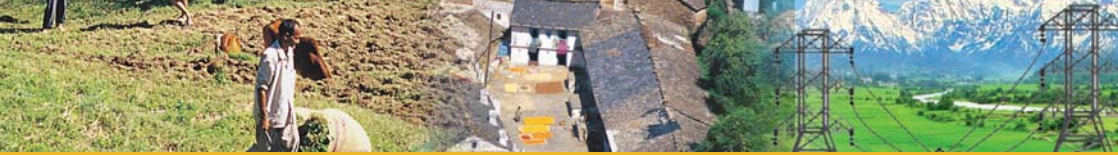
Mayer arrived in India a month later and then he met Nehru...‘ who was in the midst of a busy and critical period generally, and in the immediate throes of the severest possible crisis of negotiations with the Muslim League, and yet he not only gave time and attention to (him), but told (him) that he should see various people at Delhi...and (Nehru) had already arranged for (Mayer) next morning to see Premier Pant, who happened to be in Delhi. Mayer (was to inform later) his American friends back home:

The number and kinds of people I have seen ; their ability, outlook, energy, and devotion ; the tingling atmosphere of plans and expectation and uncertainty; and yet the calm and self-possession— what it adds up to is being present at the birth of a nation. The disparity between what they expect and what I believe I can do is so terrific that I have realistically considered telling them my deep doubts, apologizing, and going home.

Mayer during the next two days had intensive interviews and it is during this stay that he had his first meeting with Premier Pant and he wrote, ‘Premier Pant is a wonderful old man. He was described to me as a saint, as so many of these devoted leaders are’...Mayer was simply mesmerized with the atmosphere which prevailed on the eve of Independence of India .<sup>13</sup>

Mayer after three months of rural explorations returned to New Delhi and Lucknow and met Nehru and Pant again (in fact he also had a discussion with Gandhiji for about an hour) and after discussions with them revised his earlier proposal and prepared an outline of one basic rural pilot project ; in December 1946 he presented (his) village development plan to Premier Pant ‘with trepidation because it (had gone) much farther than anything the two had discussed’...Pant gave it his O.K. and thereafter Mayer made it specifically ‘applicable to a definite area’ ... in February, 1947... the U.P. legislature accepted the budget of the pilot program which had been presented to Premier Pant and Albert Mayer was invited to carry out the program.... After consultations with social scientists experienced in rural development,





Albert Mayer outlined the functions of the Rural Life Analyst which was destined to prove very crucial in the pilot program during the following year...in August 1947 Mayer returned to U.P....(by that time) a province-wide village development plan had been inaugurated...he met Premier Pant again .. and (as he was to note later) this particular interview with Premier Pant (was to prove) to be his '...most satisfying and promising experience in India ...'

Etawah was (to be) chosen over Pratapgarh, as the first district... Harish Chandra Seth, an agriculturist and Baij Nath Singh, a young Gandhian follower with social service experience, joined as Deputy Development officers....conferences with Departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Public Health, Industries and Public Works, the Development Commissioner, K.B. Bhatia, the chief, were closely involved and Premier Pant and Development Minister, K.D. Malviya were in constant touch...<sup>14</sup>

The learnings and impacts of the Etawah Pilot Project have been minuted by none other than Pandit Pant himself ( after he had moved over to the Centre as its Home Minister ) in 1956; and he recalled :

The Pilot Development Project, worked out with the assistance of Mr. Mayer was launched in the Etawah district in October 1948. It was a new experiment in rural planning, under which the task of seeking a better life and reconstructing and rehabilitating the village was to be undertaken essentially by the villagers themselves. Provisions of course had to be made for expert advise also being available in technical matters, but the distinguishing feature of the arrangement was that there was to be integrated scheme, in which the technical workers functioned as a part of the over-all village team , with a feeling of deep interest and participation, so as to invoke and retain the confidence of the village community. Another new idea that was introduced was that of the multipurpose worker at the village level....if (the various functions of different nation-building departments) in the initial stage were entrusted to a trained individual who was actuated by genuine spirit of service, the villagers would respond to his advise and draw real benefits from it.<sup>15</sup>

