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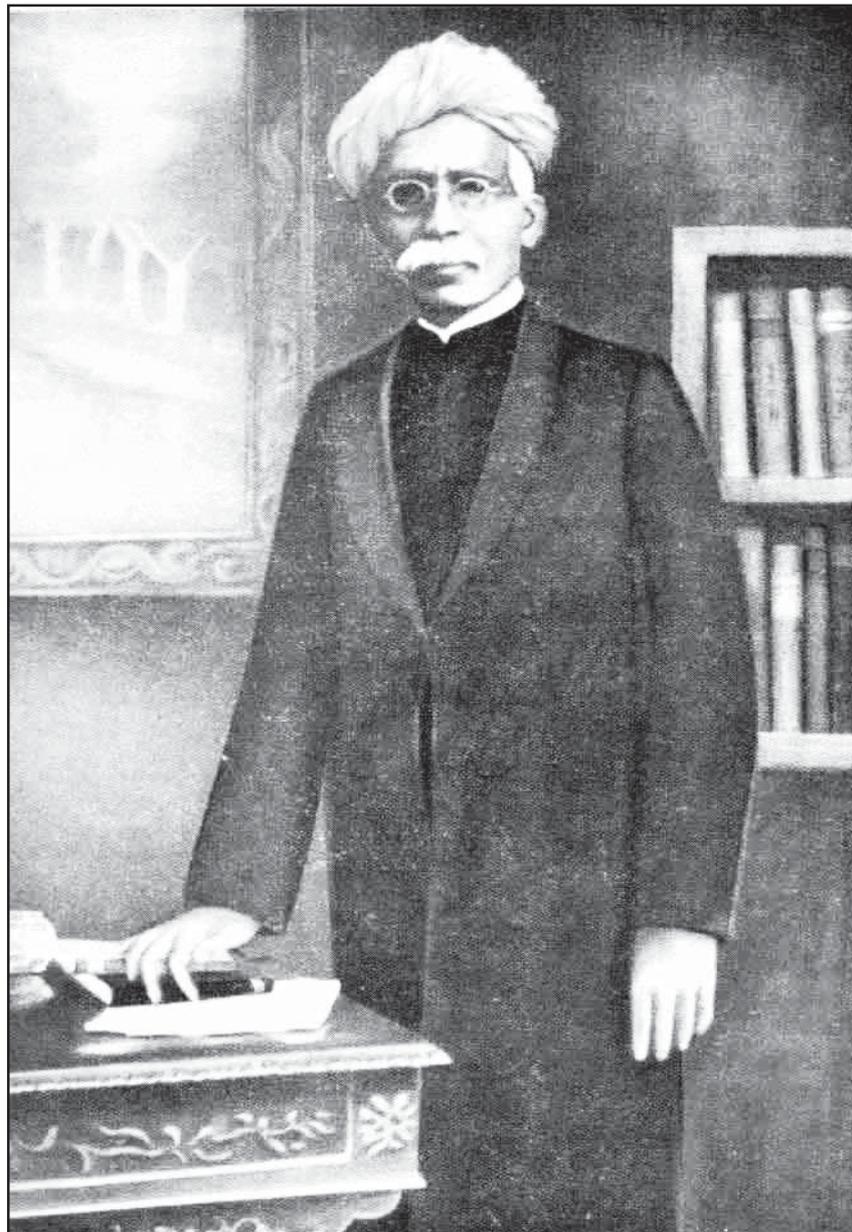
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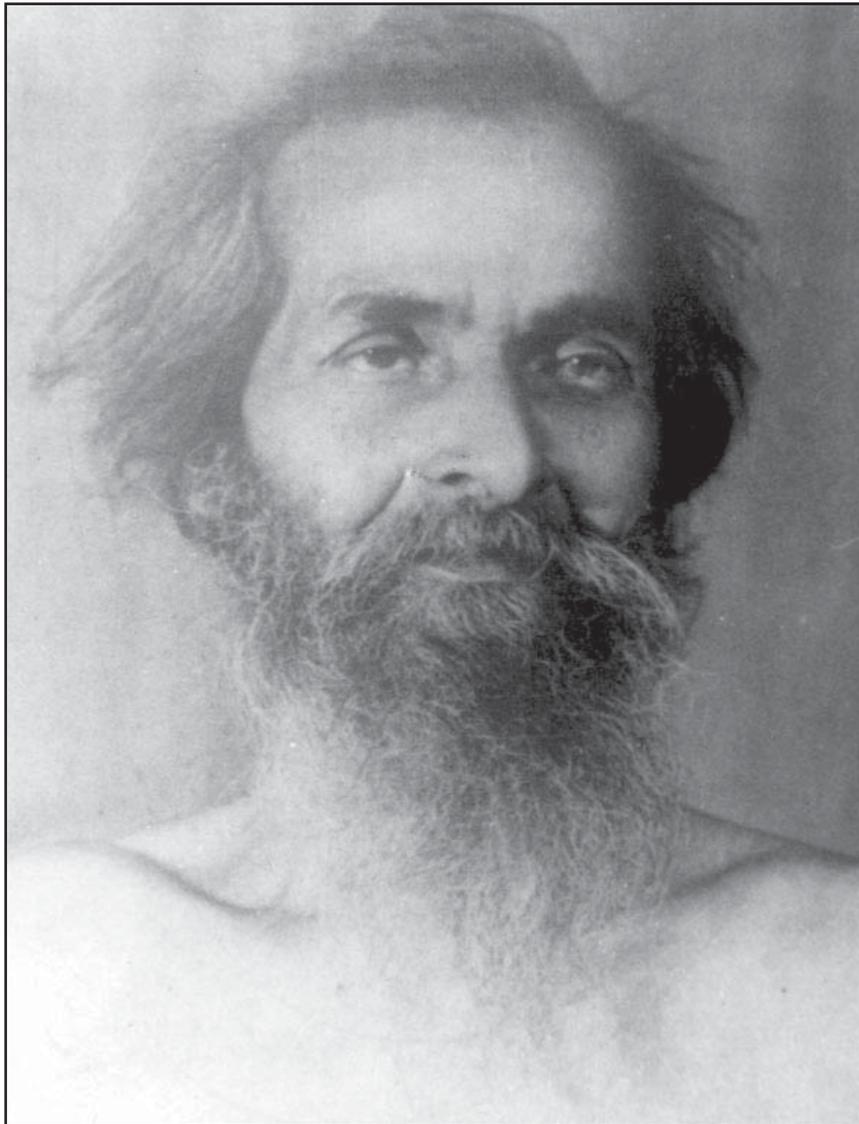
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Our Sincere Obeisance....



Utkal Gourav Madhusudan

We Fondly Remember



Acharya Harihar

Our Sincere Obeisance....



Laxman Naik

We Fondly Remember



***Legendary leader and visionary Biju Patnaik
(5th March 1916 - 17th April 1997)***

Editor's Note



When Simplicity Works Satire Hurts.....

The basic structure of the Panchayati Raj institutions is identical across the states in India but the election procedures to these institutions are at a variance. Through Panchayati Raj, a system of governance that includes both men and women are developed at the grass root level. Odisha was the first State to implement 33 % reservation of seats for women in Municipalities and Panchayats which was subsequently enhanced to 50 % under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik.

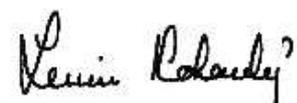
As the State celebrates the Birth Centenary of legendary leader Biju Patnaik in the 80th year of formation of the State, the official tabulation and result declaration by the State Election Commission of the ensuing Zilla Parishad elections is taking place. The ruling Biju Janata Dal has maintained a clear lead over all its rivals. For almost 2 decades the ruling dispensations under the popular Chief Minister is creating waves across the State. Unfortunately, while the election procedure was on addressing an election rally at Gonda in U.P, Hon'ble Prime Minister satirically criticized Odisha and its people. The people of the State were shocked and hurt on such comments when the percentage of poor was more in Chhattishgarh and Jharkhand. In a federal democracy, it is surprising that the Prime Minister remains silent when the Mahanadi issue is discussed and barrage is being built at the upper reach of Mahanadi by Chhattishgarh. We are sad that Hon'ble Prime Minister has denigrated the image of the State for the sake of politicking.

India's economy is expected to have slowed sharply to a near 3 year low as demand wilted following the surprise decision to ban high value currency notes. It has caused huge disruptions to daily life leaving farmers, traders and companies relying on cash transaction in disarray. However, the State's economy is expected to register a growth rate of 7.94 per cent in 2016-17 as against the national average of 7.1 per cent. The Odisha Economic Survey 2016-17 stated "Odisha's economic growth in terms of GSDP has reached a respectable level of 7.94 per cent. The size of the State's economy has increased by 22.27 per cent in real terms during the last 6 years. About 82 lakh poor people have moved up from Below Poverty Line in

8 years. The poverty in Odisha has declined by 24.61 per cent which is the highest among major States. Hon'ble Chief Minister has rightly stated that the Poverty Eradication Programmes are being implemented on a mission mode to create sustainable livelihood opportunities for rural households. The Government's thrust is to provide proper road connectivity, electricity, safe drinking-water, sanitation and other infrastructure facilities to rural areas. The Government is sensitive to the needs of the farmers and Odisha is amongst the few States to have constituted an exclusive Agriculture Cabinet for looking into the welfare of the farming community. The farm income has doubled in last 10 years and food-grain production has touched an all time high of 118.24 lakh metric tonne in 2014-15. An additional irrigation potential for 2.94 lakh hectare of agricultural land has been created in the State in the last 2 years. Probably, taking all these facts at hand, Hon'ble Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley had rightly said that **“Odisha's economy transformation is the touch stone of India's growth. If Odisha continues to grow at a pace faster than the national rate, it's potential to wipe out the poverty in the next one and half decades would be significantly high.”** Therefore, just after two months of the Finance Minister's remark that the State has managed to bring down the number of poor by half in two decades, Hon'ble Prime Minister's satirical comments on Odisha and Odias seems to be deliberate and it has definitely hurt all of us. One must be aware that despite an improvement in nutrition level in the last 15 years, India still has a serious hunger problem and a long way to go before it is able to achieve the U.N goal to end hunger by 2030. Too many people are hungry today. There is a need for urgent thoughtful and innovative action to ensure that no one ever goes hungry again.

