

**ROLE OF VILLAGE LIBRARIES IN DEVELOPMENT:  
A CASE STUDY OF MIZORAM**



By

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I, Lalremsiami, hereby declared that the subject matter of this thesis is the record work done by me, that the contents of this thesis did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

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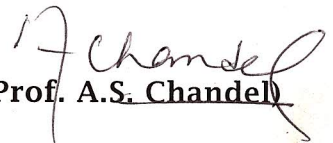
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**Dedicated to**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The larger section of world population live in rural areas, and the people living in rural areas are less advanced than their fellow citizens in urban areas. Three-fourths of them live in rural areas (World Bank, 1980). According to the 2001 census of India, almost three-fourths of the population i.e. 72.22% (741.7 million) live in rural areas and in Mizoram a little more than half of the population i.e. 50.5% (4,48,729) live in rural areas (Manorama Year Book, 2007). It is believed that the world will remain predominantly rural for at least some decades to come.

Basic meaning of rural is 'living in the country', (as opposed to the town and city) which has remained unchanged for centuries. However, the substance of country life has changed considerably, especially since the nineteenth century. The word 'rural' is used interchangeably with 'non-metro' and is also used to mean 'villages'. The term 'rural' is also often associated with 'agricultural' or 'sparsely populated' areas. Significant differences exist between urban and rural areas - in lifestyles, attitudes and values; in information needs and delivery needs. Central to the rural and urban dichotomy is geographical remoteness. Geographical remoteness means a different way of obtaining information, lack of knowledge of and access to social services agencies, remoteness from adequate education, information needs, leisure activities, etc.

There were villages long before India emerged as a cultural or political entity. The villages, which in ancient days had been the scene of self-sufficing economic activity and co-operative living had been reduced to their present miserable plight by continuous exploitation and callous expropriation.

The landmarks of customs and traditions which in the past had guided economic and social life have disappeared, leaving the villagers in darkness and destitution. Agriculture which is both a way of life and a means of living is in such a backward state that is neither profitable nor promising.

There are three aspects of rural conditions which make the situation look like an insurmountable obstacle.

They are (Misra, 1985):

- (1) The sheer terrifying magnitude;
- (2) The deplorably poor quality of life; and
- (3) The enormous complexity of the problem arising from various related factors such as:
  - (i) history;
  - (ii) the problems concerned with the productivity and employment;
  - (ii) excessive dependence on land and agriculture and limited access to inputs of production; and
  - (iv) the anti-poor politics and disabling social structures, among many others.

The village community has never been a totally isolated entity but a part, however remote, of the national state. Majority of the people of India still live in villages, and most of those who are in the urban centres have their roots

in the country side. Hence, India being a land of villages, the problems of the rural community are not sectional problems but national problems affecting nearly three-fourths of India's population (Manorama Year Book, 2007).

As rural areas and their population have important roles to play in nation building, focusing attention on this issue is important. For this, one of the most important agencies is village libraries.

For the purpose of this study, Government Recognised Libraries which are small public libraries in a rural setting in Mizoram are taken into consideration. An attempt is made to define the concepts of the tentative study.

## 1.1 DEVELOPMENT

'Development' is an old word although not ancient. Initially, it meant simply to unfold, to flatten out - the exact opposite of 'envelop'. The root word, in old French, was 'veloper', meaning 'to wrap up'. The original meaning of this root-word remains in 'envelop' and 'envelope' (Riggs, 1984).

The word 'Development' became increasingly popular after the Second World War, particularly due to the growing number of states that were liberated from the colonial rule. The whole world has become developmental and plan minded as it was never before.

Development through Planning has become the major concern of the underdeveloped countries of the world and the developed countries have been taking keen interest in this endeavour of the poorer countries.

'Development' has been called the central organising concept of our time. The United Nations has its development agencies, and the World Bank

takes development as part of its official name - the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Hundreds and thousands of people are engaged in developmental work and billions are spent each year in its pursuit. Third world nations especially, cannot be expected to be taken seriously without the development label prominently displayed on some part of its governmental anatomy.

Everyone seems to have his own meaning of development e.g. for a poor landless, agricultural labourer, development may mean a piece of land, for an educated unemployed youth it means employment, for a family without a house of its own it means a house, for a factory owner it means increase in the production and so on. There is no apparent consensus on the meaning of development, but the leaders of developed as well as underdeveloped societies have accepted 'Development' as the main issue of the public policy. The only thing which everyone agrees is that development is necessary and everyone wants it.

Two of the definitions of 'Develop' by the Oxford English Dictionary (1933) are 'to unroll or open up which enfolds, covers or conceals' and 'to unfold more fully, bring out all that is potentially contained in.' And two more definitions of 'Development' by the Oxford English Dictionary are 'the bringing out of the latent capabilities (of anything); the fuller expansion (of any principle or activity) and 'gradual advancement through progressive stages, and growth from within.'

The more popular terms in the pre war years were 'Progress' and 'Evolution'. The concept of development then passed through various nomenclatures; such as, 'Anglicisation,' 'Westernisation' and 'Modernisation'.

The word 'Development' have largely replaced these terms. Words which are sometimes still treated as synonyms to 'Development' are 'Modernisation', 'Institutionalisation', 'Westernisation', 'Growth' and 'Change'.

Riggs (1984) stated that a fate may well lie in store for replacing the word 'Development' as its value connotations have already become less positive and even, in some quarters, definitely negative. Possible replacements may be 'Change', 'Growth', 'Transformation', or 'Dependency'/ 'Liberation'.

At a symposium on social policy and planning organized by the United Nations in 1970, a working definition of 'Development' was formulated as follows: "Development can be defined as a process of improving the capability of a country's institutions and value system to meet increasing and different demands of a social, cultural, political as well as an economic character" (United Nations 1971). According to Esman (1966), development is a major societal transformation ... these qualitative changes affect values, behaviour, social structure, economic organization and political process. Palmer (1970) stated that development is a movement of human societies ... toward an idealised Model of modern society. Goulet (1971) said that development is the ascent of man in all his dimensions, in the quintessence of his humanity. Huntington and Nelson (1976) interpret development as an overall process of social, economic, intellectual, political and cultural change. According to Seetharamu (1980) development refers to the production and utilization of material resources. Enrichment of human resources refers to the non-economic factors such as social, political, ethnic or educational background of the people.