And the villagers did respond, so much so that the Etawah Pilot Project became to the movement for revitalizing the ways and life of the world's peasantry what 'Rochdale experiment in England (was) to the world's cooperative movement, (or) what the Tennessee Valley Authority (was) to the integrated exploitation of the world's great watersheds.' Began in 1948 as a 64





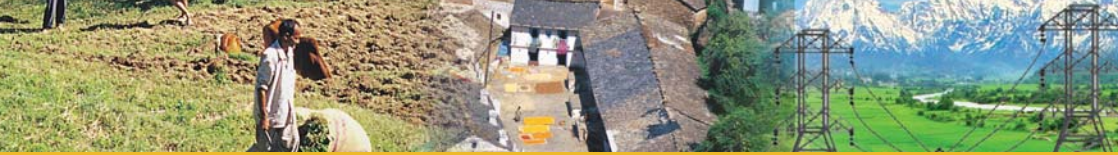


village unit it expanded within three years to one of 300 villages; it spanned four similar projects in U.P., and finally became the national prototype for the Community Development and the National Extension Service inaugurated during the course of first five years, with American help which Chester Bowles, the U.S. Ambassador, offered and secured in direct talks with Nehru. By 1950s it proved that there was no conflict between the two aims of rural development, on maximizing material production (the industrial route) and on expansion of personal and village oriented resources (the rural development route). It established a simultaneous, coordinated approach, with the village level worker as the main instrument.<sup>16</sup>

### MAINSTREAMING FORESTS AND RURAL POVERTY ISSUES

We have briefly re-visited and recapitulated just two concerns, out of a basket of so many, with which Pandit Pant was passionately involved personally and in public capacity; the first, as a budding politician, during the pre-independence period, which was directly related to the forests and the livelihoods of thousands of poor hill-men, who had been driven to the wall with huge support area around their habitats snatched in the name of protecting the forests, as if the resourceless hill-men were enemies and not the main stakeholders. His eminently well argued brief on their behalf, through the only literary work attributed to him, gave birth to the concept of community forests or Van Panchayats in 1921; a concept to which the nation was to wake up to only in 1990s under the rubric of Joint Forest Management. Uttarakhand with 12,000 plus revenue villages, out of a total of 15,000 plus, covered with Van Panchayats leads a pack of states in this regard and it has several development projects centered round them e.g. Bio-fuels, bamboo and fibre, fodder, and this welcome legacy gets enriched every passing year, a fitting memorial to their first vocal 'advocate'. Pant's analyses of the forest problems of Kumaon in passing discussed several issues which relate to the forests of Assam or the then Madras province. May I point out that the Scheduled Tribes and Indigenous Peoples (Recording of Forest Rights) Act, enacted by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, is nothing if not a belated attempt at acknowledgement of the un-recorded rights and concessions enjoyed by the Scheduled Tribes and the other Indigenous People of our country; which had hitherto remained in official records alone. What Pandit Pant and hill-people of Kumaon had been able to achieve in 1921 could be extended to the rest of the country after more than eight decades.

Having said so, my second recommendation to the Board of Governors of this esteemed Institute and Dr. L.M.S. Palni, would be, to constitute a Chair for Sustaining and Strengthening the Community Forestry Movement in our country, which ought to include pro-active action in monitoring and supervising the development taking place in the joint forestry management and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights)



Act, 2006. Premier Pant had sent out UP officials to Madras to gain similar insights and he created posts like Van Panchayat Inspectors etc, as a follow up. In the present context a large number of issues still remain unaddressed e.g. periodical elections in Van Panchayats, micro-planning, personnel deployment and their training, compensation payment for land and trees felled for various development projects etc. The good old 'Forestry for the people' has to be replaced by 'Forestry by the people'; directly linking all forestry operations with poverty alleviation and livelihoods.

The second concern of Pandit Pant, or the Etawah Pilot Project, as is well known gave birth to the Community Development approach in post Independence India, a pace-setter for many de-colonised nations of Asian and African continents. Without any doubt the central concern here was eradication of 'rural poverty' from the Indian country-side, through a participatory mode. Several rounds of expansion of National Extension Service has seen India now covered fully by thousands of Development Blocks, manned by lakhs of trained extension workers, working under various 'line-departments' like agriculture, co-operatives, rural development, minor irrigation, panchayati raj etc.. The 'issue of poverty especially rural poverty' today has become a global concern, duly reflected in the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals. India's preparedness to address its Rural Poverty across the country side has been immensely facilitated by its rural development infrastructural net-work, foundations of which were laid in UP during Premier Pant's stewardship. Verily 'the Rochdale' or co-operative movement and 'Tennessee Valley Authority' or the watershed approach, both have been subsumed under our home-grown 'Etawah Pilot Project' approach to community development or rural development.

## INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND MOUNTAIN AGENDA

India's development journey through a hitherto 'maligned' centralized planning process has reached a stage where the importance of 'Inclusive Growth', in its largest sense, has been fully realized. This visionary agenda of 'Inclusive Growth' definitionally cares more for the 'remote regions of our mountains'. It was Pandit Pant, a quintessence 'Mountain Man', who highlighted the plight of the 'mountain people' at the hands of the colonial British officers, through 'forest policy issues'; San Assi rights, over the village boundary, were nothing but peoples' immemorial rights over 'soil, water and all natural resources', and not merely over 'forests or forest produce'. The 1823 land settlement (san samvat assi) of British Kumaon was ahead of the rest of UP (then known as Upper Provinces) and the 'back-process' accepted under Regulation IX, 1833 was still ten years into the future! Pant, as we have noticed already, made out a strong case for rolling back the reserve forests back to the san assi boundaries, restoring





hill-mens' acknowledged and recorded rights. Thus by raising objections to the forest policy issues he had in fact, seen in the present context, put the 'Mountain Agenda' centre-stage, way back in 1921.

Even the world at large had not officially heard of any Mountain Agenda before the UNCED Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, where for the first time the world's mountains received attention at the highest level. As we all know this acknowledgement was expressed with the inclusion of Chapter 13, (Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development) in Agenda 21. This Mountain Agenda received further fillip in 2002 when the International Year of the Mountains was celebrated the world over, with its Asian Summit at Kathmandu, Nepal and World Summit at Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. I had the good fortune to participate in both the events. Sustainable mountain development has as one of its six objectives, "combating poverty through the promotion of sustainable income-generating activities and improvement of infrastructure and social services, in particular to protect the livelihood of the local communities and indigenous people."<sup>17</sup>

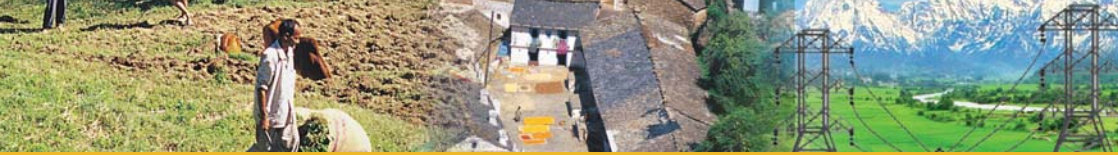
## SONS OF MOUNTAINS

A 'son of Mountains' himself, Prime Minister Nehru had described him as "a big man, tall and heavy of body and slow of movement. He is a son of our mountains and carries something of their imperturbability about him...by his unfailing good humour and tact and his amazing patience he surmounted every obstacle and was liked even by his critics and opponents....The chief criticism made of him has been that he is too good, too soft. He is indeed the perfect gentleman."

Another contemporary had observed that "even in the big province of U.P., Pant was like a Brobdingnagian in Liliput. This was particularly so in the legislature and in administration. Nothing escaped his eye. The governing principle of his approach was not to allow the party or partymen to interfere in day-to-day administration. He was a master of detail. No file was too formidable for him. His contributions in other spheres of public service have not been discussed here for want of time and necessity. To quote just one of his contributions in the field of governance of the country it would suffice to just mention that if Sardar Ballabh Bhai Patel was an Indian Bismark who brought about States integration, Govind Ballabh Pant was the second Indian Bismark who brought about States re-organization as Union Home Minister."<sup>18</sup>

As a former UP civil servant, it has been my privilege of having been closely associated with some of the concerns I have just shared. I am conscious, as the first Rural Development





Commissioner of UP, that Etawah Pilot Project and its contribution is not fully reflected in official accounts as there existed no Directorate of Rural Development, before I took over in July 1986. But for this association, my involvement with the State Institute of Rural Development, Bakshi Ka Talab, Lucknow and my stint as the Hill Development Secretary, in charge for development of the 6 mountain districts of UP, I could not have shared with you what I have today.<sup>19</sup>

The establishment of a Co-operative Drug Factory at Ranikhet (1949), the Bsheshaj Vsheshajya Laboratory and Office (Pharmaceutical Expert, 1949) under co-operative department, promotion of Van Panchayats, as mentioned already; are a few initiatives which fully reflect Premier Pant's incipient interventions in mountain development, which now stand manifest as a Ayush Department at the Centre and a proposed University of Ayurved in Uttarakhand and a very large number of Van Panchayats involved in livelihood activities.