The Government under our popular Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik has fulfilled many of its promises including extension of infrastructure development schemes to the whole of Odisha despite closure of important schemes meant for social inclusion by the Central Government.

We are proud of our Chief Minister for having reiterated that “the fight for Mahanadi and Pollavaram is beyond political or electoral gains since it is a fight for the right of our people.” When simplicity works satire hurts.....



Editor, Odisha Review

Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 : Background and Present Features

*Susanta Kumar Dash
Dr. Bhaskar Mishra*

Shree Jagannath Temple situated at Shrikshetra-Puri is one of the holiest and most sacred pilgrimages of India. Shree Jagannath Temple has been subjected to many an impediment in the past, still then it has survived and has remained unaffected. The temple has ever since its inception been an institution of unique and international importance. The independent kings of Odisha were directly managing the affairs of the Temple. While the Britishers took over the State of Odisha in 1803 it was felt imperative to frame the rules/laws for better management of Shree Jagannath Temple. In 1805 a comprehensive report was furnished by Mr. Gromeson about the prevailing mismanagement in the Temple and its remedial measures. Similarly a report on temple was submitted by Mr. Garret in 1902 before the Government. The said report highlighted the necessity of framing different Acts/Rules for better management of the temple. Much prior to this, in the year 1883 Sri K.C. Gupta, the then Collector, Puri by preparing a plan had suggested that a Committee may be appointed for management of the temple and the committee may be monitored by a Trust Board. According to him the said trust board should be appointed by a Court of Law. As per his recommendation the King of Puri will

be a hereditary member of the Committee. On 22.02.1879 a proposal no.118-A was approved at William Fort and on the basis of said proposal a letter was sent to the Commissioner, Revenue Board, Odisha for submission of a draft act on the management of the Shree Mandir. Subsequently Government of Bengal on 16.4.1879 requested Government of India that laws should be framed immediately with reference to Puri endowment. Government of India vide their letter dtd.29.11.1879 urged upon Government of Bengal to send a draft Act concerning Shree Mandir for kind information of the Governor General. Accordingly a draft Act was prepared but the Act could not get approval of Government. Again in 1881 the proposal for framing of Act gained ground and it was suggested that besides a hereditary successor as President, an honorary committee may be formed and a manager may be appointed by Government. It was observed that though attempts have been made several times for framing of Acts/rules but it could not be implemented. Mr. Allen, the then Collector of Puri in the year 1892, keeping in view the critical condition of Mukunda Dev the minor king of Puri, gave a proposal for keeping him under the court of wards, but the higher authorities could not be at one with the said proposal.

Preparing a report in 1915, L.C. Adami suggested that the management of Shree Jagannath temple is of utmost importance hence it was advisable that the power of appointment of a superintendent in the temple should be retained by Government itself. He has further stated that for such appointment an Act should be framed. In 1937 steps were taken for enactment of an Act. Sri Jagannath Mishra and Mandhata Gorachand Patnaik introduced two draft Acts in the assembly. These two draft Acts were notified in the Orissa Gazette on 22.10.1937. The main purpose of these two draft Acts was that a committee namely "Puri Jagannath Temple Committee" would be framed to administer the temple in the name of the King. The said committee was to be comprised of seven members. The Gajapati King would act as the hereditary superintendent of the temple and an executive officer would also be appointed in the temple. All financial transactions of the temple would be exercised by Government. As per other recommendations the power of management of temple would be discharged by a seven-member committee. Arrangements were also made for appointment of an officer of commissioner rank as Executive Officer. But it is a matter of regret that the said two draft laws could not be approved in the floor of the Assembly.

Again in the year 1948 and 1951 Sri Dinabandhu Sahu, the then Law Minister placed the draft Acts with certain amendment proposals in the assembly. But the said draft Acts could not get the approval of the assembly. During the said period serious mismanagement was noticed in the temple. The situation was so worse that the daily ritual could not be performed in time and *kothabhoga* also could not be offered to the deities. Because of acute financial crunch,

mismanagement in administration of temple was at its peak. In 1952 there was a serious agitation on the said issue and as a result of which people's representatives had drawn the attention of Government about the same. Sri Dinabandhu Sahu, the then Law Minister discussed the matter at Puri with different civil stalwarts and thereafter Shri Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act, 1952 was framed. According to the said Act a Record of Rights was prepared wherein the duties and responsibilities of different servitors, observance of *nitis*, festivals and special rituals were recorded. A special officer in the rank of district judge was appointed for the purpose of preparation of the Record of Rights who submitted his report on March 5, 1954. "Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1954" was framed in 1955. It is worth mentioning that although the said Act was framed in 1955, Shri Rama Chandra Deb, the then King of Puri and after his death King Birakishore Deb, challenging the legality and constitutionality of the Act, filed a case in the Hon'ble High Court of Orissa. As a result, the said Act could not be implemented immediately rather it came into force with effect from 27th October, 1960. The logic behind challenging the Act in the Court was that Jagannath temple was their hereditary private property. Government of Odisha have violated Article 19 and 31 of the Constitution by depriving him of his right to property without paying any compensation.

The second argument was that while there was already an Act viz. "The Orissa Hindu Religious Endowments Act, 1952" for management of all Hindu temples and endowment properties there was no need for framing a separate Act for Shri Jagannath Temple.

By introduction of a separate Act, Shri Jagannath temple is treated differently from other

temples of the State. According to the King, by framing a separate Act Article 14 of the Constitution has been violated and discrimination has been made against the temple. But Law Department of Government of Odisha has objected such contention of the King and it was made clear that Shree Jagannath Temple is not the private property of any one. This temple belongs to the entire State. The management of the temple was always the responsibility of State Government. Prior to the British rule in the year 1803, Muslims and Marahatta rulers were managing the temple with the help of Hindu officers. As per Regulation 4 of 1809, Britishers appointed King of Puri as superintendent of temple because the King had a hereditary relationship with the temple. Such arrangement could not restore normalcy in temple management. It became still worse when a large number of pilgrims including devotees from Nepal thronged to the temple. Because of the mismanagement, Government intervened in the affairs of the temple in order to restore order and peace. Government officers were brought on deputation to the temple and served for a long time. They were given full responsibility of managing the temple. Further the State Government strongly argued that as the duties and responsibilities of the servitors and king have been clearly defined in the Shree Jagannath Temple Act, 1952 there is no constitutional ambiguity in the 1954 Act. According to State Government, Shree Jagannath temple not only occupies a unique position in Odisha but it is a temple of national importance.

The temple of Lord Shree Jagannath is the epitome of Pan-Indian culture. Its complex ritual pattern being reflective of all traditions of India besides the edifice being the citadel of religious beliefs and sentiments of crores of people it becomes imperative to streamline the

management of the temple with enforcement of a special Act.

Taking into account the arguments of both the parties, and detailed analysis of Law, Hon'ble High Court passed order on 30.04.1955 vide OJC No.321/55 that the demand of King of Puri is not acceptable as he happens to be the foremost servitor of Jagannath temple. Hence he is entitled to certain rights and dues for the services he renders to the temple. Secondly he has also been given hereditary responsibility of managing the temple as Superintendent. In Shree Jagannath Temple Act, elaborate provisions have been made to uphold the right and dignity of the King as he is the foremost servitor of the temple; hence the prevailing tradition of the temple as the foremost servitor has never been interfered in the Act. As per law he is the hereditary chairman of the temple managing committee, so his right in this regard has not been affected. For better management of temple, adequate provisions have been made in the Temple Act. According to Hon'ble High court, the provisions laid down in Shree Jagannath temple Act are legal and constitutional. Against the order of Hon'ble High Court, Birakishore Deb, King of Puri had filed an appeal vide C.A. No.135/1962 in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. A division bench of Supreme Court comprising three judges including Sri Gajendra Gadakar, Chief Justice heard the case and pronounced a historic judgement on 5.3.1964. Some excerpts of the judgement are as follows.

“The temple is a unique institution in the State of Orissa and is in a class by itself and that there is no comparison between the Temple and other temple in the State.”

“The temple occupies a unique position in the State of Orissa and is a temple of national

importance and no other temple in the State can be compared with it. It stands in a class by itself and considering the fact that it attracts pilgrims from all over India in large numbers it must be a subject of special consideration by the State Government.”

The Hon’ble Supreme Court upheld the judgement of Orissa High Court and the appeal of the King of Puri was dismissed.

