

Implementation of Laws in the District



In the previous chapter, we read about how laws are made and how welfare and development programmes are carried out. But how are they implemented? Do you think people elect those who implement laws? Do you think once the laws are made, people implement them themselves? In these chapter, we would read about how these things are done.

- i. Building dams and canals
- ii. Supplying electricity to houses
- iii. Running ration shops
- iv. Running trains
- v. Printing currency notes
- vi. Collecting taxes from people
- vii. Preventing child labour, child sexual abuse and educating all children
- viii. Defending the borders of the country
- ix. Identifying those below the poverty line and implementing schemes for their benefit
- x. Preventing people from stealing from other people's houses

- ◆ You may have heard of many kinds of government functionaries. Can you name a few and discuss what they do?

We saw in the last chapter that there are various departments of the government to carry out various kinds of activities. These departments are under the control of ministers, but they have a large number of officials who carry out the orders of the government. Some of these officials are posted in the state capital like Hyderabad from where they plan the implementation

in all parts of the state. At the same time, the entire state is divided into a number of districts and most departments have their offices for the implementation of the government's laws and plans. There are 31 districts in Telangana.

- ◆ What is the name of your district and where is its headquarters?

Each district has a District Collector and Magistrate who coordinates the work of all the departments in the district. Let us learn more about their work.

The District Collector & Magistrate of Nallavaram

Here is an imaginary district of Nallavaram. This district has the following Mandals - Garipalli, Mallepalli, Narasapet, Gurthur. The office of the district magistrate of the Nallavaram is in Nallavaram town.

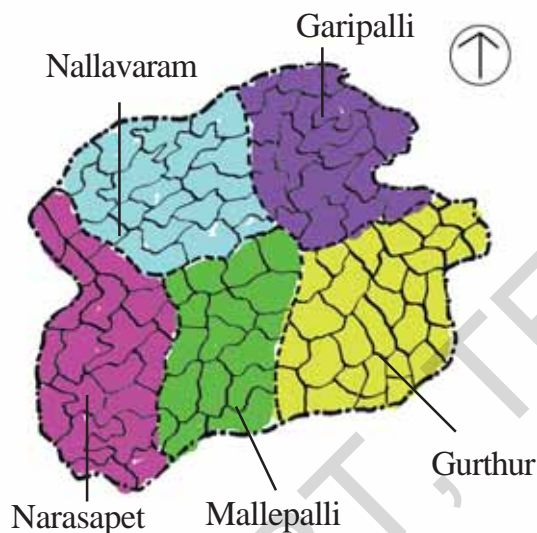


Fig 17.1 Nallavaram District

The district magistrate, Manisha Nagle, reaches her office at 10:30 every morning. At 11:30 today, there is a meeting of the officers of all the departments in the office. The heads of all the departments have come for the meeting. The Collector asks the head of each department about the progress of the work during the previous month. She also asks them about the problems they face in the work. The meeting continued till about 2 O'clock in the afternoon.

After the meeting, Manisha Nagle goes through the files. There is a stack of files.

Each file deals with the activities of different departments. She reads them and writes her comments or orders on them. It is about 3.00 PM when Manisha Nagle finishes looking at the files. From 3.00 PM. to 4.30 PM everyday, she meets the people of the district. People from all the villages come to meet her with their problems.

Some farmers of Mallepalli Mandal had come to discuss the problem of absence of irrigation in their village. Their tanks were dry for two years. The crops failed this year. They wanted to know if their loans could be waived and if they could get some repair work on tank bund. In the neighbouring villages, tank bunds were repaired. They wanted such work to be done in their village as well.

Manisha Nagle told them that since their village was not in the state list of drought affected areas they could not get any loan waiver. Collector suggested that they approach the MLA and present their problems. She promised to instruct the concerned department to attend to the tank bund of the village.

At 5.00 A.M., on the next morning, the Collector received a phone call from a town in Narasapet Mandal. The cotton stored at the ginning mill caught fire in the night. People were trying to put out the fire. The fire service had already reached the area. It was necessary to ensure that fire did not spread to the neighbouring areas. Nagle immediately left for Narasapet Mandal. She called the Superintendent of Police and the civil surgeon and asked them to go along.