Ross (1986) described development with reference to human beings to connote a change or changes in the functional capacity of the individual or group or the nation, brought about by education or by practice or by therapy or by social interaction.

According to Sapru (1994), development, be it of individuals, of groups or of an entire nation is a multidimensional and complex process involving major changes or transformations in social, cultural, economic, political, administrative and even environmental aspects of a nation, both at micro and macro level. It is a very complicated phenomena of so many interrelated, interdependent and interconnected components that a line of demarcation between various dimensions of development is impossible. It is also difficult to have a universal parameter which can show cause effect relations among various factors and development. Development is a continuous process.

Palanithurai (1996) stated that development is a loaded work which has been looked at differently by individuals based on their varying perceptions. Yet unanimous opinion or explanation is not in sight. Development is visualised globally, nationally, regionally and even locally with varying yardsticks. Dimensions and ramification of development have been analysed from the perspective of the efforts taken by the organizations at a larger level mostly by government. Thus, for development, government is the initiator and other factors are secondary.

According to Mittal and Sharma (2002), development means a process of transition from a primitive to traditional stage to a developed and modern stage. Silvert and Bonilla (1961) defined national development as a total phenomenon involving a coherent set of adjustments among economic, social,

and political institutions. Meanwhile, Ashford (1967) defined it as a process whereby the citizen ... may enhance his chances of leading a more productive life and living happily.

In Encyclopaedia of Women and Development (2000), development of a nation cannot only be measured through the technological and materialistic advances, but through the quality of life the people live. The growth of a nation lies in its capacity to elevate the lot of the weakest section of its society. Streenten (1981) feels that development must be redefined as an attack on the chief evils of the world today: malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, slums, unemployment and inequality. Measured in terms of aggregate growth-rates, development has been a partial success. But measured in terms of jobs, justice, and the elimination of poverty, it has been failure or only a partial success.

Singh (1994) interprets development as an act or process of developing or growth evolution within the framework of available resources. Its primary aim in India is the removal of poverty and all other socio-economic evils which are interlinked with it. He further states that the word 'Development' should not be understood in any narrow economic growth terms. It has to be understood in a broad manner from covering increased production to the creation of a hygienic and sound environment and continued happiness to the people living in rural areas.

Development has to be distinguished from the process of economic growth which refers mainly to an increase in the production of commodities and services in a market framework. Development is much more than mere increase in the income and earning capacities of people. Economic growth which is a built-in sub process of development is always mistaken to be

development, but economic growth alone does not ensure development. It is broadly accepted that development is not economic growth alone. But then, no one defines it in terms that can be understood clearly and operationally. There could be many arguments and counter arguments about the meaning of anything especially if it affects human beings as individuals and groups.

True development is one which is pursued with genuine concern for human values. It is the people who have to be the main elements of development and it is their preparation and activation that should be the cause and consequence of development. Development is a societal change which means the evolution of a society from one state to another in order that the society in question acquires better perception and greater control over its own environment. Development is a process that improves the quality of life for the bulk of people over a period of time. It means transformation of people into better human beings.

Development is not something that will happen suddenly. It is a process of the unfolding of the value system of a society in response to new goals, objectives and challenges. The end purpose of all development is a better quality of life. Anything that comes in the way of a good life should be considered anti-developmental.

Among the elements of development, the following have been stressed by various scholars in one form or the other (Misra, 1985):

- (1) More and better life-sustaining goods for all;
- (2) Respect for others and self-esteem;
- (3) Freedom from tyranny of any kind; and
- (4) Community life which gives a sense of belonging.

These four elements are inseparable from one another.

Real development upholds the supremacy of man as a member of the human community and aims at promoting his welfare by way of creating conditions in which his mental, spiritual and physical potential can be realised to the best advantage of the society as a whole.

### 1.1.1 RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is often confused with agricultural development. Agricultural development, no doubt, constitutes the heart but not the whole of rural development. In fact, the concept of rural development is much larger than agricultural development. Thus, to think of rural development in terms of agricultural development alone is a very narrow concept. In developing countries, rural development and national development are more inter-related than in developed countries, the former determining the level and rate of the latter. It is a driving force for the entire developmental process and lies at the heart of national development. Rural development has been stated as a strategy to promote the social life of village people in general and particularly to extend the economic and social benefits to the poor. It covers output, employment, health, education, transport, commerce, power supply and drinking facilities in general and political and social awakening in particular.

Ensminger (1974) states that rural development seeks to involve a process of transformation from traditionally oriented rural culture towards an acceptance and reliance on science and technology. Lele (1975) defined rural development as an improvement in the living standard of the masses of low income population residing in rural areas and making the process of self-

sustenance. However, World Bank (1975) has given a more elaborated definition of rural development stating that it is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people *i.e.* the rural poor. It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas. This group includes small farmers, tenants, and the landless.

Chambers (1983) also considers rural development as a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. It involves helping the poorest amongst those who seek a livelihood in the rural areas to demand and control more of the benefits of rural development. However, Mosher (1976) treats rural development as a trend in technologies, organizations, activities and values of a society that:

- (1) Increases the opportunities of its entire rural people for vigorous health, broadening mental horizons, increasing knowledge and skills and expanding opportunities to participate both constructively and pleasurably in the activities of their culture;
- (2) Progressively provides more effective means for adjusting as peacefully as possible the conflicts and injustices that invariably arise, as technological and other cultural changes take place;
- (3) Maintains or progressively approaches an optimum balance between each rural person's opportunities for freely-chosen self-expression and the corporate needs of the culture in which he lives; and

- (4) Increasingly brings all present and potential farm land into its most effective use.

