

**CO-OPERATIVES
IN ASIA :**

**THEIR CONTRIBUTION
, AND
FUTURE STRATEGY
FOR
DEVELOPMENT**

By

R.S. Umre
Consultant

**International Co-operative Alliance
&
Ex-Chief Director, N.C.D.C**

Together We Unite and Flourish

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COOPERATIVES IN ASIA

THEIR CONTRIBUTION AND FUTURE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

THE ASIAN COOPERATIVE SCENARIO

1. Let us have a look at the Asian Cooperative movement, their strength, weaknesses, problems. The economic condition has a direct bearing on the development of cooperative movement in the Asian region. A few countries like Japan, Singapore, Republic of Korea which are industrially developed countries and have a very high standard of living while most of other countries belong to a group of developing countries and are having low living standard.

In all the developing countries of Asia, poverty and unemployment are common problems. The economic structure of these countries is basically agricultural and majority of people live in rural areas. With the development of communication, transport, literacy, the people are eager to move forward for better, happier and more secure life. Cooperative as an instrument of socio-economic development may help them to meet their rising aspirations.

2. In Asia, cooperation occupies important place in the national economic development plans particularly for agricultural development and small scale industries. Each country in its economic setting has developed its own model of cooperative both in the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors and for rural and urban areas with varied experience, specialization and achievements.

3. In India, for instance, there are various types of rural cooperatives, such as service cooperatives, large sized cooperatives, large sized multipurpose societies, artisans cooperatives, dairy cooperatives etc. There are also giant fertilizers manufacturing cooperatives, modern cooperative sugar factories, spinning mills etc.

4. In Indonesia, the KUD, a cooperative organisation, yet another model is serving the village community. Japan has its own diversified pattern of agricultural cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, university cooperatives, forestry and fisheries cooperatives coupled with its own management model. So is the case with the Republic of Korea with success in the field of agriculture, fisheries and livestock cooperatives.

5. Malaysia has a network of school cooperatives and successful insurance cooperatives. In Sri Lanka, the multipurpose cooperatives have played a significant role, particularly in distribution of consumer articles. In Singapore, trade unions are actively involved in measures taken for modernizing workers and consumers cooperatives. Thailand has established successfully the rural credit and urban consumer cooperatives. These few examples show that each country has developed its own cooperative model to serve the community.

6. What is common among the developing countries of Asia is that cooperatives are being assigned programmes of assisting the poverty stricken and weaker sections of the community. Another common feature is that agricultural cooperatives have a key role in production, marketing and processing of foodgrains. The States in these countries feel that their's is the responsibility toward overall socio-economic development of the country; their political considerations and decisions have increasing influence on cooperatives.

OBJECTIVES:

7. Since the objective of a cooperative is to promote economic and social welfare of members, its motive is not to make profit but to fulfil the social responsibility. Successful cooperatives are those which care most for community welfare. They have to develop as community institutions to serve the community as a whole rather than to confine their activities and benefits to members only.

8. Cooperatives being people's movement generate friendliness and the spirit of mutual aid and goodwill among the members. Similarly cooperatives of one country say some rich country can help cooperatives of another country which is not so rich and requires technical and financial help. This surely results in mutual friendship and understanding. This could be another objective.

9. Cooperatives are also instruments of development-economic, social and moral. They have emerged as an important segment of economy in most countries. Cooperation occupies important place in the national economic development plans.

CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

10. In cooperation certain ethical and moral standards have been laid down. They are in the form of principles. for example, honesty and fairness is one of the principles of cooperation. All members are morally bound to help each other. All members of a cooperative are considered equal regardless of the amount of their investment. This promotes the spirit of equality and mutual respect.

11. Thus cooperatives are instruments of socio-economic development and by practising certain principles and associated values, distinguish themselves as different identities from other organisations namely private and public.

12. A cooperative without principles is like a soldier without discipline. A soldier has to follow certain rules, discipline and possess spirit of patriotism. A cooperative organisation is different from other organisations-private or public in that it has an open membership. Any person is free to join and to quit a cooperative, and no person shall be discriminated against because of his or her ideas, beliefs or political philosophy.

13. Democracy is a cardinal principle of co-operation. All members of a cooperative are considered equal regardless of the amount of their investment, and voting rights are accorded on one person one vote basis. The third principle is limited interest. A cooperative limits the amount of interest paid on invested funds.