### **GBPHIED AND THE MOUNTAIN AGENDA**

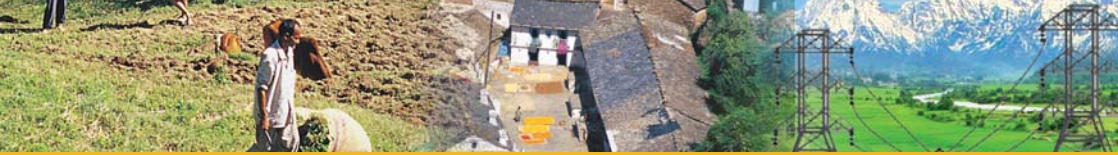
When GBPHIED was conceived and established in 1988 neither the world nor India had an agenda known as Mountain Agenda, there now exists one after the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. This institute's units now straddle the entire length of the Indian Himalaya and it has also been declared as the Nodal Agency for co-ordinating mountain development initiatives of a regional inter-governmental mountain development organization of 8 regional countries, the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

The best homage we all could possibly pay to this son of the mountains, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant on his birth day, is to reflect seriously on the 'mountain issues' he had highlighted, especially the 'deep economic distress' caused by continuing disappropriation of mountain peoples' immemorial rights on 'soil, water and other natural resources', which the State by its steam-rolling power tends to ride rough-shod over, from time to time; and took effective steps to mitigate them by successfully rolling back the 'reserved forests' to their pre - 1823 boundaries. During the present times the very same 'mountain issues' continue to exist but in a much more complex avatar, calling for a multi-pronged package of solutions, consisting of policy, governance structures, processes, programmes and projects. The mountain issues which are manifest are – a higher and aggravated poverty in the mountain tracts, high unemployment and unemployable youth, involuntary and increased migration of able-bodied people, iniquitous distribution of development and drudgery of rural hill-women. Sectoral solutions would be of no avail now, and therefore the Mountain Agenda for an institution like GBPHIED would consist of:





1. **Advocacy for establishment of a Ministry of Mountain development:** by way of according a special status to mountain areas, recognizing that mountain areas are special and distinct from low-land areas -- as a nodal and independent department under the direct charge of Prime Minister for organizing, co-ordinating and promoting Mountain Development, as has been done in the case of coastal areas by establishment of Department of Ocean Development in July 1981,
2. **Upgradation of Ministry of DoNER into Mountain Development by including the remaining mountain states of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir:** as a legal and institutional mechanism, which would also ensure more mountain specific investment programs, e.g. non-lapsable annual plan outlays, earmarking of sectoral Ministries funds for mountain development, greater mobilization of financial resources for mountain development and conservation programs,
3. **Mobilization of addition Resource flows:** Mobilization of additional resource flows, both Plan, through Five Year Plans and, Non-Plan funds through Finance Commissions' Awards; making out case for Compensation for Eco-System Services for the catchment areas in the plains, CAMPA funds collected through compensatory mechanisms, and other Ministries' programs and schemes specifically tailored to meet mountain programs and projects; innovative mechanisms allowing greater share of the proceeds from mountain based economic activities to reach mountain people; through innovative Public Private Partnership infrastructural projects ,
4. **Greater empowerment of Women and Children:** Ensure greater empowerment, equity and equality of mountain women, though poverty alleviation initiatives,
5. **Promoting Cultural integrity and Biological diversity:** Increasing awareness of specific mountain cultures and their important role in maintaining mountain eco-systems and greater recognition of endemism of plant and animal species,
6. **Experience-sharing and Networking:** Use of Mountain Forum, Inter-Governmental organizational and NGO consultations, collaboration to be fully exploited, stimulating and enhancing direct exchanges among mountain communities, and
7. **Monitoring and Reviewing Mountain Agenda:** Mountain Forest and Food Security issues as they impinge on hazard prevention, biodiversity conservation and enhancement of livelihood opportunities to be monitored in a continuing manner.<sup>20</sup>