Singh (1994) stated that the main thrust is on development of rural people as an individual as well as a member of his village community, and the community as a whole. These people are to be encouraged to achieve development by their own efforts and through adopting a co-operative way of life for promoting group interests and interests of the community as a whole. Thus, the development of solidarity and self-reliance in the community are the two basic objectives of rural development. The core task of rural development consists in fuller use of local resources and skills, modernization of farming, regeneration of agricultural allied activities, institution building to fulfil the local needs, eradication of development problems and improvement in health and education. Rural development is not only an action plan but also a process aimed at improving the lot of the people living outside the urbanised area.

Singh and Ali (2000) associated rural development with the process aimed at improving the well-being of the people living outside the urbanised areas.

Shaban and Bhole (2000) mentioned that the term 'Rural development' connotes both the economic betterment and great social transformation of the people living in rural areas, implying thereby improvement in income, health, education, safe drinking water facilities, energy supply, sanitation, housing facilities, transportational and communicational facilities, etc.

According to Mittal and Sharma (2002) rural development is a process of change culminating into improved quality of life for rural people, or rural development implies development and utilization of natural and human

resources, technologies, institutions and organizations, and basic infrastructure for promoting and speeding up the all round development of rural people on a self-sustaining basis.

### 1.1.2: RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

The first attempt of rural development in India was made in 1885 with an ultimate objective of bringing immediate relief and development of rural areas in Baroda (Gaur, 1985). Another attempt was initiated by Spencer Hatch at Marthandom in 1921 in the then Travancore, now part of Tamil Nadu. It was a specific model with five facet programme comprising the spirit, mind, body, economic and social side (Padmanabhan, 1996). In 1922, the Swaraj Ashram was established at Baroda by Mohan Lal Gandhi (Gaur, 1985). The Ashram aimed at preparing for non-cooperation and the civil disobedience movement launched by the Indian National Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji. In the same year *i.e.* 1922, the first attempt at what may be called an integrated approach to village development was initiated by the great poet Rabindranath Tagore.

He established an institution for this purpose and called it *Sriniketan*. In his own words, 'the object of *Sriniketan* is to bring back life in its completeness into the villages making them self-reliant and self-respectful, acquainted with the cultural tradition of their own country and competent to make an efficient use of modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic conditions' (Padmanabhan, 1996).

It was the father of the nation; Mahatma Gandhi, who for the first time in the history of India, built rural development as a movement involving politicians, constructive workers, statesmen, industrialists, educationists, economists and social workers in a big way. His idea of village development was all comprehensive and based on the philosophy of active participation and community action.

Before independence, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi launched rural development programmes under their own auspices. Tagore believed in self and mutual help and he was the first to recognize the need for a change in the outlook of villagers as a precondition for development. The Gandhian approach to rural development was nearly the same *i.e.* improvement of inner man and morality through self help. Material development of the village was considered less important.

The beginning of large scale government financed rural development programme was made in 1948 with Etawah Pilot project in Uttar Pradesh. The Community Development Programme was launched in 1952 by the Government of India with the establishment of 55 community development projects across the states in the country. But the programme failed to make a significant dent on the rural set up and rural economy.

During sixties, it was mixed up with agricultural development. In the year 1961, a new strategy primarily for agricultural development was evolved. Thus, relatively more emphasis began to be given to agricultural production. It was also realized that it may be difficult to achieve desired production increases with the then existing production technology in the country. So, during the year 1965-66, simultaneous efforts were directed to evolve High

Yielding Varieties (HYV) or the Hybrid Seed Varieties to remove technological constraints in increasing agricultural production. Even though this new approach was followed with such a grand success that the period of its implementation was termed as 'Green Revolution', the programme could not play any significant role in rural development. Rather, it quickened the process of economic polarisation in rural areas and contributed to increasing social antagonism between landlords and tenants and land owners and labourers.

Then, the Planning Commission realized that the ideology of equity in spatial development could not be achieved through adoption of Adhoc and piecemeal planning for urban and rural areas separately. Since the Fourth Five Year Plan (1969-1974), the emphasis shifted from agriculture and Rural Development which was defined as a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people living in rural areas. Most people came to know rural development as a combination of some special programmes running under the charge of a separate department called Rural Development Department.

Real India is rural India. Majority of the Indian people live in the villages. So, development of the country in the true sense means development of the rural areas. Development of the rural economy has been accorded the highest priority in the planning process of India. Alleviation of rural poverty and all-round development of rural areas have been the major objectives of planned development. Ever since the inception of planning, the policies and programmes have been designed and redesigned with this aim. It is now being realised that efforts towards rural development have not yielded expected results. Rural areas, in general, still remain largely under-developed with stark

regional or inter-state disparities. People in rural areas feel that they are far removed from the government.

The issue of rural development is an obstinate and longstanding challenge. Rural development no longer means agricultural development alone. It is also not a social welfare case of pumping money into rural areas to provide for basic human needs. It encompasses a spectrum of activities and human mobilization to make people stand on their own feet and break away from all structural disabilities which chain them to the condition in which they live.

Rural development has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons (Lawania, 1992):

- (1) Three-fourths of India's population lives in rural areas;
- (2) Half of the country's national income is derived from agriculture;
- (3) Seventy percent of India's population get employment through agriculture;
- (4) Bulk of raw materials for industries comes from agriculture and rural sector;
- (5) Increase in industrial production can be justified only when rural population's motivation and purchasing power to buy goods can be increased;
- (6) Stable and developing agricultural economy can help in stability of prices of industrial goods;
- (7) Growing disparity between the urban elite and the rural poor can lead to political instability.

For the purpose of this study, the following five components of development have been taken into consideration in defining the concept.

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**Economic Development:** According to the World Bank (1991) economic development is to improve the quality of life. Especially in the world's poor countries a better quality of life generally calls for higher incomes, but it involves much more. It encompasses as ends in themselves, better education, higher standards of health and nutrition, less poverty, cleaner environment, more equality of opportunity, greater individual freedom and a richer cultural life.

Based on the above definition and the condition of the research site, the following indicators were used to represent economic development for this study.