14. Another important principle is distribution of surplus. Any surplus funds cooperative activities yield must be distributed equally among all members. Fifth is education. A cooperative must strive to educate and enlighten its members and staff, to inform the public of its existence and purpose, and to work for the growth of the cooperatives both domestic and foreign, to whatever extent possible. Co-operation among Co-operatives at local, national and international level as a principle of Co-operation assumes a great importance in the present economic trends of the world.

15. The above principles have been built on the foundation of basic values. These values have an important bearing on cooperative development. The purpose of cooperative development as has been pointed out earlier, is to improve the economic as well as social condition of the people and thereby economic development of the region/country.

16. The main economic goal of a Co-operative is the material promotion of the members by joint efforts. Everyone who knows what cooperation is, would agree that in a cooperative society it is the man (and woman also) for whose economic and social benefit the efforts are made by him, for him. This is based on mutual help values like co-operation, unity, collective action etc.

17. There are quite a number of other cooperative values like self-help, elimination of profit as a driving force, social responsibility, democratic values, commitment, openness and education. Of these the democracy, social responsibility and education are most important.

'Honesty' and Caring for others are other two values added to the list recently which we as co-operators must practise.

a) DEMOCRATIC VALUES:

18. Democracy is a cardinal principle of cooperation which envisages equality, participation and equity. All human beings like to be respected and all of them like to share the power and its results. In a cooperative institution members are the key factors. They operate their institution together and without any pressure from outside.

b) THE MUTUAL HELP VALUES

19. These values envisage collective action, solidarity, peace. One works for all others while all others work for themselves individually. This generates the feeling of oneness, togetherness and unity. Collaboration and cooperation among the members is essential for a cooperative institution to satisfy the social and economic needs of the members.

c) NON-PROFIT INTEREST VALUES

20. These values mean elimination of profit as a driving force, social responsibility and not profiting from others' work. The business of society is conducted not with a view to making profit but to render the best services.

d) VOLUNTARY EFFORT VALUES

21. These values envisage commitment, creative power, independence. Cooperatives are formed by people who have found it necessary to work together to solve economic problems. It was felt that a few working together can achieve more than many who strive alone. And then cooperatives should be open to everyone, and nobody should be allowed to dominate others.

e) EQUALITY VALUES:

22. In a cooperative institution nobody is superior to the other. All members are equal irrespective of their economic and social status. They come together to cooperate and collaborate. Dignity of members is upheld. One member can not make profits at the cost of the other members. The distribution of profits is not done according to the corporate ventures but on the principle of equal distribution of wealth and services.

f) EDUCATION VALUES:

23. These values envisage knowledge, understanding, insight etc. To make the cooperative democracy meaningful, the member education is of utmost importance. It also helps promotion of member relations. In developing countries, the need to educate members in cooperation is more necessary because of illiteracy of people.

CONTRIBUTION BY COOPERATIVES :

24. The persons who have formed a cooperative may be a farmer, a consumer or a simple worker. He may be engaged in manufacturing of industrial goods. Each one of them expects from his or her cooperative to derive not only monetary advantage but a complete satisfaction which is partly qualitative. A worker expects security of employment in addition to his pay ; the consumer expects quality, a wider choice, convenience in the purchase of his goods, clothes etc. The farmer expects to safeguard the family farm and his style of life, which is based on collaboration with nature. All this comes into living cooperation because power lies with people, not with money. Then the Govt. also look to cooperatives as an instrument of socio-economic development of the people. Let us see what are the cooperative contributions toward this end ?

25. Cooperatives inspite of their weaknesses and problems have made substantial contribution towards the economic development of various countries. They have been most successful in many fields touching upon agriculture and foods. If there is any particular business in which cooperatives have proven skills and knowhow, it is in the production, processing and marketing of food all over the world. At the producer's end, whether in Europe or Asia, the most successful cooperatives are those that serve farmers and the agricultural industry.

CONTRIBUTION BY INDIAN COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

26. Let us take the example of India where the cooperative sector of the country has entered into all walks of socio-economic life of the people. Major thrust areas of the movement are: support to agricultural production through distribution of agricultural credit, fertilizers and other inputs and providing post harvest facilities like storage,

processing and marketing. Besides, the cooperatives have been playing an important role in supporting the economic needs of consumers, artisans, labourers and other weaker sections such as small and marginal farmers.

27. The National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India, a national level co-operative marketing organisation transacted business in 1991 to the tune of Rs. 4000 million of which exports accounted for Rs. 150 million. Processing cooperatives played a very important role in providing the benefits of value addition to farmers. Cooperative sugar factories produced 60 percent of total sugar production of the country. Cooperative spinning mills commanded 20, percent of total spindleage in the spinning sector of the country.