Shri Jagannath Temple Act is the first comprehensive and historic Act framed by any independent State and the Act is still in vogue. In 1960 Government of Odisha gave the responsibility of management of temple to a Committee and appointed a senior OAS officer as its administrator. While the said arrangement was in force for 38 years, as per decision of a high power committee Odisha Administrative Service officers of Joint Secretary rank were appointed as administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple from 1998 till February, 2005. In 2004 major amendments were brought in the Temple Act and an Indian Administrative Service officer not below the rank of Commissioner (equivalent to Revenue Divisional Commissioner) was appointed as administrator of temple from February, 2005.

As per Section 5 of Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 the responsibility of management of all moveable and immoveable properties of the temple was given to “Shri Jagannath Temple Managing Committee”. As per Section 6 of the said Act, the King of Puri shall be the chairman of the said committee. On the basis of amendment in the said Act, Collector of the district of Puri, who should usually be a Hindu, shall be the ex-officio Vice Chairman of the committee. Besides this one Brahmin who is

entitled to sit on Muktimandap and four of the servitors from among the enlisted servitors as mentioned in the Record of Rights shall be nominated as members. The administrator is to function as the Member Secretary of Shri Jagannath Temple Managing Committee. The Commission of Endowment shall also be an ex-officio member in the Committee. As per provisions of the said Act one person representing the *maths* and other institutions connected with the *sevapuja* or *niti* of temple shall be nominated as a member and two eminent persons shall also be nominated by State Government as members of the Committee. Besides these 12 members, as per Section 6-A, the Managing Committee may co-opt such number of persons not exceeding four as it deems fit to be the members of the Committee from among persons not belonging to any of the categories referred to in clause (e), (f) & (g) of sub-section (1) of Section-6. It is not out of place to mention that as per Section 6(2) of the Act, no person who does not profess the Hindu religion shall be eligible for membership. Provided that if the Collector of the district does not profess the Hindu religion such officer of the State Government professing such religion not below the rank of an Additional District Magistrate as the State Government may nominate, shall be the Member and Vice-Chairman of the Committee in place of the said Collector.

The Committee is considered as a body corporate having perpetual succession. The executive power of the Committee and the day to day management of temple are bestowed on the administrator of the temple.

Section 7 of Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 speaks as follows on the appointment of a Chairman during the minority or disability of the Raja of Puri.

7(1) “If at any time the Raja of Puri happens to be a minor or in the opinion of the State Government suffers from any of the disabilities covered by Sub-section (1) of Section 10 other than Clause (f) thereof the duties of the Chairman shall, during such minority or so long as such disability lasts, be exercised by a person professing the Hindu religion whom the State Government may by order specially appoint in that behalf”.

As stated above even if the King of Puri is not eligible for the post of Chairman of Managing Committee, on the basis of Section-8 of the Act he is entitled to perform service as Gajapati Maharaja and to get allied benefits out of said niti/puja/service.

Section 15 of the said Act enumerates the duties and responsibilities of the committee. These are as follows.

1. To arrange for the proper performance of Seva-Puja and of the daily and periodical Nitis of the Temple in accordance with the Record of Rights;
2. To provide facilities for the proper performance of worship by the pilgrims;
3. To ensure the safe custody of the funds, valuable securities and jewellery and for the preservation and management of the properties vested in the Temple;
4. To ensure maintenance of order and discipline and proper hygienic conditions in the Temple and of proper standard of cleanliness and purity in the offerings made therein;
5. To ensure that funds of the specific and religious endowments are spent according to the wishes, so far as may be known of the donors;
6. To make provision for the payment of suitable emoluments to its salaried staff;
7. To arrange for the preparation of a list of immovable properties endowed to Lord Jagannath and of trusts created for offering Bhog or of the performance of any *seva* in the Temple;
8. To prepare and implement with the prior approval of the State Government and remunerative scheme for cashew nut plantation, casuarinas plantation/horticulture, dairy farming, establishment of retail shops for sale of commodities inside the Temple or any other commercial undertaking in order to augment the resources and income of the Temple;
9. To take steps for resumption of any building or room situated within the premises of the Temple from any person if he has ceased to render the service for the performance of which such building or room was allotted to him or if such service has become obsolete; and
10. To do all such things as may be incidental and conducive to the efficient management of the affairs of the Temple and its endowments or to the convenience of the pilgrims.

It is worth mentioning that since the commencement of Shri Jagannath Temple Act in 1955, amendments in the said Act have been brought out at different times such as in 1961, 1962, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1983, 2003, 2004 and 2008. After 28 years of commencement of the Act provision for setting up of a Hundi was inserted through an amendment in the existing Act in 1983. In 1983 new clauses such as 28-B and 28-C were added in the Act

and as a result “installation of Hundi” and introduction of “Foundation Fund” respectively were given effect. For the better management of Fund a committee was formed and the Chief Minister became the Chairman of the Fund. Amendments were also made in the sections 6,10, 15-B, 16, 16-A, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28-C, 30-C, 32 and 33 of Shri Jagannath Temple (Amendment) Act, 2003. Important among these amendments relate to removal of encroachers from the land Shree Mandir, R.O.R. amendments, power and responsibility of administrator, distribution of responsibilities among the officials, creation of Foundation Fund etc.

After one year of such amendment again the Act was amended in 2004 and some new provisions were added. As per this amendment reforms in the administration of temple was made and accordingly an IAS officer belonging to the rank of Commissioner was appointed as Chief Administrator of the temple. After this amendment Sri S.C. Mohapatra, IAS was appointed as the first Chief Administrator of the Temple. As per Section 19(2), the post of Dy. Chief Administrator, as per Section 19(3) posts of Administrators such as Administrator(Admn.), Administrator(Niti), Administrator(Security) and Deputy Administrators (Revenue, Finance and Development) were created. Similarly major amendments were made in Section-6 of Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 and accordingly provisions were made for appointment of a Working Chairman in the rank of Additional Chief Secretary of the Managing Committee, Chief Administrator, Temple as ex-officio Member-cum-Secretary, Collector, Puri as ex-officio Member, Additional Secretary, Law Department as ex-officio Member, Superintendent ASI, Bhubaneswar Circle as ex-officio Member, S.P.,

Puri as ex-officio Member and 5 servitors also as members. As per the amendment one Chartered Accountant, one Brahmin who is entitled to sit on the Muktimandap, two eminent persons shall also be in the Committee. The tenure of the said eighteen-member Committee is for three years.

The “Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955” has been amended many a time during the last 56 years and as a result the administrative system and Managing Committee of the temple have been substantially upgraded. The Managing Committee is efficiently discharging its duties and responsibilities.

Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 with subsequent amendments has been designed to streamline the temple of national heritage for the benefit of countless devotees, pilgrims including the tourists all over world. Since the temple is one of major centres of worship, the Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 provides guidelines for uninterrupted implementation of traditional *nitis* and observance of fairs and festivals attached to the Temple.

References :

1. Shri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955.
2. Shri Jagannath Temple (Administration) Act, 1952.
3. Judgement of Hon’ble Supreme Court in Civil Appeal No.135/1962.

Susanta Kumar Dash, Chief General Manager(P&A), IDCO, Bhubaneswar.

Dr. Bhaskar Mishra, OSD (JTA), Law Deptt., Govt. of Odisha, Puri.

PANCHAYATI RAJ DEPARTMENT : MARCH TOWARDS EXCELLENCE

The philosophy of RURAL DEVELOPMENT is based on the epitome of **Progress, Economic Growth and Social Justice**. The Panchayati Raj Institutions have been in existence for a long time but have not been able to acquire **the status and dignity of viable and responsible Peoples' Bodies** due to absence of regular elections, insufficient representation of weaker sections like SC, ST and Woman, inadequate devolution of powers and lack of financial resources as well. Article- 40 of the Constitution presupposes one of the Directive Principles of State Policies lays that the State shall take steps to organise village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authorities necessary to enable them to function as units of self Governments. That stimulated a determination to enshrine in the Constitution certain basic and essential features of Panchayati Raj Institutions to impart certainty, continuity and viability.

The 73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1992 was a supreme talisman for effective decentralisation of power and to make the Panchayati Raj Institutions vibrant in the lowest rung of the Community. The objective of Panchayati Raj Department revolves round socio-economic development in the rural area and implementation of poverty amelioration programmes to ensure inclusive growth, social-justice, reduction of poverty, enhancement of per-capita income and elevation of the socio-economic condition of the rural poor. The Gandhian Philosophy of "Real India lives in villages" envisages **Grama Swaraj** (Self Rule), **Antyodaya** (Welfare of Weaker Section) and **Sarvodaya** (Welfare of All) are being replicated in all the schemes implemented by Panchayati Raj Department like Rural Housing, MGNREGS, Day-NRLM, GGY and Central & State Financial Commission Grants.

RURAL HOUSING SCHEMES : A MISSION TO REVITALISE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SECURITY OF RURAL POOR.

The Government of Odisha commits to provide pucca house to every kutchha household in our State to address one of the basic human needs. The following schemes are implemented by Panchayati Raj Department.

1. **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Grameen)**
2. **Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (BPGY)**
3. **Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (Mining)**
4. **Nirman Shramik Pucca Ghar Yojana (NSPGY)**

Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana(Grameen)

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), the flagship scheme of the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India has been revamped to Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Grameen). The houseless poor families and those living in less than two kutchha rooms as per SECC-2011 Survey are eligible for availing housing assistance to construct minimum of 25 Sq. Mtr. of house. The fund released to the beneficiaries is shared between Centre & State in the ratio of 60:40. Altogether 1,11,511 houses have been completed with a total expenditure of 845.52 crore.during the current financial year against 3,96,102 houses with financial allocation of Rs.3,695 Crore sanctioned by MoRD in favour of Odisha.

Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana

Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana is the flagship programme of the State which was launched during the financial year, 2014-15 replacing the old Scheme “MO-KUDIA YOJANA” with a view to achieving the objective of converting all the kutchha houses to pucca houses.

Components of the Scheme: The BPGY has two components:

(1) BPGY (Normal) 85% of annual target	The households enumerated as having kutchha house of two rooms or less as per SECC-2011 are covered under this scheme.
(2) BPGY (Special) 15% of annual target	Rural households affected by natural / man-made calamities like fire, flood, cyclone, earth quake, elephant menace, communal violence, major law and order problem, etc. and extremely poor, vulnerable and deserving households who need pucca house but could not be selected under BPGY (normal) are covered under BPGY (Special).

PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE

The housing assistance is given @ Rs.1.3 Lakh to the beneficiaries in IAP District and Rs.1.2 Lakh in Non-IAP Districts. Besides, through convergence with MGNREGS, the beneficiary avails Labour Component of 95 / 90 days (IAP-95, Non-IAP- 90) and Rs.12,000/- for construction of toilet out of (Swachh Bharat Mission) SBM / MGNREGS.

Progress under BPGY

Financial Year	Budget Allocation (In Crores)	Amount Sanctioned (In Crores)	Expenditure Incurred (In Crores)	Houses Completed
2014-15	330.105	330.105	193.538	31,553
2015-16	700	700	828.22	1,14,726
2016-17	700	700	373.196	39,256

Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana (Mining)

All the kutcha households residing in mining affected villages of 08 Districts viz. Angul, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Koraput, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh are provided pucca houses under **Biju Pucca Ghar (Mining)** Scheme on saturation mode.

The Scheme is funded by Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) and implemented by Panchayati Raj Department. The unit assistance and instalment pattern are same as with BPGY beneficiaries.

Govt. have provided 29,769 beneficiaries under the above scheme with an allocation of Rs.250 crore out of which 1539 houses have been completed with total expenditure of Rs.100.12 crore.

Nirman Shramik Pucca Ghar Yojana (NSPGY)

Building and other construction workers between the age of 18 years and 60 years having existing valid registration with the Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board under the Building and other construction workers (RE&CS) Act at least for a continuous period of 3 years are eligible for assistance under the “**Nirman Sharmik Pucca Ghar Yojana**”. This Scheme is funded by Odisha Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board (OB&OCWWB) and implemented by Panchayati Raj Department. The unit assistance and instalment pattern are same as with BPGY beneficiaries.

An allotment of 60 crore has been received to provide house to 5100 beneficiaries during 2016 and Rs.6.824 crore has been utilized.

Innovative Steps taken by Panchayati Raj Department:

1. To boost completion of house, the beneficiary completing house of RCC roof within four and six months of receiving work order is awarded incentives of Rs.20,000 and Rs.10,000 respectively out of Biju Pucca Ghar Administrative Contingency.
2. State Government have launched a dedicated Rural Housing Portal “www.rhodisha.gov.in” for transparency and creating awareness.
3. Direct beneficiary Transfer through AwaasSoft-PFMS platform from 2015-16 onwards was launched. All accounts were registered with Public Financial Management System (PFMS) of Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

4. Community Based Organization like SHG, Producers Groups and Gram Panchayat Level Federations and NGOs are tagged to beneficiaries for facilitating completion of house. They are paid financial assistance of Rs.700/-, Rs.500/- & Rs.100/- for completion of house within 4, 6 and 12 months respectively.
5. Each beneficiary has been tagged with a particular Block staff, who facilitates the beneficiary in completing the house. The tagged officials are paid incentive @ Rs.500/-, Rs.300/- & Rs.100/- basing on duration of completion of each house for their extra effort.

MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE SCHEME : A STIMULUS IN PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PREVENTING EXODUS

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act-2005 was notified by Government of India on September 7, 2005. By an amendment in the NREG Act, the name of the NREG Act has been changed to "The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act" w.e.f 2nd October, 2009. The basic objective of MGNREGA is to enhance livelihood security in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. This Act is a milestone towards realisation of right to work. In Odisha, this scheme was launched in 19 districts on 02.02.2006 and is now being implemented in all 30 districts w.e.f. 01.04.2008.

Physical and Financial Achievement (as on 21.02.2017)

Government of India have approved the Labour budget for the year 2016-17 amounting to Rs.2459.20 crore which will provide employment to 17.78 Lakhs HHs and will ultimately generate 800 lakhs person days.

During the financial year 2016-17 (as on 21.02.2017), 615.12 lakhs person days have been generated against the labour budget of 800 lakhs person days. A sum of Rs.1923.05 crore have been utilised out of the total fund available of Rs.2026.73 Crore. Job cards have been issued to 64.13 lakhs households out of 64.68 registered households. 17.63 lakhs households have been provided employment out of 21.31 lakhs households demanded employment. 229249 no. of projects have been completed out of 589942 no. of projects taken up. 242.72 lakh person days have been achieved by women out of 615.12 lakh person days generated, which is 39%. 1571 no. of AWC buildings have been completed against the target of 3500 AWC building. 12015 no. of farm ponds have been completed out of the target of 20340. The percentage of expenditure on Agriculture and Agriculture Allied works is 68% against the target of 60%. The percentage of expenditure on NRM works to total expenditure is 63% against the target of 60%. The road side plantation of 4988 RKM has been done against the target of 4000 RKM.

New Initiatives taken by the State Government

- The State Government has adopted Ne-FMS w.e.f. 01.04.2016 in which all the wages of the labourers are being credited to the accounts of the labourers directly from the account of the MoRD, Government of India.

- About 6.15 lakhs seedlings were planted by the Gram Panchayats in the institutions like School, College, AWC building, GP building throughout the State during the plantation week from 02.07.2016 to 07.07.2016.
- 148082 assets under MGNREGS have been Geo Tagged against the target of 87215 assets.

DAY-NRLM Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana – National Rural Livelihood Mission : AN INSUPERABLE CHALLENGE AGAINST STAGNATED ECONOMY & IMPOVERISHMENT

DAY-NRLM is having the mandate to reach out to all poor households, link them to sustainable livelihoods opportunities and nurture them till they come out of poverty and enjoy a decent quality of life. Funding pattern of the programme is 60:40 (CSS). Key components of the programme are:

1) Inclusive social mobilisation and community institution building:

The programme aims at mobilising them into Self Help Groups and further builds their institutions at village level called as Cluster Level Federation, at Gram Panchayat level called as Gram Panchayat level Federation and at Block level called as Block Level Federation.

DAY-NRLM strongly believes in community to community extension and hence one of the core activities of the programme is to build community cadres for community mobilisation, livelihoods (agriculture, livestock, and enterprise) and financial inclusion services to poor.

2) Financial Inclusion:

Targeted households are being facilitated to access basic financial services like opening of Jan Dhan Account, social security through coverage under insurance. Self Help Groups are being provided with the Revolving Fund and Community Investment Fund to meet household level consumption and initial production needs and also to build institutional capacities of SHGs in managing bank credit. To provide access credit in augmenting livelihoods, Self Help Groups are being supported for bank credit. To provide the bank credit to SHGs at affordable rate of interest, Interest Subvention is being provided to Self Help Groups who are making prompt repayment.

Odisha – Aam Aadmi Bima Yojana covers life and accident insurance of SHG women members in intensive Blocks. In view of importance of financial literacy in successful implementation of financial inclusion, community functionaries have been trained by Reserve Bank of India so as to enable them to act as resource person.

In Odisha, the scheme is being implemented by Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM), Panchayati Raj Department for enhancing the socio-economic condition of the rural poor through promotion of sustainable community based institutions. In order to facilitate effective implementation of NRLM in the State, OLM has adopted an Intensive Block and non intensive Block approach. As of now, OLM is engaged with about 33 Lakh households by covering 2.99 lakh SHGs across the state through both intensive and non intensive approach.

Achievement April 2016 to 31st January 2017 under DAY-NRLM.

Indicators	Achievements
Women Self Help Group (SHG) Coverage	2.99 SHGs Lakh in 314 Blocks have been formed. 1.44 Lakh SHGs covered under intensive approach in 107 Intensive Blocks. During the current FY 10,725 (78.4%) SHGs are brought into NRLM fold against the target of 13680 SHGS till 31 st January 2017.
Pro-poor Inclusion Fund (PPIF) (upto Rs.15,000/-per SHG)	12637 (180%) SHGS have been availed Pro-Poor Inclusion Fund of Rs.17.51 crore. Till 31 st January 2017, 89,802 SHGS have been availed Pro-Poor Inclusion Fund of Rs.119 crore.
Community Investment Fund (CIF)	Rs.27.47 crore has been released to 112 (51%) GPLFs towards CIF. Till date 1497 GPLFs have been availed Rs.274 crore towards \CIF.
SHGs credit linked	51,974 SHGs have been credit link amounting Rs.651.04 Cr. OLM is facilitating effective linkage of SHGs with banks. For this Samanwaya Mela are being organized for solving the issues relating to pending cases of SHGs for credit linkage. SHGs are also given scope to utilize this platform to open savings bank a/cs
Interest Subvention	During FY 2016-17 Interest Subvention of Rs.2.11 crore has been released to 29,276 SHG loan account.
Placement Linked Skill Development Programme under DDU-GKY :	OBJECTIVE :- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To promote livelihood skill through training and placement. - To skill rural youth who are poor. - To provide jobs with wages at or above the minimum wages. - To reduce poverty by enabling the poor households to access gainful self employment and skilled wage Employment opportunities.