Rural Development Programmes - beneficiaries, economic improvement received from the programmes, and source of information about the mentioned programmes; Subsidized sale of goods/provisions and facilities offered by Agricultural Department of the state government- beneficiaries, Improvement of economic situation due to activities arising out of such offers, and source of information about the said offers; Agricultural activities - gain of knowledge, status of production due to utilization of gained knowledge, and source of information about the knowledge; Agriculture-related reading materials - frequency of reading and usefulness of the materials; Skills for economic production - possession of skills and market for the products; Loans offered by State Bank of India (Rural Bank) - beneficiaries and economic improvement due to the loans; and source of information about employment opportunities.

**Social Development:** Social development means acquisition of the ability to behave in accordance with social expectations. Becoming socialized involves three processes, which although they are separate and distinct, are

closely interrelated that failure in any of them will lower the individuals' level of socialization. The three processes are: (i) Learning to behave in socially approved ways; (ii) playing approved social roles; and (iii) development of social attitudes (Hurlock, 1978).

Based on the above definition and the condition of the research site, the following indicators were used to represent social development for this study.

Family participation in social services; Increase in capacity and participation in social activities and source of improvement in social activities; Interests developed and source of information to develop interests; Beliefs in social issues and source of improvement towards certain social issues; Opinion regarding prevalence of social evils and Expected usefulness of library for tackling social evils.

**Cultural Development:** Cultural development is defined by Taylor (1871) as 'development in that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'.

Based on the above definition and the condition of the research site, the following indicators were used to represent cultural development for this study.

Importance given to traditional values; Desired occupation for offspring; The way of viewing a job opportunity; and Event having the most important influence in a person's life.

**Political Development:** According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics (1996) political development is broadly the development of institutions, attitudes, and values which form the political power system of a

society. In a democratic country, political development involves an accountable government, opportunities for popular participation through the exercise of freedoms of association and expression, embraces the rule of law and respects human rights. Political development enhances the capacity of the state to mobilize and to allocate resources and to process policy inputs into implementation outputs.

Based on the above definition and the condition of the research site, the following indicators were used to represent cultural development for this study.

Followers of a particular hero and source of acquaintance with a political hero; Confidence in the political leaders of different parties in Mizoram and reasons for not trusting them; Incentives used by political parties to win voters; Source of motivation to cast votes; Reason for voting a particular candidate and Source of mobilization of voting pattern; Attitudinal change in voting pattern and source of change of attitude; and Knowledge about governance.

**Educational Development:** According to Giddings (1896) education is to develop in individuals, self-confidence and self control, emancipate them from superstitious beliefs and ignorance, give them knowledge, make them think realistically and help them to become enlightened citizens.

Based on the above definition and the condition of the research site, the following indicators were used to represent educational development for this study.

Awareness of recent educational technologies, source of information about awareness of recent educational technologies; Purpose of reading books and periodicals; and Improvement acquired from library

## 1.2 PUBLIC LIBRARIES

McColvin (1956) stated that a public library is that which is provided by the local authority (The Town or County council) and entirely or mostly at its own expense, governed and administered by the authority or a committee wholly or largely appointed by itself, available free of charge to all who live in its area (and often others as well), and offering a wide selection of materials chosen to embrace as completely as possible the varied interests of the individual and the community, free from bias or religious, political, or other motives.

India, keeping with her long tradition of learning had a few good libraries long before the British settled in the country. But the concept of public libraries was brought to India from England.

The year 1808 was the most significant date of public library development in India when the government of Bombay initiated registering libraries for providing copies of books published from the 'Funds for encouragement of literatures'. The Europeans living in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras had established some kind of public libraries in these three metropolitan cities. These libraries were used by the upper strata of the society.

Calcutta Public Library, in true sense, perhaps was the first attempt to set up a public library in British India at a meeting of eminent personalities of Calcutta on the 20th August 1835 and this meeting led to the establishment of this library on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1836. The man behind this experiment was Mr. J.H. Sidon, the ex-editor of the *Englishman* who founded the 'Calcutta Destitute Public Library'.

The first public library system was developed in Baroda during the period of 1906-1911 by Sir Shivaji Rao Gaekwad III of Baroda with the expertise and knowledge of an American librarian, Mr. A.B. William. This public library system consisted of the central library, village libraries and mobile libraries in Baroda.

In many states especially Andhra, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka and West Bengal have a glorious past in the field of library movement which originated during freedom struggle that laid the foundation for the development of public libraries after independence. In 1956, Unesco in collaboration with Ministry of Education had set up Delhi Public Library, a model public library under the guidance of two British librarians. An Advisory Committee was set up by the Government of India in 1955. The committee submitted its report in 1958. The major recommendations were to give free library service to every citizen of India that the structure of the library should consist of National library, State Central libraries, District libraries, Block libraries and Panchayat libraries.

The Planning Commission constituted a Working Group on Libraries in 1964. The group made a survey of the Indian libraries which revealed that per capita expenditure on public libraries per annum in India was Rs. 00.03 while in U.K and U.S.A it was equivalent to Rs. 6.00 and Rs. 12.47 respectively.

The public library is often defined as the People's university since it is an educational institution open to all, rich or poor, young or old. Each individual begins at his/her own level and progresses at his/her own speed.

According to Ranganathan (1961) a library is a public institution or establishment charged with the care of the collection of books, the duty of

making them accessible to those who require using them and the task of converting every person in its neighbourhood into a habitual library goer and a regular reader. Thus, a public library is regarded as a public institution which is also expected to convert the potential users into actual users. This is the concept of modern library.

Report of Advisory Committee for Libraries (1959) Government of India mentioned that a public library is a library

- (1) Which is financed for the most part out of the public funds;
- (2) Which charges no fee from readers and yet is open for full use by the public without distinction of caste, creed or sex;
- (3) Which is intended as an auxiliary educational institution providing a means of self-education which is endless; and
- (4) Which rouses learning materials giving reliable information freely and without partiality or prejudice on as wide a variety of subjects as will satisfy the interests of readers.

IFLA/Unesco Public Library manifesto 1994 (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2001) defined that a public library is an organization established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a range of resources and services and is equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status and educational attainment.

A library is a multi-purpose social institution. A modern library is a living force in a society where it functions, with the potentialities to determine its shape and quality. At the same time, it is also a product of that society. So, a library may be described as a social institution as well as a vital societal force.