28. Dairy Cooperatives which provide supplementary income to farmers particularly in the small and marginal category have also made a good progress and their activities benefited a very large segment of people. There are around 64000 dairy cooperatives with a membership of over 6 million in the country. Their milk processing capacity is 17.60 million liters per day.

29. The contribution of cooperatives in production and distribution of chemical fertilizers is quite significant. The cooperatives are controlling nearly 30% of total fertilizer distribution in the country. The IFFCO & KRIBHCO, farmer cooperatives engaged in production of fertilizer account for 23% of the total fertilizer products. Both these institutions are contributing significantly to the introduction of the latest technology for agricultural development. They have undertaken member development projects for educating the beneficiary farmers in different parts of the country.

CONTRIBUTION BY JAPAN :

(a.) Development of Farming

30. Let us take the case of Japan. The multipurpose cooperative concept has proved to be very effective in Japan and ensured almost hundred percent coverage of farmers eligible for cooperative membership. Farming in Japan is characterized by small holding, intensive cultivation and diversified cropping pattern and combination of paddy field with upland crops. This necessitates the existence of a single organization which can service the farmer member in several ways. Keeping in view the need of such an organisation, Japan implemented a program of amalgamation of single purpose cooperatives into multipurpose cooperative in a big way. There were 12050 multipurpose cooperatives at the end of March 1961. With amalgamation, these societies were reduced to 3745 at the end of March 1989.

31. With the growth in their size and the volume of business, the cooperatives have attained a commanding position in terms of resources, facilities and diversification of activities. The multipurpose cooperatives provide their members all the services needed by them and other facilities such as all inputs for production, guidance at all levels for increasing production and assistance for planning socio-economic activities of the members and their families.

32. The man-power shortage in Japan forced the agricultural cooperatives to resort to modernization of agriculture and streamlining of most of its means of production, storage, transport and distribution. The rapid urbanisation of rural areas, created by the influx of industrial workers in the countryside for residential purposes forced the cooperatives to modify their approach to membership. The most visible of these developments was the rapid increase in the income of farm householders.

33. The present day multi-purpose cooperatives function on the basis of a fully integrated framework of activities. The integrated way of functioning envisages the socio-economic life of the family members in its totality. The income target of the farm household becomes the foundation on which the edifice of cooperative activity is built up.

34. One of the important factors contributing to the rapid increase in the farm household income has been the linkage of production loans to the marketing of rice to Govt. under the price guarantee scheme.

35. The above description of working of multi purpose cooperatives in Japan shows that the agricultural cooperatives at the primary level made a good contribution in terms of providing services to members as well as improving their standard of living.

36. Between 30 and 40 percent of all Japanese households are represented in the cooperative movement by at least one cooperative member. In some cases the participation level is much higher. For example Nada Kobe can claim that 70% of all households in the region are represented in the membership.

(b.) DISTRIBUTION OF CONSUMER GOODS:

37. If all goods are taken into account, the cooperative share of the market is 1.5 per cent. In the case of the groceries alone it is 2.5 percent. Seen as absolute figures, these have somewhat sobering effect. They can be explained by two factors, one of which is the system of free market economy which is practised to an extreme in Japan, and which permits every type of fair competition. The second is that in Japan there are countless minor retail shops which are not subject to any restriction regarding opening times and which are thus in a position to corner an important share of the market. If one were to regard the consumer cooperatives as a big chain of stores, or in other words as a single giant

enterprise, then the figure of 1.5% and 2.5% could be regarded as being highly respectable.

Women's Role

38. In the consumer movement of Japan, women play a special role. "Hans" groups which consist of housewives residing within small areas e.g. one building, or a street have made a good contribution to the development of consumer activity in Japan. The "Hans" group discusses frequently the common consumer problems. The group elects its own leader and deputy leader. The Consumer cooperative society is supposed to have a special unit to look after the interest and needs of these "Hans" groups. These groups keep a watch on quality and prices of goods and undertake joint purchases.

39. The largest single advantage of the "Hans" movement is that it helped in awakening of women about their rightful place in the community and helped them to raise their economic status by providing opportunity of service. The detailed account of working of "Hans" in Japan is given in a case study of TSUROKA cooperative Society functioning in the Yamagata prefecture. This could prove as a model for some of the Asian countries with the involvement of women. Women generally constitute half the total population of any country and it is time that by involving them in consumer cooperative movement, they are given rightful place in the community. If you develop a man, you develop an individual but if you develop a woman you develop a nation.