In conclusion, a sincere homage to Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, a son of the mountains, cannot be what in development parlance is called just 'incremental'; as the issues which he consciously chose to address, he did so in such a comprehensive and competent manner that even after more than fifty years while we continue to address the very same issues but we are able to clearly discern all that he was able to lay out for us during his own times; and therefore what GBPHIED, bearing his name and thus his legacy, does in this regard cannot be anything less than 'strategic'; and that, in my view, has to be this 'Mountain Agenda', which I have just outlined. I am more than conscious of the massive efforts that would be required in this undertaking but then what we are discussing here involves Mountains, and Moving Mountains has never been easy, as the saying goes.

I am deeply indebted to the Board of Directors of the GBPHIED for giving this opportunity to me of sharing some of my thoughts on the legacy left behind by Pandit Pant, as well as his contributions to shaping and moulding of our perceptions of mountains and mountain issues; also what accordingly could be considered as the appropriate agenda for this esteemed Institution named after him; at this stage of my public career. I have very fond memories of my long and very fruitful official and personal association with some of the most eminent former Directors, Professor A.N. Purohit, Dr. Uppeendra Dhar and of course, the present one, Dr. L.M.S. Palni. As a stake-holder myself it is obvious that I have great expectations from this institution and I wish you all success and best of luck.

A big thank you to all of you, for the patient hearing you have given me this afternoon.

Jai Hind !

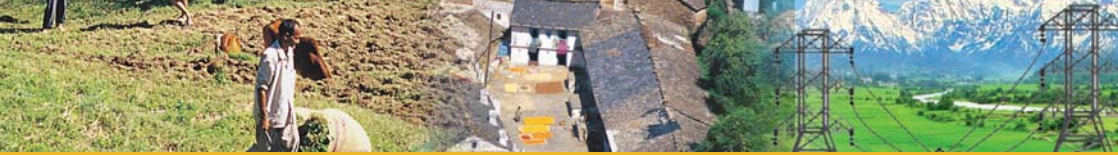




## References:

1. Kim Marriott and Richard L. Park in Pilot Project, India: The story of rural development at Etawah, Uttar Pradesh: University of California Press, 1959, page 13.
2. See Annexure: A for his brief Life-History.
3. Besides M. Chalpathi Rau's Govind Ballabh Pant, His Life and Times, Allied Publishers (1981), decidedly the most authoritative, intimate and exhaustive of all biographies; there is another biography by Mahendra Kumar Rastogi, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Life and Contribution to Indian Politics, Gyanodaya Prakashan, Naini Tal (1987) and yet another in Hindi by Bhagwan Singh, Safal Prashasak, Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant, Rajpal and Sons (1988). Shambhoo Prasad Sah's Govind Ballabh Pant, Ek Jiwani, Delhi (1972), reportedly a 'mine of information', could not be accessed; then there are articles and indirect references to him in various magazines and compendiums. The largest segment of Pant literature exists in the form of his speeches in the debates of the U.P. Legislature, the Central Assembly, the Constituent Assembly and Parliament and the Selected Works of Nehru. Govind Ballabh Pant seems to have written only one book entitled, 'The Forest Problem in Kumaon', which was published from Allahabad in 1922. The request to write this report was made to him in a special session of Kumaon Parishad held on 10 April 1921 and when after a widespread forest movement UP Government constituted a committee to enquire into the forest rights of the people of Kumaon, before which Pant, Indralal Shah and Hargovind Pant were called to give evidence on behalf of Kumaon the three leaders refused to appear before the committee, in view of the attitude of the Government. Parishad collected the opinion of the people and their representatives on the forest problem but in view of the unsatisfactory composition of the committee, the terms of reference of the committee and the false allegations made against the Parishad under the chairmanship of Govind Ballabh Pant the Parishad laid before the villagers the report prepared by Pant on the Forest Problems in Kumaon. Thus the Report prepared by Pant reflected the views of the Parishad on forest issues tackled by the Forest Grievances Committee, 1921. (see Chalpathi Rau, pages 42, 45-46 and The Forest Problem in Kumaon, edited by Dr. Ajay S. Rawat, Gyanodaya Prakashan, page 21). Most of the collections of speeches were brought out during his Centenary Celebrations in 1988 e.g. Words That Moved, 1935-37, Central Legislative Assembly by UP Government (1988); The Challenging Times (1925 -60), edited by Bhagwan Singh, Vikas Publishing House (1988).