The main function of a library is the collection, preservation and dissemination of knowledge to all. According to Ranganathan (1967) the objectives of the public library system are:

- (1) It should help the life-long self education of one and all;
- (2) It should furnish up-to-date facts and information on all subjects to one and all;
- (3) It should distribute, in an unbiased and balanced way, all shades of recorded views and thought to one and all, as a help in the discharge of their political functions in respect of local, national and international affairs;
- (4) It should contribute to productivity-drive by informing top managements of the latest trends in diverse enterprises, by ploughing back into the minds of researchers, designers, and technicians, every piece of relevant new thought, promptly and pin-pointedly;
- (5) It should provide to one and all a harmless and elevating use of leisure;
- (6) It should preserve the literary remains of humanity for posterity, as vehicles of culture and as source materials for antiquarian research, and in general; and

- (7) It should work for the continued social well being as the agency in charge of all socialized recorded thought.

The primary purposes of the public library are to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. They have an important role in the development and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions.

The IFLA/Unesco Public Library Manifesto 1994 (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2001) proclaims Unesco's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. Unesco, therefore, encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries. It stated that the following key missions which relate to information literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services:

- (1) Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age;
- (2) Supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;
- (3) Providing opportunities for personal creative development;
- (4) Stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people;
- (5) Promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;

- (6) Providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;
- (7) Fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity;
- (8) Supporting the oral tradition;
- (9) Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
- (10) Providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups;
- (11) Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills; and
- (12) Supporting and participating in literary activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.

The objectives of the public library are many and vary. In essence these are to promote enlightened citizenship and to enrich personal life. The purposes and objectives are described in relation to three basic concerns - the need of the people who use the libraries; the need to ensure that the library is located in a suitable site; and the need to provide for effective means of operating it and developing its services. The following broad objectives may be laid down for the library as a social institution (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2001):

- (1) It should foster and provide the means of maintaining the individual's individuality, for the progressive unfolding of the individual's personality, and for helping in the individual's acquisition of know-how of daily life;
- (2) It should provide all kinds of information needed to solve citizens' problems. To reach these people, libraries must be

prepared to offer custom-tailored products, to develop a new educational role as an essential lifelong service and a vital public utility;

- (3) It should play a positive role in encouraging the active use of leisure time through recreation and entertainment.

The library should be the centre of the intellectual life of the area which it covers. That intellectual life covers all stages, from the incipient curiosity of those whose intelligence is only beginning to awaken to the advanced research of the highly trained specialist. The library not only has to serve earnest seekers after knowledge, but also those who are seeking relaxation and recreation. The scope and function of the modern library, in theory, is the same all over the world. But, in practice, the picture differs from country to country and from library to library (Mahapatra and Thomas, 1997).

### 1.2.1 VILLAGE LIBRARIES

An independent and fast developing country cannot afford to accept inequality between urban people and rural people by denying rural people the facilities of public library as enjoyed by the urban people and thereby condemning them to their present state for all times to come. The urge of the rural people in a developing country for different kinds of information connected with their livelihood is a natural human attribute. Village libraries are important to meet the varied needs of the people in the rural areas.

A great leader like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had a keen insight about the overall development of India. He had foreseen the role of public library system

in rural areas. On 6<sup>th</sup> January, 1955, he stressed the importance of rural libraries. He suggested having at least one library in each village. His opinion was that library services should not be confined only to scholars and the learned, but they should be available to all people and in true spirit every library should be a university in itself. In 1972, coinciding with the International Book Year, Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) came into existence. It is the only library promotional agency existing in the country. The Foundation has been doing good service to the cause of rural education through its assistance to the State Libraries, focussing attention to the development of rural libraries.

Lange (1980) said that a rural library environment, in contrast to the urban library, can be said to include at least five relatively unique operational elements:

- (1) Remoteness from mainstream of current library activity;
- (2) Generally poor financial support;
- (3) Lack of professional staff;
- (4) Lack of adequate resources; and
- (5) Generally poor status in the community served.

The objectives of village libraries may be enumerated as follows (Mittal, 1964):

- (1) Disseminating authentic news and information;
- (2) Providing motivation for learning, reading and writing and helping in maintaining, enhancing and feeding literacy among the people;

- (3) Helping to keep alive and enhance the cultural heritage;
- (4) Increasing vocational competence in raising the technological level of a village occupation;
- (5) Promoting information of the various factions of the village population wherever they exist;
- (6) Helping the village institutions and organizations to improve their progress;
- (7) Developing aesthetic sense and refined taste;
- (8) Helping the people to spend their leisure time profitably.

Lack of formal education and limitation of adult education tend to increase the responsibilities of the rural libraries. So, in order to cater to the intellectual appetite, our rural libraries should function as community centres, cultural centres as well as information centres.

More than the urban library centres, the functions of these rural counterparts need to be manifold. They have to be practical and utilitarian in nature. The rural libraries should not only aim at providing literary knowledge and entertainment to the masses, but also endeavour to import professional knowledge about all spheres of life.

### 1.3 ROLE OF LIBRARIES IN DEVELOPMENT

Libraries are symbols of civilized societies. Libraries are associated with the value that a society places on knowledge and learning, and thus on truth. A nation uninterested in the truth of its past, unconcerned with developing its citizens' potential and inimical to freedom of expression, does not require libraries.

One of the means of self-education and information is library which provides recorded knowledge for use of members of the library. The knowledge acquired bear fruits for human benefaction *i.e.* a better social and cultural order, political order, economic order and all that is essential for the prosperity and happiness of man and society.

In a modern society, besides fulfilling the three necessities of a civilised society viz., food, clothes and a house, feeding the intellectual hunger of each citizen and providing him with the information relevant to his profession, health, happiness and prosperity are the subjects which amount to the success or failure of democracy and well being of a nation in work, and as such, intellectuals or non-intellectuals all require relevant information for the sake of efficiency and growth of national production. It is, therefore, needed for the public libraries to circulate reading materials and serve the citizens with relevant reading materials (Trehan, 1982).

The library can play important roles in the economic, educational, social, cultural and political development of the society.