	In the current FY-25880 (86%) youths have been trained under Placement Linked Skill Development Programme out of the targeted 30,000 rural youth. 20654 (98%) candidates have been placed against the target of 21000.
RSETI (Rural Self Employment Training Institute)	OBJECTIVE : To promote Rural Entrepreneurship & Self Employment among rural unemployed youth. Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs) are set up in all 30 districts of the State to promote Rural Entrepreneurship and Self Employment. Rural unemployed youth in the age group of 18-45 are trained in these institutes. In 2016-17, 16742 (93%) rural youths have been trained against the target of 18000.
Aam Admi Bima Yojana-Odisha	11,87,821 households have been covered under Aam Admi Bima Yojana.

GOPABANDHU GRAMIN YOJANA : (GGY) TRANSFORMATION IN RURAL COMMUNICATION AND BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

Gopabandhu Gramin Yojana (GGY) focuses on providing additional development assistance to bridge critical gaps in infrastructure in rural areas of the State by complementing and supplementing existing resources with special focus on Bijli, Sadak and Pani (i.e. electrification, road and bridges and irrigation and water supply) in every village on need based manner.

During the Financial year 2016-17, 32631 Projects have been completed under GGY with an expenditure of Rs.77626.59 Lakhs

- 75.93% of these projects are under Road Sectors.
- 16.08% of these projects are under Water Sectors.
- 7.85% of these projects are under Electricity Sectors.
- 0.14% of these projects are under other Sectors

1326 kilometers of roads have already been completed during the year 2016-17 till January, 2017.

CREATION OF DURABLE AND PRODUCTIVE ASSETS UNDER *CENTRAL AND STATE FINANCE GRANT.*

The 14th Finance Commission constituted by Govt. of India and 4th State Finance Commission constituted by Govt. of Odisha have been implemented in the state for the period 2015-2020. Both Commissions have assured transfer of funds to the local bodies for planning and delivery of basic

services smoothly and effectively within the functions assigned to them under relevant legislations. Grants can be utilized for strengthening delivery of basic services like drinking water supply, Sanitation, Street light, **Septage** management, Waste management, Maintenance of Community assets, Creation of Capital assets, Salary of employees, Honorarium allowance of PRI members and Construction of Staff quarters.

Out of the 14th FC Grant basic grant of Rs. 1323.09 crore only has been released in favour of 6208 G.Ps in the year 2016-17. Similarly Rs. 1361.27 crore under 4th SFC has been released to the PRIs for utilization and creation of capital assets.

By utilizing the fund, 474 No. of Kalyan Mandaps, 1252 No. of Market Complex, 3117 No. of Crematoriums, 7933 No. of Bathing Ghats with changing room for Ladies, 155 No. of Orchards, 2306 No. of Street lights, 607 No. of Hatas, 1003 No. of Playfields and 456 No. of info Theatres, 860 No. of Staff quarters, 559 No. of repair of G.P Building and 1664 No. of Road projects have been undertaken during the year 2016-17.

The Department have made sustained effort to create urban amenities available in rural area with optimum utilization of sources.

REORGANISATION OF GRAMA PANCHAYATS

Government in Panchayati Raj Department have reorganized the Grama Panchayats by way of increasing 595 new GPs taking into consideration the geographical barriers, population exceeding 10,000 in one GP and above all for administrative convenience.

Thus the total number of GPs after reorganization comes to 6801. The prime objectives of reorganization of GPs are to percolate the message of development and fulfil the aspiration of the most vulnerable and marginalized section of the Community and above all to create democratic ethos in rural area. This has resulted in creation of employment opportunity in the newly created GPs and elected representatives in 3-tier Panchayati Raj System in token of constitutional obligation.

Panchayati Raj Department is committed for enhancement of per capita income of the rural household, expeditious development of rural infrastructure to provide basic needs and to bring a Platonic metamorphosis in rural economy by way of optimum utilization of resources and securing the larger interest of the largest section of the Society.

NATIONAL RURBAN MISSION (NRuM) SCHEME : A PURPOSEFUL THRUST IN TRANSFORMING RURAL LIFE.

The Scheme “**Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission**” (SPMRM) Scheme launched by the Hon’ble Prime Minister on February 21st, 2016 with an objective for development of a cluster of villages that preserve and nurture the essence of rural community life with focus on equity and inclusiveness without compromising with the facilities perceived to be essentially urban in nature, thus creating cluster or Rurban villages. The Rurban Mission will also be referred as National Rurban Mission (NRuM).

MoRD, Govt. of India have released Rs.165.00 lakh under the Scheme during the year 2015-16 for preparation of Integrated Cluster Action Plan (ICAP) / Detailed Project Report (DPR) / Functioning of State Project Management Unit (SPMU)/ District Project Management Unit (DPMU)/ Cluster Development and Management Unit (CDMU)/ Information Education and Communication (IEC) Activities / Organising workshop for the five Rurban Clusters i.e. **Talabasta** (Cuttack district), **Ranipada** (Khurda district), **Utkela** (Kalahandi District), **Samasingha** (Jharsuguda district) and **Thakurmunda** (Mayurbhanj District). The allocation under the above Scheme is shared with proportion of 60:40 between Centre and State.

MoRD, Govt. of India have released Rs.24.00 Crore to the above Rurban Clusters towards 1st Instalment under the Scheme for the year 2016-17. Rs.16.00 Crore has been provided towards State Matching Share under the Scheme.

Further MoRD Govt. of India have approved five Rurban Clusters i.e. **Dahita** (Bargarh District), **Keshapur** (Ganjam District), **Murtama** (Nabarangpur District), **Kotagada** (Kandhamal District) and **Sibtala** (Bolangir District) in 2nd phase and released Central Assistance amounting to **Rs.175.00 lakh** during the year **2016-17**. Besides, MoRD Govt. of India have released Addl. Central Assistance amounting to Rs.10.00 lakh to the Rurban Cluster Utkela and Thakurmunda.

There is a proposal for provision of fund of Rs.120.00 Crore (Central Share Rs.72.00 + State Share Rs.48.00) under the Scheme for the year 2017-18.

Government have taken all-out step for utilising the resources to bring a metamorphosis in rural area by way of providing basic urban amenities and developing an enlightened and viable cluster in rural area.

Biju Patnaik and the Untold Stories

Anil Dhir

Biju and the Americans :

The American Secret Agency CIA had always maintained an extensive dossier on Biju Patnaik. Numerous memoirs of ex-bureau chiefs, diplomats and operatives mention him in their works. During the Nehru heydays, McCarthyism ruled the CIA's decisions and policy. Senator Joseph McCarthy had started the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1938. Thousands of American citizens were jailed on unfounded accusations of being communist supporters. The CIA maintained dossiers on leaders and politicians who were anti-communist and friendly to the USA.

Biju Patnaik's role in setting up of the Aviation Research Centre at Charbatia and his visit to the CIA headquarters find ample mention in Conboy and Morrison's book "The CIA's Secret War in Tibet".

In the height of the Cold War years, in April 1963, US Ambassador Galbraith made the first official request to India for a base for the U-2 spy planes. In spite of intense and almost desperate persuasion by the USA, Nehru turned down the CIA proposal to base a detachment of the high-streaking snoopers planes.



In March 1963, Biju Patnaik, who was the Chief Minister and Nehru's defence adviser, was sent to Washington. He held discussion with the Pentagon. The two interviews that he had given to the Washington Post and the Baltimore Sun caused a stir in the political circles back in India. There are reports that he had also secretly visited the CIA headquarters at Langley.

On 3rd June 1963, Kennedy met President Radhakrishnan at the White House and reiterated the CIA's wish.

After Radhakrishnan's return, Nehru held a meeting with Biju Patnaik and discussed the matter. The Americans had lobbied with Biju, who was keen to have the base at Charbatia. Everything was set for the final go, but Nehru turned down the proposal at the last moment. A dejected

Galbraith met Biju Patnaik, who by then had resigned under the Kamaraj Plan.

Nehru's objection was based on the advice of the IB Chief B.N. Mullick. Mullick asked Nehru to insist on having all the films shot by the spy planes processed in India and retaining one set of all the photographs. The CIA argued that each U-2 sortie brought back hundreds of miles of film and it was just not possible to set up the technical facility to process and analyse all of them in India. The CIA instead offered to give India processed pictures later, but Mullick would have none of it. Nehru struck to his guns, even after Biju Patnaik talked to him on the issue.

In May 1963, T.T. Krishnamachari, the powerful Minister in Nehru's Cabinet visited the US, and the officials there had persuaded him to send a long cable to Nehru asking him to change his mind about the U-2 base. Nehru ticked him off with a curt "please do not meddle in this".

A disappointed Galbraith left India in June 1963. He had lobbied hard with Biju to get the U-2 base through, but failed. Galbraith made nearly half a dozen trips to Bhubaneswar, both secret and official, to meet Biju. During one of his trips, he was hosted at the BNR Hotel in Puri. Galbraith signed the visitor's book and praised the hotel.