4. See for Ramsay's period (1856-84), Founders of Modern Administration in Uttarakhand (1815-84), for various innovations carried out in British Kumaon during the first seven decades, by R.S. Tolia; Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh (2009), pages 233 – 333.
5. M. Chalpathi Rau, *ibid*, pages 13-15; Badri Datt Joshi was born in 1830 and at the age of 49 became a Sudder Amin; hence he could not have been a Dewan under the Gurkha rule, as erroneously mentioned by Rau at page 15; also cf Tolia, *ibid*, page 239 and 244.
6. Edwin T. Atkinson, *The Himalayan Gazetteer*, Vol.1, part I, page 852, Report on the condition of submontane forests, in 1861, By Major Henry Ramsay, in *North Western Provinces Gazette Supplement*, 19 December, 1861; and Govind Ballabh Pant's *The Forest Problem in Kumaon*, edited by Dr Ajay S. Rawat, first published in 1922, Gyanodaya Prakashan, Naini Tal.
7. *The Forest Problem in Kumaon*, *ibid*, pages 28 – 92.
8. Report of the Forest Grievances Committee for Kumaon, and Government Resolution, Forest Department. No. 1237/XIX-209, 21 November, 1922; and Land, Forests and Village Community, Centre for Development Studies, UP Academy of Administration, Vol. 3: III, 1998, pages 15 – 28; comparison with Pandit Pant's report paragraph 43 for handing over of forests to district boards, and para 15 for elimination of Class B by Stiffe and Nelson; Class B would correspond to Reserved Forest Class I, recommended by Wyndham Committee.
9. Chalpathi Rau, *ibid*, page 202-203; and Govind Ballabh Pant, Foreword, in *Pilot Project, India*; Albert Mayer, *ibid*, page vii; and pages 18-19.
10. *Pilot Project, India*; Albert Mayer, *ibid*, Origins, pages 5 - 6.
11. *Pilot Project, India*; Nehru to Albert Mayer, June 17, 1946.
12. *Pilot Project, India*, Albert Mayer to Premier Govind Ballabh Pant, U.P. Premier, Naini Tal, India from New York, August 2, 1946.
13. *Pilot Project, India*, Albert Mayer, *ibid*, "newsletters" to his American friends, October 27, 1946, pages 12-15.
14. *Pilot Project, India*, *ibid*, pages 42-43.
15. *Pilot Project, India*, *ibid*, Foreword by G.B. Pant, Sep 12, 1956, p viii.







16. Govind Ballabh Pant, *His Life and Times*, M. Chalpathi Rau, *ibid*, page 361 and Pilot Project, India, *ibid*, pages vii and viii.
17. *Mountains of the World, A Global Priority*, edited by B. Messerli and J.D. Ives, A contribution to Chapter 13 of Agenda 21; The Parthenon Publishing Group, New York London, 1997, Preface page vii. and page 448.
18. Chalpathi Rau, *ibid*, pages 191 and 385.
19. *The Organization of the Government of Uttar Pradesh*, M. Zaheer and Jagdeo Gupta, S. Chand & Co, 1970 ; Community Development Department is at the Secretariat and consisted as a part of the old Planning Department, pages 279 and Community Development in field actually meant Development Blocks, pages 309 and 546, and
20. *Mountains of the World*, *ibid*, pages 447 -453; and Report of the Task Force on The Mountain Ecosystems, Environment and Forest Sector, Eleventh Five Year Plan, Planning Commission, November, 2006, Chapter 4.0, Integrating Various Sectors for Mountain Development, pages 41 - 56.