### 1.3.1 LIBRARY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic growth in modern age of a democratic set up cannot be achieved without an efficient public library service. Books about readers' daily needs, written in simple languages are essential to improve local ways of making a living by agriculture, small-scale industries, handicrafts, etc. An important function of a public library is to improve the economic level of its community by providing not only books and periodicals, but also of commercial and technical information. In rural areas, the most urgent economic

problem is to improve the production of agriculture. A public library is a convenient place to educate the villagers on how to improve their productions and to find markets for the same.

### 1.3.2 LIBRARY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

No social reform can be carried out without the awakening of thought or the progress of ideas. While formal education plays a dynamic role in awakening of thought, formal education alone is not sufficient to master social change as knowledge is not limited to education in schools or higher institutions. Continuing education is a means through which education to the masses is provided.

Issues like adult education, mass literacy, health, poverty alleviation, family welfare programmes, environment protection, drug and alcoholic addiction, child marriage, evils of dowry system, crime against women, communalism, regionalism, superstitious beliefs, etc. need to be tackled successfully to achieve social reform. This can be done through enlightenment occurring through acquisition of knowledge. To gain knowledge by the society, the help of some viable agency is needed.

Modern library is said to be a special agency charged with the function of preserving and disseminating knowledge to the society and servicing men's graphic records for enlarging the mind and dispelling ignorance and prejudice. According to Rose (1954), the library is essentially concerned with intelligence, nourishment and growth of the society. And if the public libraries are not given the importance as a catalytic social agency, then the intelligence of the society is at stake. Darwin's theory of 'survival of the fittest' can be rightly applied

here as nature has her own laws to govern that the mentally weak or ignorant will eventually perish.

Library is called an index to the human development. A public library plays a big role in social education to prepare people for social adjustment. It offers materials and services to people to live a successful social life and avoid social evils. It provides opportunities to the people to understand social evils and the methods to control them.

Public library is a very important social institution. It plays a significant role in the development of the society. The social progress largely depends on education which is provided to the common people.

#### 1.3.4 LIBRARY

##### 1.3.3 LIBRARY AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Gandhi said 'I do not want my house to be walled on all sides and my windows to be stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible; but I refuse to be blown off my feet by any'.

Libraries are the inheritors and repositories of the culture and civilisation of the past without which human beings would have remained ignorant of the past and without a base to bud up the future. Library is the only effective repository of the cultural heritage. It has aptly been referred to as 'the mind of society' and 'live repository of the past culture and sustainers of the intellectual activity that anticipates the future'. Libraries help in carrying the civilisation forward. Shakespeare said that ignorance is the curse of God and knowledge the wing wherewith to fly to heaven. Knowledge thus comes to the rescue of man in darkness where culture is on the verge of being wiped out.

Library is the most dominant social institution that facilitates the multi-various progress of the society. It promotes cultural activities and provides scope for the healthy utilisation of leisure time. Library is a centre for many cultural programmes which induce interests among the clientele. This in turn contributes to the cultural development of the people. Thus, libraries can make them highly moral in character, enthusiastic and literary creations and good citizens of the country. These institutions can create revolution in the cultural life of the people (Mookan, 1973). Libraries provide a great opportunity for cultural development.

#### 1.3.4 LIBRARY AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

The origin, the nature and the purpose of public libraries depend upon the understanding of democracy. The principles underlying democracy are (Jains, 1982):

- (1) Political equality of man;
- (2) Man's faculty for social, mental and moral improvement;
- (3) Respect for the rights of others; and
- (4) Tolerance for the opposite points of view.

The purpose of public library is to provide members of the society opportunities to overcome some of the social and intellectual barrier and that is why it is sometimes called 'Poor man's University'.

Public libraries are peoples' universities and play an important role in the life of a nation. These are the cheapest, best and sure means of self education of one and all without distinction of colour, caste, creed or sex. These help create and maintain an awakened citizenry. The public libraries are

more important in a democratic country like India as its basic political and social fabric depend upon enlightened citizens.

Democracy will be impossible unless the citizens have free access to correct information. This will help the people to know, demand and enjoy their rights, and realise and discharge their duties in a free society. India, being the largest democratic country in the world, needs to enlighten the citizens which can be facilitated by public libraries.

### 1.3.5 LIBRARY AND EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A country without proper educational background cannot stand on its legs firmly as acquisition of knowledge is the very basis of progress and strength. A well informed and educated citizen is an asset to the nation.

The power of reasoning is the most significant gift of nature to man. It has to be sharpened and channelized with the help of education. The purpose of education is to discover and bring out the best of a human being. Education stirs the development of all phases of the personality.

One of the most powerful and progressive instruments of a sound system of education is the library. Classroom lectures give only a glimpse of knowledge. This may be useful for passing examination but it cannot claim to build up a full personality of the students. The library supplements the instructional work of classrooms and carries forward the ideals of education. The library has earned recognition for its academic services and it occupies a prominent place in the educational programme of every nation.

Education is the harmonious development of all our faculties. It continues all the way through whether it is willed or not. Libraries play a very significant role in continuing education of the masses.

Knowledge is power and libraries are the reservoirs of this power manifested in books and other reading materials. These reservoirs if utilised properly have the power to contribute significantly to the wholistic development of a nation.

In 1993, the Comedia Consultancy issued a report under the title 'Borrowed Time' which concluded that public libraries are currently making an impact in five main areas of public life (Brophy, 2001):

- (1) Education: Support for self-education and lifelong learning.....  
 responding to the impact of educational reform providing space in libraries as homework centres.
- (2) Social policy: Acting as an entry point into the wider culture for many of Britain's ethnic minority communities ... playing a leading part in preserving local identities ... supporting the emotional needs of particular disadvantaged groups in local communities - providing a quiet haven or refuge in the midst of the noisy city.
- (3) Information: Providing more and more information services in a society in which individual rights and the need to know are at a premium. Yet unsure of its role in a society in which information is capital and an increasingly expensive commodity.
- (4) Cultural enrichment: Providing a choice of books, recorded music, videos across a range of interests; acting as an entry point for

children into literacy and 'the book of life', storytelling, after school activities, offering a home to art exhibitions.