Chester Bowles, the new Ambassador, had been briefed about Biju's proximity to Nehru. Topmost on his agenda were two unfinished projects of Galbraith, the setting up of a Voice Of America transmitter and the Bokaro Steel Plant. In 1963, eager to bolster its radio transmitting capacity against China, Nehru had agreed to locate a VOA transmitter somewhere in eastern India. On Biju's insistence, Odisha was one of the places earmarked for the facility, even though the

Americans had wanted a facility in the North-east. The agreement was that the Americans would be allowed to maintain the facility for some limited hours, but Indians would control and run the show. In short, the Americans would be using Indian Territory for their propaganda broadcasts, something that was against the spirit of non-alignment.

When news leaked out, the Indian media and opposition raised a hue and cry. There were nay-sayers within Nehru's Cabinet too. Biju Patnaik vehemently supported the project, but in the end Nehru cancelled the proposal under the flimsy pretext that the Americans were not agreeing to it being completely staffed by Indians.

Nehru's flip-flop resulted in America's backing off from the Bokaro Steel Plant. Despite the fact that Kennedy was keen to give financial support for the steel mill, the U.S. Congress turned it down. Kennedy was aware that he did not have the votes to get the proposal passed and there would be a major fight if he insisted on having his way. The Indians helped Kennedy back out by announcing that the Soviet Union would set up the plant.

In November 1963, Chester Bowles was summoned by Kennedy to Washington. Bowles had met Biju Patnaik and the new Defence Minister Y.B. Chavan. Kennedy had agreed to a proposal for arms aid of \$ 375 million, spread over five years. In his memoirs, Bowles has written that a pleased Kennedy had called him for a meeting on the 26th Nov, one day before he was to return to India. Kennedy told Bowles that he would be approving the aid plan. That meeting between the President and his Ambassador to India never happened; Kennedy was shot dead on the 22nd November 1963.

Biju Patnaik once again took up the Charbatia base matter with both Mullick and Nehru. A reluctant Nehru, on Biju's insistence, agreed to allow the US to overfly Indian Territory and use Charbatia as a base for refueling the CIA's U-2 spy planes.

The CIA resumed its spy missions from Thailand's Takhli air base. According to recently declassified documents on the history of the U-2 programme obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by National Security Archives of the USA, it was the secret flights made by these U-2s aircrafts which informed India about the nature of Chinese incursions inside Indian territory.

Biju Patnaik finally could persuade Nehru to allow the U-2 base at Charbatia. He made the Americans agree to set up a plant for processing the films that were shot by the spy planes. A huge complex with 30 air-conditioned flats was built for the nearly 60 CIA technicians, who worked round the clock. The complex still exists, and in later years, has been in use for processing pictures brought in by our own reconnaissance aircraft. Today, in this age of satellite technology, the setup has become redundant.

The first mission out of Charbatia took place on the 24 May 1964. Three days later Nehru died, and further operations were postponed. The pilots and the U-2 planes left Charbatia for Thailand, but the technicians remained. In December 1964, when Sino-Indian tensions along the border increased once again, Detachment G returned to Charbatia and conducted three highly successful missions. The role of the American spy planes during the Chinese debacle has never been told. The setting up of Establishment 22 in Charbatia, comprising the Khampa rebels and Biju Patnaik's role in it is the matter of another chapter in this book.

How much credence the Americans gave to Biju Patnaik is evident from CIA and the American Embassy papers released a few years ago. On 14th January 1964, a telegram from the American Embassy at Delhi, sent to the State Department, revealed that Nehru had suffered a coronary thrombosis resulting in partial paralysis. The next day Chester Bowles sent a detailed report on the rat race that erupted for the office of Prime Minister. He mentioned that the Krishna Menon-Madan Mohan Malaviya group was hell-bent on propping up Indira Gandhi as their puppet on a string. While Gulzari Lal Nanda had already begun to chair the Cabinet meetings, Bowles wrote that T.T. Krishnamachari, Morarji Desai and S.K. Patil were the other strong contenders.

Chester Bowles wrote: "Biju Patnaik was a strong possibility for future. Governor Khosla with whom I spent two days in Orissa recently and who knew Patnaik well in his role as Chief Minister said he was in many ways the ablest man of coming generation in India but he was not ready for top job as his perspective has not clarified. At moment Khosla was inclined to think he would be dangerous, unpredictable and easily swept off his feet. However this tendency might diminish as he gained more experience and it is possible that Patnaik might emerge as constructive and effective force."

The other irritant in the Indo-US relationship was the American policy towards Kashmir. In the 1960s, the USA was seriously involved in a bid to settle the dispute at different levels including the UN Security Council. The US never subscribed to either a plebiscite solution to the problem, or the one through an international conference. Rather, they were in favour of a dialogue between India and Pakistan to resolve the dispute. The USA had

always viewed the people of Kashmir as a party to the ultimate dialogue and resolution of the conflict. America considered all of Kashmir to be a disputed territory, on both sides of the line of control.

In the early 1990s, Kashmir virtually became a flashpoint and the valley witnessed mass resistance against the Indian forces. Pakistan was repeatedly taking the issue to the international community. The United States had spelled out its clear-cut position on the Kashmir conflict. On 6th March, 1990 Assistant Secretary of State John H. Kelly testified before the Asia-Pacific sub-committee of the House of Representatives thus: “United States considers Jammu and Kashmir a disputed territory”. He urged both the countries to settle it according to the Shimla agreement. Subsequently, US Ambassador to Pakistan Robert Oakley asked both the countries to “take into account the needs of the people of Kashmir.” The statement marked the beginning of the USA’s shift on the Kashmir issue.

Chandrasekhar was the Prime Minister and Biju Patnaik the Chief Minister. During a visit to Bhubaneswar, the Prime Minister had discussed the Kashmir issue with Biju. Even Narashimha Rao, the next PM, who got elected from the Berhampur Constituency of South Odisha in 1992, took Biju Patnaik’s advice in matters relating to the Americans.

In 1996, elections were held in Kashmir. Strangely enough, US ambassador Frank G. Wisner pushed the elections idea and started a campaign in its favor. He personally met several Hurriyat Conference leaders in a bid to convince them for participation in the elections. When the separatist leaders told him about their stand of not taking the oath to remain loyal to the Indian constitution, he even assured them that in case of

their readiness to participate in elections, India would not ask them to take oath. Both Pakistan and the Hurriyat denounced Wisner’s pro-elections campaign and many Kashmiris boycotted the elections.

In early March 1996, while Biju Patnaik was in Delhi, casually chatting with some journalists in his suite at the Orissa Bhavan, a story in a local newspaper caught his attention. “Free and fair polls in Kashmir necessary- Wisner”, read the headline. An infuriated Biju immediately rang up Wisner and ticked him off for “messing around in the internal affairs of our country”.

Wisner was presumably well aware of Biju’s relationship with the USA. He quietly heard Biju out and then invited him over to Roosevelt House -the American ambassador’s residence- for lunch the next day. Biju Patnaik did go over, but what transpired is not known.

It was Biju’s Plan– not Kamaraj’s

The Kamaraj Plan was post-independent India’s biggest political earthquake. It saw the largest reshuffle, both in government and party, in Indian political history. The ‘Kamaraj Plan’, named after K. Kamaraj Nadar, the Chief Minister of Madras, called upon Congress leaders holding ministerial office at the centre and in the states, to relinquish their positions and devote themselves to organisational work to revive and strengthen the party.

However, in later years, doubts have been raised as to the originator of the plan. In their memoirs, Radhakrishnan, Morarji Desai, Indira Gandhi, Jagjivan Ram, S.K. Patil, Atulya Ghosh, I.K. Gujral and a horde of biographers have written that the plan was not Kamaraj’s but Nehru’s own, which he had implemented after consulting Biju Patnaik who was his defence and

political adviser. Many of them attribute the plan to be Biju Patnaik's, which was put in place by Nehru.

The Kamaraj Plan was a Machiavellian device which Nehru used to eliminate all those who had dreams of succeeding him. He used the camouflage of the Kamaraj Plan to eliminate all those who were against him. There were many stalwarts of the Congress party whom Nehru could not have touched otherwise; the Kamaraj Plan was an effective tool to take care of them.

Soon after being sworn in for the third time in March 1962, Nehru suffered his first serious illness- a kidney affliction known as pyelonephritis. He recovered quickly but his body acquired a slight stoop, and he was forced by doctors to cut down his long working days. When the Chinese strike came in October, the Indian response revealed an utter lack of planning and a failure of leadership. As the Chinese over-ran the Himalayan frontier, precipitating a full-scale confrontation, the Indian army suffered a virtual rout in both Ladakh and the north-east sectors. In the course of the conflict, the Indian casualty figure reached 7,000, with nearly 1,400 dead. Indian counter-defence was catastrophic. Unaccustomed to the altitude and the terrain, the Indians faced over 10,000 well-provisioned Chinese soldiers. The Gurkhas and Rajput units in Ladakh had just cotton uniforms, canvas shoes and one blanket per man. The ill-equipped, ill-rationed and unacclimatised soldiers fought desperately across the snow-capped mountains.

In the spirit of national unity, criticism was initially muted, but the conduct of the Indian operation badly damaged Nehru's standing. The nation enveloped itself in patriotic sentimentalism. Citizens' rallies and defence fund collection drives were organised across the country. The perception

was widespread that the government had bungled badly. Even President Radhakrishnan, after a visit to the front, publicly acknowledged the government's 'credulity and negligence'. The country was uneasy, angry.