The Collector reached Narasapet at around 7.00 AM and went straight to the cotton ginning mill. A lot of cotton had

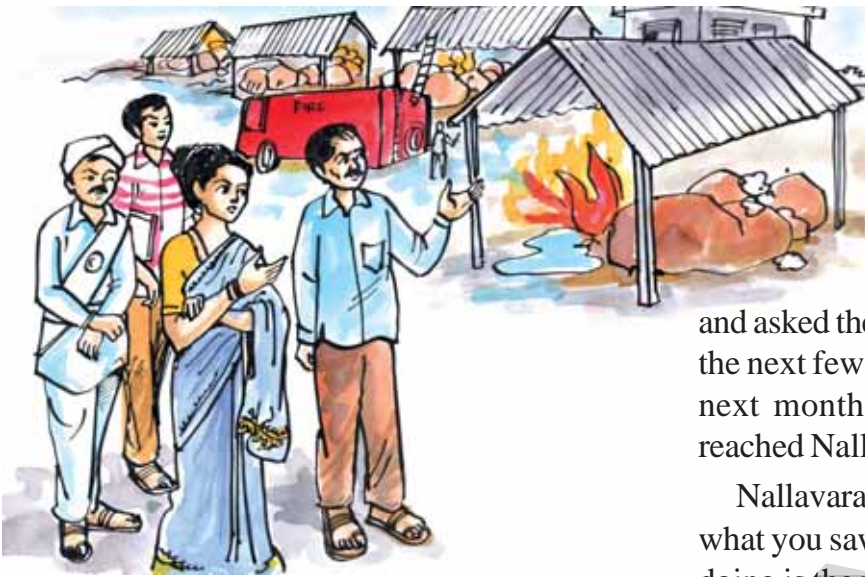


Fig 17.2 District Collector at the cotton factory.

been destroyed but the fire was now under control. The Municipal Chairperson and the police officers were also there. The Collector asked them about the extent of damage. The Chairperson told her that two labourers in the mill had suffered severe burns and had been admitted to the hospital. A few houses nearby had also been burnt down.

Nagle announced a compensation of ten thousand rupees each to the owners of the houses, which were burnt and promised to inquire into the causes of fire. The Collector then visited the injured labourers at the hospital. She also announced a relief payment of twenty thousand rupees each to the two labourers.

On the way back, she visited the Municipal Office. It was pointed out that due to encroachment in many parts of the city, the fire engine arrived late. Sidewalks on the roads were encroached by shop keepers. Many houses and other offices had illegally extended their boundary walls beyond the permitted limits. This was leading to traffic jams in many parts of the town. She talked to the Municipal Officials

and asked them to take strict actions during the next few weeks and report to her at the next monthly meeting. Manisha Nagle reached Nallavaram only after it was dark.

Nallavaram is an imaginary district. But what you saw the Collector of Nallavaram doing is the work that they are expected to do in every district.

- ◆ What explanation did the Collector give for not waiving the loan for the farmers?
- ◆ Who were the other officials mentioned in the incidents?
- ◆ Who were the non-officials mentioned in the above incidents?

Tahsildar (MRO) and Village Revenue Officers

You may have noted that Nallavaram district is divided into different Mandals. There are many villages in each of these Mandals. In the map, you can see that Nallavaram is divided into many Mandals. Many villages together form a Mandal. Just like in the district headquarter, there are different offices at the Mandal. There are Mandal Officers of Development, Revenue, Education, agriculture, and so on.

- ◆ Find out your Mandal in the district map.
- ◆ Find out some of the Mandals in your district map.

Among others, the Revenue Officer keeps the land records. If you live in a village or own land, you may know that your parents have some record for the land that is owned by them. Land all over the country is measured and this information is kept in these offices. They also have maps of the land showing land owned by different people, showing crops, tanks, drainages, wells, neighbouring plots, roads, hillocks, and so on. These documents become extremely useful. If there is a dispute between the boundaries of land owned by two individuals, maps and written documents can be used for settling it. Or, if someone buys or sells the land, this information needs to be written in this office as well. These maps also have records of the forest or uncultivated grazing lands. So if someone encroaches into these lands, they can be evicted.

It is the responsibility of the Village Revenue Officer and Mandal Revenue Officer to keep track of these records of the land. For this purpose, 'mee seva' services are utilized and various certificates are being issued by this centre. They also have the responsibility for updating and issuing ration cards.

How Laws are Implemented?

To understand this, first we need to understand an actual law. In the previous chapters, we have read about the significance of groundwater and how it has



Fig 17.3 Villagers verifying the land records at 'mee seva kendra'

historically been important in our agricultural development. We also have perennial rivers and forest areas. Yet today, we find that in many parts of Telangana, borewells are dug up to 1,500 feet or more. In the long run, it may not be viable to have such system of irrigation, or drinking water.