- (5) Economic development: Libraries play a role in developing local business information services and in a wider context, act as a focal point in the town centre mixed economy where retailing alone cannot sustain liveliness and vitality.

The UK Audit Commission's 1997 report 'Due for renewal' (Audit Commission, 1997) stated that Public libraries find themselves tackling needs in a number of separate areas (Brophy, 2001):

- (1) Recreation and culture (for example, by lending books to people to read for pleasure).
- (2) Learning (for example, by making study materials available for reference and loan).
- (3) Social Welfare (for example, by taking materials to housebound people, or offering a safe and warm place where people can relax)
- (4) Economic development (for example, by providing business information or by helping individuals with training and job seeking).

A nation may suffer economic and financial losses, it may even experience political set-backs, but as long as its intellectual treasure houses, viz., the libraries, exist and men can go to them to seek intellectual stimulus and spiritual inspiration, the nation's soul is intact. Phoenix-like, it will rise again using the thought-contents of the past as the seed of a future growth. Libraries are not only the depositories of the past intellectual attainments, but

also the nurseries which make development and growth in the future possible (Nath, 1967).

India is lagging behind in appreciating the importance of public library and its role in the developing society and the nation. To keep pace with the rest of the world, there is a long task ahead. Failure to give impetus for developing public libraries may hamper endeavours in other spheres of life for development.

#### 1.4 MIZORAM SCENARIO

Mizoram, one of the north-eastern states of India lies at the southern tip of the erstwhile Assam state occupying an area of 21,081 Sq. Km., having an International boundary of 722km. and inter-state boundary of 284 km. It is occupying a very strategic position in the north east corner of India. It is sandwiched between Myanmar (404km) in the east and south, Bangladesh (318Km) and Tripura (66Km) in the west and Assam (123Km) and Manipur (95Km) in the north. According to 1991 census, the population of Mizoram was 6,89,756 and in 2001 census it became 8,88,573 (Males:4,59,109 Females: 4,29,463) against the total population of India which was 1,02,64,43,540 (Males:53,10,61,138 Females: 49,53,82,402). A little more than half the population *i.e.* 50.5% (4,48,729) live in rural areas. Christian Missionaries started education since the early twentieth century and by the year 1999, 82.27 percent were literate and by 2001 census, 88.8 percent (Males: 90.7%; Females: 86.7%) became literate, the second highest in India while national literacy rate according to the 2001 census was 64.8 percent (Males: 75.2%; Females: 53.6%). And by September 2007, Mizoram was declared to have the highest literacy rate

as 89.42 percent of the population have become literate (India Today, 24th Sept. 2007). The '*Duhlian*' dialect now called Mizo language has become the '*lingua franca*' used all over Mizoram, a factor which gives impetus to the fast growth of Mizo literature and encourages speedy progress in all spheres of development.

Mizoram was one of the autonomous districts of Assam until it was uplifted to the status of Union Territory in the year 1972 and it was later given statehood in 1986. The state was administratively divided into three districts namely, Aizawl, Lunglei and Chhimtuipui districts and has been increased to eight districts in the year 1998 namely, Aizawl, Kolasib, Champhai, Serchhip, Lunglei, Lawngtlai, Saiha and Mamit districts with twenty two (22) subdivisions, twenty two (22) towns and eight hundred seventeen (817) villages.

Mizoram is a hilly terrain with poor facilities of outlet to the neighbouring states. The state depends on a road network for the movement of goods and passengers within and outside the state except for one airport linking the outside world. Lack of adequate communication infrastructure has been one of the main reasons for the state's backwardness and causing a feeling of isolation for the people of Mizoram.

Mizos were compelled to find subsistence on the product of their labour alone and so they remained self-sufficient in food grain till the middle of 1960s. The mounting pressure of population on land disturbed as Jhum cultivation required more land. In addition to this, political uprising in 1966 brought untold misery to the people. Many villages were grouped at selected centres. Under the prevailing situation, it became quite difficult to undertake Jhum cultivation and the mainstay of Mizo economy dissipated. As a result,

Mizoram rural economy suffered a serious setback for a long-time and self-sufficiency in food grain production has never been resumed since then. This brought poverty accompanied by decline in moral standard as well as growing social inequality and serious problem of unemployment.

Due to the two decades of insurgency, no meaningful development could be launched. Therefore, the planning process started properly only after Peace Accord was signed (30th June 1986), i.e. from the Seventh Five Year Plan. Meanwhile, in the absence of development in other sectors, agriculture continued to be the main occupation of the people. Besides, due to rapid increase in population in the absence of matching expansion of job opportunities in the government and industrial sectors, there is a likelihood of an increased pressure on land and agriculture. And the rural population (50.4%) is already a little more than the urban population (49.6%). Therefore, the route to development of the state is through rural development. By increasing the productivity of agriculture, horticulture, livestock, pisciculture, forestry, handlooms and handicrafts, income of the rural households is most likely to increase.

Alongwith the upliftment of Mizoram to the status of union territory and later to statehood, the central government steeped up its developmental effort by increasing the sanction of funds several folds. Among such development was the establishment of Mizoram state library on 1st July 1974. Earlier, a sub-divisional library had been established on 1st August 1969 which came to be known as Sub-Divisional Library, Aizawl. District Libraries were opened in Saiha and Lunglei towns on 1st April 1975 and 22nd May 1975 respectively. And other two Sub-Divisional Libraries were also set-up in Kolasib and Champhai

towns on 30th January 1980 and 20th May 1983 respectively. Later on, the three Sub-Divisional Libraries had been upgraded to the status of District Libraries on 18th May 2001. Hence, with the two existing District Libraries, the state now has five District Libraries without any Sub-Divisional Library. However, it is unfortunate that the status of the incumbents were not upgraded as well.

#### **1.4.1. SCENARIO OF VILLAGE LIBRARIES IN MIZORAM**

Few village libraries sprung up due to the encouragement of the local educated people. With the gradual progress and improvement in literacy, a thirst for reading and to know more was felt. Then, the Department of School Education came to know about the service rendered by Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) and readily pursued the matter. The knowledge of the service of the Foundation which focussed attention to the development of rural libraries led to conceiving an idea of spreading village libraries throughout the then Union Territory, so that literacy rate would be accelerated and the citizens would be enlightened; and this would further result in speeding up of an all round development. With this expectation, the task of setting up of and recognising the village libraries was enthusiastically taken up.