EMERGING CHALLENGES TO ASIAN MOVEMENT

(a) LACK OF PEOPLE'S INITIATIVE

40. While it is accepted that cooperation is a popular people's movement, it lacks the characteristics of a members movement in Asian countries due to dominance of Govt. and lack of people's initiative. Hence cooperation has yet to become a mass socio-economic force directed and managed by the people themselves. This is a very important challenge before the cooperative movement in Asia.

(b) CARE FOR THE DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

41. The other equally important challenge before cooperatives is to care for the dis-advantaged groups like women, fishermen, poor people, handicapped persons. Cooperatives with the support of well-designed state policies and assistance can play an important role in ameliorating the poor conditions of disadvantaged groups. Women constitute half the population, and lack of adequate participation by this vast human resource in development seriously limits economic growth. Experience in developing countries has shown that where women actively participated in activities such as consumer, industrial and thrift and credit cooperative the performance of these cooperatives has greatly improved alongside the considerable improvement in the incomes and living standards of the member households.

(c) BUILDING COMMUNITY LIFE

42. The objective of cooperative should be to build community, create co-operative/ community villages many hundreds of them, within the larger urban setting. The cooperative idea of self-help, sharing common interests and needs, can be the social adhesive holding an urban area together and transforming it into community. The growing tendency of people in rural areas is to move towards the urban areas

where modern facilities are generally better. To check this, an idea of creating modern villages around the urban area in building a community life is suggested. These measures would bring about rural prosperity through income and employment generation and thus prevent migration of people to urban areas.

43. A consumer cooperative needs a new orientation and a new setting in which it will provide a wide range of community services. In other words, a consumer cooperative should be connected with its membership in a more intimate and organic way than through the mere purchase and sale of goods.

(d.) ASIAN COOPERATIVE BANK :

44. Cooperatives of the future will require a well developed system of international banking. It is suggested that an International Cooperative Bank for Asia and the Pacific be organised which would take care of the needs of cooperatives in developing countries of Asia and provide funds at favourable terms. In such a Bank, developed nations' contribution will be much larger proportionately than that of developing countries.

(e) SHIELD AN INDIVIDUAL

45. One of the strongest tendencies in modern economics is towards the convergence of two powerful institutions – Big business and big government. The only alternative left to citizens is to form groups of their own, specially cooperative. A group can shield the individual from getting crushed into the mass.

(f) ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL

46. Ecological and environmental foundation would have to be protected and preserved to allow further advancement in biological productivity. Cooperatives all over the world have to play an effective

role in environmental control and preventing the environment from further pollution. This is a big challenge before cooperatives.

(g) SINGLE OR MULTI-PURPOSE COOPERATIVE

47. The Asian countries are primarily rural based and main occupation is agriculture. The rural people are also consumers whose basic needs have to be fulfilled. What kind of a cooperative would meet the needs of farmers and consumers? Should it be a multi-purpose cooperative as this pattern is working in Japan, Sri Lanka and India? It is increasingly realised that a rural multi-purpose cooperative which is a conglomerate of cooperative services combined in one can bring in substantial change in prevailing economic system and social order.

(h) PACKAGE OF SERVICES TO RURAL PEOPLE :

48. In Japan beside providing farming inputs and marketing services, a co-operative is a credit and thrift organisation, an insurance agency, a centre for consumer supplies ; it provides medical services and hospital care in some places. It has an extension and field services and a community centre for cultural activities. This type of cooperative can actually prove a model to cooperative movement in Asia which want to introduce a cooperative organisation providing a package of services to rural people.

(i) CO-OPERATION AMONG COOPERATIVES :

49. The biggest challenge cooperatives are facing today is competitive strength of other sectors namely private and public. If cooperatives have to keep a pace with the modern competitive world, they have to co-operate between themselves to face the challenge of other sectors. The I.C.A emphasised on this point and adopted a resolution in its Congress in 1966 which states "All co-operative organisations in order to service the interest of their members and their communities should

actively cooperate in every practical way with other cooperatives at local, national and international levels".

50. The need for suggesting the inter-cooperative relationship is felt because the whole trend of modern economy is towards closer economic integration and for setting up large units both private and public sector. To meet this challenge, the cooperatives have to fall in line with them. The collaborative approach between the cooperatives is as much needed in the developing countries where the cooperation is considered as an important instrument for bringing about rapid economic progress among the rural population.