The unilateral ceasefire called by the Chinese in November after they had wrestled 23,200 sq.km of Indian Territory saw Nehru become a broken man. As the blame game started, heads started to roll. The army chief and the chief of staff were both fired. Although Nehru maintained a stoic silence, he could not continue to ignore demands for Menon's resignation. Amidst growing public restiveness, Lal Bahadur Shastri told him, '*Panditji, jab chhotia hutina hin di jaati, tab badi hutideni par jaatihai*' (When a small sacrifice is withheld, a bigger one gets to be demanded). Menon was replaced by Chavan, even though Biju Patnaik had been the front-runner.

Even though Menon was blamed for the defeat, critics attributed India's defeat to Nehru's policy of non-alignment and his failure to take a realistic stance towards China. Congress party stalwarts closed ranks on Nehru and said bluntly: 'It is Menon today. Tomorrow will be your turn.' Through these turbulent months, Nehru kept his nerve. Even in the gloomiest moments, he did not seek scapegoats.

When the Congress party lost three critical parliamentary by-elections in April 1963, political undercurrents within the party came out into the open. The by-elections resulted in the entry of three of Nehru's most trenchant critics- J.B. Kripalani, Ram Manohar Lohia and Minoo Masani to Parliament "to pour scorn on an ageing and disillusioned Prime Minister". In Parliament's monsoon session, Kripalani moved a motion of no confidence, the first challenge that Nehru faced

to his leadership since 1947. Although defeated, the motion was deeply symbolic of the rising political disaffection with the government.

There were anxious stirrings within the Congress party too. Over 80 members of its national committee petitioned for a special session to discuss the slide in the party's political fortunes. Held on August 9th and 10th, 1963, the special Congress began innocuously with the party delegates deliberating ways to revive the organisation. Behind the scenes, however, a far-reaching purge was being conceived by the party chiefs to refurbish its image and to reinforce Nehru's standing.

The Working Committee of the AICC had accepted Kamaraj's scheme with one proviso, exempting Nehru from its application. Nehru soon had the resignations of all the Ministers in his hand. Now it was for him to choose which of them should be accepted. He used the opportunity to drop many of his erstwhile colleagues known to be inefficient, rumoured to be corrupt, or tend to disagree with him on basic policies. Among the departing ministers at the Centre was Shastri, known for his personal loyalty to Nehru, his honesty and capacity to get along with everybody. But he and Biju were in a sense decoys. They led out the others whom Nehru wished to exclude.

The "Kamarajed" leaders were not selected by chance. Indeed there is ample evidence that multiple perspectives influenced the Centre and in the States in which the Congress ruled. Geographical equity was apparent. Morarji was from Gujarat, Jagjivan Ram from Bihar, Shastri from Uttar Pradesh, Patil from Maharashtra, Gopala Reddy from Andhra Pradesh, Sreemali from Rajasthan and Biju Patnaik from Orissa.

Apart from Nehru's personal angle of the Kamaraj plan, it checked the rising obsession for power and strengthened the organisation of the Congress Party. It was a step in true Gandhian tradition, a call to Congressmen not only to give up their jobs but to move away from wrongdoing.

In later years, Morarji Desai commented that Nehru had removed through the Kamaraj Plan all possible successors from the path of his daughter Indira. Nehru was trying to do Indira in 1963, what his father Motilal had done for him in 1929, passing on to him the highest office then open to an Indian nationalist, the Congress Presidency.

Biju's role both as an originator and an ally in the plan was well known, even during its implementation. Few in the Congress believed that a docile person like Kamaraj, who knew neither Hindi nor English, and was confined to South Indian politics, could have formulated such a Plan and convinced Nehru. In fact, whenever he had met Nehru, there had always been an interpreter at hand.

Nehru frequently denied that he had inspired the Kamaraj Plan. There were reasons to disbelieve him, the truth remains that the scheme certainly suited Nehru at all levels.

In fact Indira Gandhi, in her book "My Truth" (page 95) has written about Biju's role in the plan. She writes "It seems Mr. Kamaraj and Sanjiva Reddy met at Tirupati and talked about it. Biju Patnaik just happened to be there. He overheard all of this and dashed to Pahalgam where I was holidaying with Rajiv and Sanjay. As my father was resting after lunch, I went to the garden and sat with Mr. Patnaik who put this proposal to me."

Atulya Ghosh has written that the Kamaraj Plan had been hatched at Pahalgam by Nehru, Indira, Biju and Ghulam Bakshi, the then Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. In fact he wrote that “the sole motive of the plan was to get rid of Morarji Desai, Jagjivan Ram and C.B.Gupta (the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh). Some others were added later to give it a credible facia”.

In the book “Chandra Bhanu Gupta: A profile in courage”, his biographer L. N. Sarin quotes Gupta. He writes “at this stage Biju Patnaik, the Chief Minister of Orissa, took the idea of “Party before Post” to Kamaraj who approved it. Patnaik discussed it with three other Chief Ministers and then went to Kashmir to meet Nehru who was holidaying there at Pahalgam. He met Nehru at Pahalgam and apprised him of the scheme”.

In his autobiography “The Story of My Life” Morarji Desai (Vol II, page 199) wrote in bare words, “Jawaharlalji went to Kashmir in May or June 1963 after the Lok Sabha had been adjourned and Shri Biju Patnaik met him there. Shri Patnaik later told me about the talk he had with Jawaharlalji and said that he had suggested to him a plan that was very much like what was later known as the Kamaraj Plan.”

Benjamin Zachariah’s book, “Nehru” clearly mentions on page 255, “the Kamaraj Plan named after quiet and soft spoken congressman K.Kamaraj Nadar was attributed to Biju Patnaik the Orissa Chief Minister. Kamaraj and Nehru himself admitted that it originated with Patnaik”.

For her epochal book “Panditji: A Portrait of Jawaharlal Nehru”, Marie Seton had referred to the personal papers of Nehru. This was one of the first books published after his death. Seton wrote on the Kamaraj Plan (page 365) “No sooner had the plan been whisked into the limelight, than it was suggested that this blueprint was the work of more than one man: that the originator could not have been Kamaraj alone, that the dynamic Chief Minister of Orissa, Biju Patnaik, had a hand in it.”

S.K.Patil, the Maharashtra Chief Minister who had resigned under the Plan wrote of Biju’s involvement in his book “My Years with the Congress”. Patil wrote (page 89) “.....Nehru was not prepared to do. He went to Kashmir to think matters over. His daughter and Biju Patnaik accompanied him. They must have done a lot of thinking there.”

How much the Kamaraj Plan revived a dispirited party, polity and nation remains open to debate. But Nehru, the consummate politician, had succeeded in regaining his authority over party and government. Shastri was taken back, but before Biju Patnaik could be reinstated, Nehru died. Because of the Kamaraj Plan, or rather the Biju Plan, the old fox of Odisha had to undergo a political hibernation of nearly thirteen years.

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Gender Politics: Scenario in Indian English Fiction and India

Dr. Shruti Das

“I hate to hear you talk about all women as if they were fine ladies instead of rational creatures. None of us want to be in calm waters all our lives.”

— *Jane Austen, Persuasion*

I find it pertinent to begin my article with this quote from Jane Austen’s famous book *Persuasion*. Indeed, women have been always assigned two roles in society; they are either the bold, the wild and the evil or the beautiful, the docile and the obedient. They practically have no other representation. They are always to be seen and never to be heard. Jane Austen’s lament that she hates to hear of women being described as “fine ladies instead of rational creatures” rings true even today. Fictional representations of women even in the 20th and 21st centuries still reflect deep patriarchal influence which forms a concern of feminist readings of Third World fiction.

Jane Freedman, an important feminist of the twentieth century, contends that the basic assumption of feminism starts ‘with the assertion that feminisms concern themselves with women’s inferior position in society and with discrimination encountered by women because of their sex. Furthermore, one could argue that all feminists call for changes in the social, economic, political

or cultural order, to reduce and eventually overcome this discrimination against women’(1). The continuity of changes in socio-economic and psycho-cultural aspects of human living has influenced the role of Women. With the process of Industrialization, Modernization and Globalization showing its deep impact on the human society all over the world, the role and responsibilities of Women has attained new definition and perspective. Yet, through history woman has been violated and discriminated against. Woman’s expression and articulation has always been timid and reserved. In writing, she has been exhibiting an apologist attitude almost always compromising with patriarchal mindsets. Her writing has been conservative and has simply chronicled the lives and love stories of women from a certain cross-section of society articulating the discourse of patriarchy. Examples of these are profusely found in the works of majority of the prolific women writers of India today. Bhasa literature and literatures available to us in translation written by eminent woman writers are not exception to this. The bold and rebellious Draupadi in Prativa Ray’s epic making *Jagnaseni* bows down before patriarchy, towards the end of the novel. We find the rebellious voices finally tamed in the fictional world of Sarojini Sahu and these are only a couple of the prototypical writers

we find in the mainstream writing in India today. In the initial stages of the novels/stories the woman character is full of resistance but the ending usually exhibits a compromise with dominant patriarchal principles and the novels conclude with a fairy tale ending of 'happily ever after.'

Elaine Showalter in her essay, "Feminist Criticism in the Wilderness", explains this. She says,

... a theory of culture incorporates ideas about woman's body, language, and psyche but interprets them in relation to the social contexts in which they occur. ... women's culture forms a collective experience within the cultural whole, an experience that binds women writers to each other over time and space. 197.