A notable event of the public libraries was that 'The Mizoram Public Libraries Act, 1993' came into existence. This act had been passed by the Legislative Assembly on 6th January 1993 and consent had been given by the Governor of Mizoram on 25th February, 1993. The provisions of the Act includes village libraries which states that there shall be recognised village libraries in such villages as may be found and considered deserving and

suitable by the government from time to time. The government may sanction Grant-in-aid to recognised village libraries in accordance with the rules made under this Act (The Mizoram Gazette, 1993). However, the said Act has not been implemented till today.

The government of Mizoram joined the Foundation's matching scheme from the year 1981-1982. And recognition of the village libraries by the government started from 1982-1983 with the then existing ten libraries. These libraries came to be officially called 'Government Recognised Libraries'. Since then, 'Village Library' and 'Government Recognised Library' have come to be used interchangeably.

The biggest and most influential voluntary organisation, namely, Young Mizo Association (YMA) have been encouraged and have been enthusiastic about setting up of new village libraries. Almost all the village libraries have been set up and looked after by this organization. The village libraries kept has been on the rise and by the year 2000-2001, 407 Government Recognised libraries existed, by 2004-2005, 421 and by 2007-2008, 424 in numbers.

**Funding:** In order to encourage and challenge state governments to pay more attention to public libraries, Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) used to match the contribution of the states, with the same amount through its matching scheme. Thus, the amount would be doubled after matching. This means that it used to be a fifty-fifty contribution from both sides. Fortunately, since the year, 2004-2005, north-eastern states had been given a special matching scheme in the ratio of 1:9 i.e. RRRLF would match the states' contribution by nine folds.

The state's contribution to the Foundation's matching fund started with a meagre amount of Rs. 17,500.00 only which on increasing and in the year 1997-1998, it became Rs. 15,00,000.00 (Rupees fifteen lakhs) and between 1999-2000, and 2004-2005 it became Rs. 12,00,000.00 (Rupees twelve lakhs) continuously for some years, then declined further. The total amount of fund contributed upto 2000-2001 was Rs. 69,57,500.00, upto 2004-2005, Rs. 1,17,57,500.00 and upto 2007-2008, Rs. 1,42,57,500.00.

The state government used to procure reading materials out of this fund and the same would be distributed to the government's recognised libraries. The mode of distribution is equal share at a time, approximately hundred books used to be distributed. The total number of books purchased from this fund upto 2000-2001 was 3,49,868, upto 2004-2005, 4,92,043 and upto 2006-2007, 5,94,489. Sometimes, the Foundation would send books in kind as gifts (English and Hindi languages). The total number of books received as gifts from the Foundation upto 2000-2001 was 8,768 (English: 6,975, Hindi: 1,793), upto 2004-2005, 12,673 books (English: 8,863, Hindi: 3810) and upto 2006-2007, 17,066 (English: 11,572, Hindi : 5,494). Furniture had also been distributed to some selected libraries. Whatever had been supplied to the village libraries had been in kind, except for the separate assistance towards the construction of library buildings.

**Supplement Funding:** Most of the village libraries have been supported and looked after by the concerned branch of Young Mizo Association. Sometimes, the organization also provides supplementary funding; the frequency of funding and the size of the fund differ from one branch to another. The citizens and users of the libraries also used to give donation.

**Link with higher level libraries:** Village libraries are more or less independent. Among the higher level libraries, they have link with only the State Library. The main link is that the State Library supplies books and sometimes furniture to the village libraries. And the State Library does the part time job of monitoring whenever it can in the form of inspecting the libraries on-site and has the influence of de-recognising and suspending the undeserved ones by moving the issue to the State Library Planning Committee (SLPC). Another link is participation of village libraries in the bi-annual library seminar and training programme conducted jointly by Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF), Art & Culture Department and Mizoram Library Association. Two persons from each village library are usually expected to attend the said programme.

## 1.5 CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it may be understood that rural reconstruction covering all aspects of rural life and all problems of rural areas is a priority for development of the states and the country as a whole. The need of focussing on rural areas for development may also be seen from Mahatma Gandhi's words which state that 'If the villages perish, India will perish too' and 'the soul of the country lies in its villages'.

Development in the new perspective has been referred to as an overall process of transforming men and societies leading to a social order in which every human being can achieve moral and material well being. The ignorance of the masses is largely responsible for the social, political and economic evils; enlightened citizens cannot be led like dumb cattle. Development has to

proceed from the individual. It is possible only where the process of perfecting the individual is pursued as the nation is the sum total of all our personal lives. Unless there is a national character in an individual, a sense of discipline and development, a nation cannot survive for long.

The work of rural reconstruction is a stupendous task, and an obstinate and a long standing challenge. Isolated attempts to locate these problems and tackle them individually cannot succeed, because these problems are inter-related, having been woven into the fabric of social life. The masses have to be enlightened first to be able to be developed and to pursue further development. There are certain agencies through which mass education can be promoted such as the press, motion pictures, radio and libraries. Unesco Public Library manifesto proclaims Unesco's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for fostering of peace and understanding between people and between nations.

A village library is a popular institution which reaches far down to the masses. Village libraries will prove to be of valuable service for the spread of mass education. The power of reading materials is great. They touch life at so many points that their function is far wider than that of any other mode of education. Through reading, a person becomes enlightened, capable enough of understanding the mysteries of nature, social justice and fair play towards his fellow beings. Reading materials bring education, information, skill and new insight. They keep a citizen well informed about the latest developments so that he may be able to keep pace with revolutionary process. A library offers anyone opportunities to become a better citizen of his country, and it develops his creative faculties and powers of appreciation in a positive and dynamic

way. So, a library does more in bringing about marvellous changes in the habits of centuries than can be achieved by any other means. As such, village libraries have important roles to play in the national programme of social reconstruction and nation building.

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