51. In this connection, it is encouraging to note that some of the cooperative movements in Asia such as Japan, South Korea and Malaysia have started offering their experiences to others. Japan has become a leading factor in this field. The Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives has agreed to host an annual training programme for cooperative leaders through IDACA. The Japanese Consumer Cooperative Union (JCCU) has promoted better understanding among the members of consumer cooperatives in developing countries through study tours by co-operative leader from other countries of the Region at JCCU's cost. Singapore has launched the Singapore Cooperative Technical Assistance Programme (SINOTAP) in 1990. The developing countries will be benefited by this program.

(j) INTER-NATIONAL TRADE THROUGH COOPERATIVES:

52. The other field where there is so much scope yet not much explored is international trade through cooperatives. The ICA and the national cooperative trading organisation with joint efforts can do much in this field. It is gratifying to note that the ICA Regional office for Asia and the Pacific have have set up an office in Singapore recently to do the needful in this field.

FUTURE STRATEGY FOR DEVELOPMENT:

(a) Adopt technology:

53. There is a growing urge, emphasis and trend to adopt and assimilate technological developments so as to improve the operational and service efficiency of the organisation. Cooperatives have to fall in line and take full advantage of technological development for their efficient working.

(b) Develop Team Spirit:

54. For successful working of a cooperative, a team spirit between the elected Board of Directors and appointed managers and the personnel selected by the Board of Directors should be developed. Actually there should be mutual confidence between the two, neither one should try to overstep the authority of the other. The Management ensures that the cooperative operates as a sound business, while directors, acting as custodians on behalf of the members, ensure that it operates as a good cooperative.

55. Cooperative should be treated as an Institution as well as an Enterprise. A member of a cooperative is simultaneously a member of an institution and the enterprise. The institutional half of the cooperative is mainly concerned with achieving the socio-economical values of the members and the other half is concerned with enterprise values like profitability, expansion, diversification, organisational development and human resource development.

56. In future, therefore a cooperative should be a mixture of pragmatism and idealism and should enter into advantageous arrangements with private business for practical reasons but still uncompromising in its opposition to the main drive that motivates capitalism, i.e. urge for profit making.

57. Govts and cooperatives should look for collaborative arrangements in enterprise and public service, one complementing the other, with Government filling the functions that only Govt. can perform, and cooperatives doing what cooperatives are best able to do. There is much that Govts. can do to promote cooperatives without dominating them.

Evolve a strategy : Produce more, distribute equitably

58. In the developing countries of Asia and in other parts of the world, a proper system of production of food and its distribution is an item of priority. The cooperatives, in future, should involve a strategy by which they help both producer as well as consumer i.e. yielding more production of food and distributing the same fairly and equitably. The cooperative movement is in a position to give world leadership.

Promote workers cooperatives :

59. Most of the developing countries of Asia, though agriculturally based are trying to develop their industries, both big and small. In such a situation the worker's productive and industrial cooperatives are the best means to create a new relationship between workers and work place. The new strategy should be to promote such cooperatives.

60. Cooperatives that are not only economically efficient but are also socially influential, will appeal the New Age.

Build a cohesive sector :

61. The future development of the cooperative system can be assured only through the building of cohesive sector in the economy of the nation.

Build a leadership:

62. All the strategies for the development of cooperative movement suggested above will be futile if there is no proper leadership.

implement them. In this connection Dr. A.F.Laidlaw said in his paper "Cooperatives in the year 2000" that "there must be a great body of lay leaders, women as well as men, not just to make a success of cooperatives, but also to work towards building of a new kind of society. The best leaders will not see cooperatives as an end in themselves but rather as a means to a better social order".

Become an ideal cooperator:

63. Finally, the relevance of a cooperative lies in the fact that it helps men and women, members of a cooperative, to improve their socio-economic condition. What is a cooperative? It is an association of cooperators working for them and by them. Therefore a cooperator has to set an ideal. If we have to look for an ideal cooperator, the following views of a Yugoslavian co-operator may be relevant.

"The cooperator is not a capitalist, nor a proletarian, not an exploiter, nor an exploited one. He is not an employer nor an employee, He is an entrepreneur of a particular kind, builder of an enterprise serving himself and his own needs. He is actually a creator of a new economic system. He is a builder of a new civilization and a new world based on mutuality, not antagonism on mutual help, nor mutual destruction".

64. If all cooperators of the world numbering 670 million become ideal as defined above, we can surely create a new world order of peace, friendship and development.