Andhra Pradesh Water, Land and Trees Protection Act, 2002

It is important to protect these resources for the benefit and survival of the next generations. In this connection, the Government of Andhra Pradesh enacted the Andhra Pradesh Water, Land and Trees Protection Act in 2002. It is being implemented since 19-04-2002. Some of the features of this law are:

- a. Permission from Mandal Revenue Officer is essential to drill/ dig new wells.
- b. Specific depth and distance should be maintained between the wells to avoid unnecessary competition.

- c. Steps to prevent wastage of rain water.
- d. Industrial units should have waste water treatment plants.
- e. Protection of drinking water.
- f. In the regions affected by groundwater depletion, sand quarrying from river beds is prohibited.
- g. Social forestry to be taken up on large scale.
- h. Cutting trees without permission is prohibited. When one tree is cut, two saplings should be planted.

After the law was passed, government formed an authority to implement the act. It was called the Water, Land and Trees Protection Authority or WALTA. If you look carefully, in order to implement a law like this, it is necessary that different departments of the government work together. You can note that the forest department has to be taken into account, because forests are important for saving water and the department in charge of Industry to ensure that the factories are not polluting water.

So we can build a table such as the following to show how different persons in the government could be responsible for implementing the law:

Department	Subject
Groundwater Department	Registration of Rigs, Sand Mining, classification of Groundwater basins, etc.
Municipal Administration & Urban Development Department	Construction of Rain-water harvesting structures, tree planting, permission for construction of new buildings.
Mines and Geology Department	Monitoring Sand Mining in water bodies
Forest Department	Granting permission for felling trees

Now, if this law is properly implemented, what will it mean? Considering the following possibilities, can you identify which departments will be responsible if their activities are to be evaluated – it is possible that there are more is one department which looks at them:

- ◆ Satyavathi is a farmer who wants to dig a new bore well, but there is another bore well in her neighbouring land. What are the rules she has to follow?
- ◆ Padmanabham wants to build a new house and and wants to get sand from the river bed near the house. For this, whose permission is required?
- ◆ Apparao is a contractor who wants to start a stone quarry near the forest. From which departments should he take the permission.

Thus, in a democratic country like ours there are different roles played by elected representatives and appointed government officials. In many ways, these are different from the way kings and priests dictated different aspect of our lives. That is not to say that all the different forms of marginalisation, disparities and discrimination have been removed from the society. But we can work towards achieving them.

Keywords :

1. Magistrate
2. Tahsildar
3. Law implementation
4. VRO
5. Ginning

Improve your learning

1. Make a list of activities done by the District Collector.
2. Correct the following statements :
 - a. Law is implemented by the elected representatives.
 - b. The Collector is in charge of a Mandal.
 - c. People approach the Mandal Development Officer to solve the problems of the entire district.
 - d. Tahsildar keeps the record of land revenue.
3. Read the first two paragraphs of (page 160) Tahsildar and Village Revenue officers and answer the question given below.



Why do you think are the land records kept at village and mandal levels?

4. Compare the roles of people who make laws with those who implement them in the following aspects:

a) has to contest elections;	b) are part of different departments of government;
c) responsible for making laws;	d) responsible for implementing laws;
e) usually elected for 5 years;	f) are appointed into jobs;

Member of Legislative Assembly	Persons in Administration

5. Here is another brief description of Manisha Nagle. Read this carefully and compare it with the text given under the head “Mansabdar’s and Jagirdars” in chapter 14 and “Captains of the

troops' - The *amaranayakas*' in Chapter 13 and fill the following table.

Manisha Nagle has been the Collector of Nallavaram for the last 5 months. Earlier, she worked as the Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Public Health Department in the state capital. It is possible that she may be transferred as a Collector of another district or taken back to the State Secretariat. She is an employee of the Indian Government. Often, some of them have to go to Delhi and work for the central government. All the officers like Manisha Nagle are selected through an examination conducted by the government.

Item	Government employees	Amara Nayakas	Mansabdars
Process of selection			
Paid through			

6. Colour the mandals surrounding your mandal in your district map.

Discussion:

Organise a programme of “student’s interaction with revenue officials” (Tahasildar/Mandal Revenue Inspector/Village Revenue Office) about - “The implementation of Laws”.

Project:

1. Interview your teacher, or any government school teacher to get the following details:

When was she or he appointed?

To which department of the government does she/he report?

Has the teacher been transferred?

How are they promoted or punished? Who is responsible for their salaries?

If they have any complaints about their working conditions, whom do they report them to?

2. What has been their experience in implementing the new rules/programmes like ensuring enrollment of children, mid-day meals; or any other program? Make a presentation of your findings in the classroom.