## Annexure: A

### Govind Ballabh Pant: Brief Life History

- 10 Sep. 1887 Born at Khunt, Almora to Manorath Pant and Govindi
- 1903 High School (Ramsay College); 1905 Intermediate
- 28 Dec. 1905 As a student of Allahabad 'Varsity attended AICC Varanasi
- 18 April 1908 As a Law College student, attended AICC Constitution Sub Committee meetings.
- 1909 Passed Law degree from Allahabad University
- 1910 Law practice in Almora
- 1914 Established Prem Sabha ( Nagri Prachini Sabha) & Udai Raj High School
- 1916 Member Notified Area Committee and Chairman Education Committee
- 28 Sep. 1916 Established Kumaon Parishad and represented Kumaon in Congress Sessions
- 15 Nov. 1916 As Kumaon Parishad Congress representative attended AICC Lucknow Session > contact with Gandhi and Sarojini Naidu etc
- 6 April 1920 Impressive speech opposing Rowlatt Act at Kashipur
- 23 July 1920 Elected Chairman District Board, Naini Tal
- 10 April 1921 Attended Kumaon Parishad Session > Opposed official repression of Kuli Utar in speech > demanded hissedari / khaikari rights for Turai farmers / improvement in forest management > Session requests him for a Report on Forest Problem of Kumaon
- 16 June 1921 Chairman of Kashipur Notified Area, resolution passed for free and compulsory education for children
- 25 Dec. 1921 Special session of Kumaon Parishad at Almora under his Presidentship, resolution passed against use of liquor, untouchability, constitution of Panchayats, promotion of education and Industrial & economic activities
- 13 Dec. 1923 Elected to UP Council first time > Swaraj Party





- 8 Jan. 1924 Elected Leader of Swaraj Party in UP Council
- 31 Aug. 1925 Meeting at Naini Tal for abolition of Non Scheduled district status and bringing Kumaon under High Court in civil matters > Mukandi Lal, Badri Datt Joshi attend > resolve to raise the matter in the Council
- 7 Nov. 1926 President of State Congress; presided / Aligarh Session
- 7 Dec. 1927 Opposed Simon Commission in UP Council
- 30 Nov. 1928 Boycott of Simon Commission procession with Nehru > lathi - charged by mounted police > sustained injuries which lasted life-long
- 23 July 1928 Re-elected Chairman District Board, Naini Tal
- 6 April 1930 Addressed Haldwani conference for support of Gandhi's breaking of Salt Law
- 22 May 1930 Arrested at Krishnapur, Naini Tal; sent to jail on 6 month sentence/ participating in anti Salt law agitation
- 18 Feb. 1932 Re-arrested
- 10 Nov. 1932 Kumaon Samaj Semmelan at Almora, for 10 days, upper caste drink water at Tamta Naula
- Nov. 1934 Elected unopposed for Central Assembly
- 30 June 1935 Elected President of Naini Tal District Congress
- 22 March 1936 Tripura session of AICC > Pant Resolution > Pres Subhash Chandra Bose requested to nominate EC Members as recommended by Gandhi > Accepted
- 7 March 1937 Elected Leader of Congress Party in UP Council
- 17 July 1937 Premier of United Provinces
- 15 Feb. 1938 Resignation handed with his Cabinet Members to the Governor protesting GG's interference u/s 126(5) in the working of a popular Ministry



- 28 Feb. 1938 UP Council passes Naik Sudhar Act
- 2 Sep. 1938 UP Council passes resolution for Constituent Assembly
- 24 Nov. 1940 Arrested and released from Almora jail on 17 Nov 1941
- 9 Aug. 1942 Arrested in Bombay > Quit India Movement
- 31 March 1945 Brought to Bareilly from Ahmednagar Jail and released
- 25 June 1945 Attended Simla Conference
- 1 April 1946 Re-elected Premier in UP and constitutes Cabinet
- 1 July 1946 Gets Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms resolution passed > Committee constituted for preparing/ report
- 14 June 1947 Presents Resolution in AICC for division of India ; based on which Brit Parliament passed India Independence Act
- 15 Aug. 1947 Takes over as Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh
- 1952 Conducted first general Election of India
- 1 May 1952 Supreme Court upholds UP ZALR Act
- 19 May 1952 Elected Leader of UP Council and Congress Party, and re-elected Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh
- 1 July 1952 Announcement of Zamindari Abolition law
- 3 Jan. 1955 Takes oath as Cabinet Min/ Home Min 10 Jan 55
- 26 Jan. 1957 Conferred Bharat Ratna
- 7 March 1961 Dies in harness.