MODEL OF A SUCCESSFUL CONSUMER COOPERATIVE IN JAPAN - TSURUOKA COOPERATIVE SOCIETY

TSURUOKA Cooperative Society functions in the Yamagata prefecture which has a population of 1.5 million.

It is a part of larger Tsuruoka where the first 'HAN' groups were born in 1956. The Tsuruoka Cooperative started in 1879 and had a long tradition. The people still preserve the Japanese traditional culture and deep insights into life and death.

2. In 1956 the people had to face many difficulties in procuring essentials. Therefore the chairman of the society himself started collecting orders from the members using a bicycle. The HAN groups were organised for easy collection of orders so that they could collectively buy things at a cheaper rate. The orders were put into a box in the cooperative. The pioneers were farmers and workers.

3. At present, the cooperative has 5700 HAN groups which is 60% of the total membership. 35% are from Yamagata while Tsuruoka claims 55% In Oyama 85% are members. The cooperative has 20 billion yen average turnover and has 16 stores and 8 distribution depots for HAN groups. It has two main warehouses. There are three types of HAN groups visible in the society viz. Farming HAN groups, Institutional HAN groups and village HAN groups. Average size of a HAN group is 8 households represented mostly by housewives.

4. The HAN groups meet at a general assembly at least 3-6 time a year. The assembly discusses the cooperative affairs and even common social issues and report to the society assembly. In order to preserve democratic value of member participation, the Tsuruoka cooperative is divided into districts. In each district, there is a general assembly and a board of directors, in addition to an audit committee. The

representatives of the HAN groups attend the society's general assembly and elect the board of directors.

5. The HAN groups participate not only in routine business decision on assortment, quality and quantity of goods but also location and layout of depots and stores.

6. Han groups in Tsuruoka maintains a set of commandment as basic principles. These are :-

- Through Han activities, we promote collaboration with a movement which safeguards our health and better living.
- Let us come together as members as of the community to build democracy and to become a proud community.
- Let us act hand-in-hand for a healthy and sound growth of children.
- Let us collaborate with other organisations to safeguard peace and democracy.
- One for all, all for one with this precliamation, the members pledge to serve the group. Each member is given a pamphlet describing the structure and rules for functioning of type group. One of the important rules is to rotate the leadership.

7. It would be interesting to know the organizational structure of a cooperative society and the place of 'HAN' therein. A Han belongs to a district corresponding to the school district of the community and members are encouraged to join district committees to address local problems and plan community activities. Regional Cooperative Societies each elect a board of directors who are responsible for administration of their society.

8. Each regional board of directors under the guidance of the central board of Directors develop their own policy, manage business activities

in their area and promote local programmes for members' involvement. The central board of directors is elected from each region and is responsible for correcting the business and member activities as a whole. The Congress of Representatives is composed of members elected from each region.

9. However the basis of direct democracy has been assumed through the business decisions made by the HAN groups. These decisions determine the policy of the cooperative society. Han meetings are held compulsorily after Han leader's meeting. This is to inform the members about what transpired during the Han leaders meeting. Every time either a board member or a staff member of the cooperative is present. The meetings are held in the Han leader's home or any other member's house in rotation.

10. Normally the topics discussed are :-

Report on business activities, main event in the month in the cooperative, how to increase share capital and deposits and any other social issues. During these meetings members exchange product knowledge on new commodities, problems of their daily life and how to solve them.

11. Thus it would be seen from above that the consumer organisational pattern from the Han group, as a basic unit upwards is so built that there is full play of democracy and member participation. The members not only take charge of business decisions of the cooperatives but also follow the philosophy and directions of the cooperative society. It has proved to be a model closer to what Report what Rebert Owen saw as a cooperative community. Han has a balance of economic and social ideals.

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R.S. Umre has a Master's Degree in Economics and Commerce and studied in five Universities namely, Agra, Delhi, Nagpur, Pune and Winnipeg (Canada).

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He has written and published a number of articles on Cooperation and studied the cooperative movements of Japan and Thailand closely. He studied and prepared a report on integrated cooperative development for the district of Banswara in Rajasthan. He worked as a Consultant to the International Cooperative Alliance, New Delhi. He has also prepared a Project Design for setting up a Model Cooperative Consumer Stores with Self Service Department in Mauritius.

Composing and Printed by **GRAPHIC POINT**
1898-A, Ch. Durga Singh Marg, Kotla Mubarkpur,
(Behind H-Block South Extension), New Delhi - 003, Ph

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