Showalter cites Gerda Lerner's explanation of the importance of examining women's experience in its own terms:

Women have been left out of history not because of the evil conspiracies of men in general or male historians in particular, but because we have considered history only in male-centered terms. We have missed women and their activities, because we have asked questions of history which are inappropriate to women. To rectify this, and to light up areas of historical darkness we must, for a time, focus on a woman-centered inquiry, considering the possibility of the existence of a female culture within the general culture shared by men and women. History must include an account of the female experience over time and should include the development of feminist consciousness as an essential aspect of women's past. 198

Dominant patriarchal structures have always constructed history and controlled the forms of social consciousness. We learn that in the 18th century, English common law gave men permission to discipline their wives and children with a stick or whip no wider than their thumb. 20th century onwards many feminists claim violence against women is the result of deeply entrenched patriarchal culture that encourages and rewards male domination. They say in a patriarchal culture, men are more likely to use violence to maintain hierarchy. While society claims to abhor violence, patriarchal structures often make heroes of men who are aggressive. Indian society is no exception when it comes to patriarchy. It has attempted to diminish feminism by branding it a Western import, Uma Narayan responds to particular problems of women in Third World countries and contends that Indian women have specific problems which the Indian feminist movement has sought to address. She highlights

Issues that feminist groups in India have politically engaged with, problems of dowry-murder and dowry related harassment of women, police rape of women in custody; issues relating to women's poverty, health and reproduction; and issues of ecology and communalism that affect women's lives. 13.

These issues in fact bring to limelight the manner in which Women's Rights are violated. Voices have been raised against such violations of Rights by feminists, reformers and writers over the years, sometimes aggressively but most often timidly and covertly.

The present paper takes as a case in point the depiction of these issues in Indian English fiction by women writers in general and Arundhati Roy's 1997 Booker Prize winning novel, *The God*

of *Small Things* in particular, to show how representations of patriarchy and dominance are encountered polemically by women represented in the fiction. This book is a part of most of the University curriculum in India. In this book Roy questions certain social, economic and political structures that have got patronage of the male dominance over centuries and have crossed borders into a democratic socialist India. Talking about herself and her novel she says; “I don’t come from a privileged background, I just happened to write a book that sold a lot. My mother was literally dying. She had nothing. She left her drunk husband. She started a school. I left home at 16, I lived on the streets. I had nothing. Then I wrote a book. I lived for a long time, yes, with a man who had privileged parents but then that had nothing to do with me.” (Andrew Anthony. Arundhati Roy: goddess of big ideas) <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2014/nov/23/arundhati-roy-interview-goddess-of-big-ideas>

Radical in practice, Roy is not impressed by the protectionist attitude of society. A victim of discrimination and violence, her writings champion for empowerment of the underprivileged in India. It is relevant here to move away from fiction to discuss the ground reality of women and laws formulated on their behalf in order to render fictional narrative true to life. The Empowerment of women which is a concern of various schools of development has become one of the most important Concerns of 21st century not only at national level but also at the international level. Efforts by the Govt. are on to ensure Gender equality but Government initiatives alone would not be sufficient to achieve this goal. Society must take initiative to create a climate in which there is no gender discrimination and Women have full opportunities of Self decision making and

participating in the Social, Political and Economic life of the Country with a sense of equality. Here a question may be raised: ‘why focus on women?’ In a website that addresses gender equality and women empowerment we find certain key issues discussed, that:

‘The 1995 Beijing Declaration from the United Nations’ Fourth World Conference on Women and the 1992 Rio Declaration recognized that empowering women is essential to sustainable development. . . The global development agenda should seek not only to address and monitor the elimination of specific gender gaps, but also to transform the structural factors that underpin the widespread persistence of gender inequalities, gender-based violence, discrimination and unequal development progress between women and men, girls and boys. The empowerment of women and girls and the protection of their rights should be centre-pieces of the post-2015 agenda.’ (<https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/poverty/news/2013/03/11/56097/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-are-key-to-addressing-global-poverty/>)

The theme of this article is well in keeping with the International agenda. It goes further, looking at the ways in which literature and literary works; especially in India is relevant in this cultural participation. In 2012 U.N. Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, made a conclusive report that, ‘promoting human rights and advancing gender equality were fundamentals of development . . . (through) full economic empowerment of women’ (ibid). Some of the key obstacles to women’s empowerment, as outlined in the document, are threats and acts of violence against women. Further, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls is recognized as integral to development. The

prevention and reduction of all forms of violence and abuse . . . should be at the heart of any agenda which fully recognizes the centrality of human security, both as a human rights imperative and as integral to development. Michelle Bachelet, executive director of UN Women, speaking on gender equality and the post-2015 developmental framework at a conference in Dublin, Ireland, said, “There is no country in the world where women and girls live free of the fear of violence. . .” (ibid).

This forms also a part of Indian reality in the present times, as always. Empowerment of women is the prerequisite to transform a developing country into a developed country. Women empowerment generally has three components : firstly, women’s sense of self worth; secondly, their right to have the power of control their own lives, both within and outside home; and lastly, their ability to influence the direction of social change to create a just social and economic order nationally, internationally and universally. Educational attainment and economic participation are the key constituents in ensuring the empowerment of women” (Singh, Gupta 54). Apart from the laws and policy formulations the violence against women can be only tackled through attitudinal change that need to take place in the family, in the society and the female members of the society as well. Only this attitudinal change and proactive action against violence by every single individual will help in galvanising the slumbering structures of the government and society towards further concrete steps and action’ (Singh, Gupta 55).

Empowerment can be achieved through:
1) By initiating a change in the mindset not only of men, but also of women themselves. Women should have the right to decide upon their choices

without coercion or violence and have the freedom to participate more fully and equally in society, 2) Ensuring Gender equality in opportunities, rights in all matters including property and obligations for women in every sphere of life, and 3) Education for the Girl Child- Education is important for all, it is more so for the girl child as education helps them to know about their rights and privileges. An educated mother generally has a greater influence in a household which help in securing more resources for herself and her children.

It is interesting to note an opinion given by the noted danseuse Padma Subrahmanyam in a discussion on *Empowering Women of India* published in the New Indian Express on 25th Jan 2014.

‘She said that the present Western model of individualism was creating a situation where an individual’s interest was becoming more important than that of a community, resulting in the disruption of the duty-based family system.

She said that in an Eastern culture like that of India, family and women were to take care of the elders, the infirm and the unemployed. But the present system of individualism in the Western society has led to a situation where it is the State that provides all the care and none in the family has any duty towards the other.

The idea that the India of today will be the America of tomorrow must change and that India should not get affected by the ‘infection’ of individualism, she said.

Exploring the origins of Western feminism, she said that in the West, for several centuries, women were not considered as

human beings but as animals. “Even when that changed, it was not at the same level of man. The man had the image of god and everything else, including the woman, was thought to be for his consumption,” she said. This injustice prompted women to rise in protest and fight against the system. “In India, we have not had a situation like this. From the earliest of days, women were worshipped as deities and revered. Pujas were done on young women,” she said. She narrated the role of women from the days of Gargi Vachaknavi and Avvaiyar to Chittoor Rani Padmini’ (New Indian Express 2014).

Subrahmanyam, like many others like her, is merely articulating the cultural stereotype of female characters that adhere to classical modes, thereby, supporting ‘the tools of patriarchal exclusion’ (Freedman 9). For them male is the norm and humanity is viewed as masculine in spite of the changing definition of society. Women in India have been selectively given positions of power under the reigns of patriarchy from which they are not allowed to slip. The idea that ‘women were worshipped as deities and revered’ is tagging the line of patriarchal ideology. It does not allow for the manifold atrocities meted out to her when she dares to try to be heard rather than fit into the assigned role of an idol, a beautiful puppet of entertainment. This attitude of eminent women is disturbing to the 21st century Indian woman whose reality is perpetual fear of multidimensional violence to both her body and psyche. It is disturbing and disquieting and can only help in perpetrating violence against women in general under the facade of deification and protection.

Journalists and activists draw one’s attention to the psycho-socio-cultural and

economic reality of women nationally and universally. The problematic of women empowerment has to be resolved through awareness and through literary texts that move away from the position of being apologist and adopt an affirmist and assertive attitude. Writers have taken up the onus of participating in such crucial issues through representations of multiple levels of oppression in their work. Literature offers solutions by stimulating the minds of the reader and promoting and generating confidence in the reading public to confront violence on women and the underprivileged. According to Suzanne McGlynn ‘girls today often are overwhelmed . . . by society’s mixed messages that they must be intelligent and strong, yet compliant and delicate. In a fast-paced world where young women are assailed with detrimental messages of what a woman should be, the students of Saint Catharine Academy (in the US) find asylum in their English classes. Here, amidst dynamic lessons of grammar and vocabulary, of colourful Native American folk tales or ancient Greco-Roman mythology, they encounter guidance, support, and encouragement that they as women, can, and should, reach for the stars’ (Pathways). We get a picture that literary discourse or fictional discourse is instrumental in offering guidance, support and encouragement to women that they can confront oppression and move towards self actualization and development.

Coming back to the Indian scenario, we notice that towards the 20th century Indian English literature started moving away from projecting women as highly desirable damsels or vicious women impediment in the fight of good against evil. It started recognizing woman as a cultural participant in the freedom movement and as a cog in the wheel of national development. Yet, difference of sexual orientation and woman’s

supposed difference from man has been 'used over centuries to justify discrimination against women and their exclusion from full social and political citizenship' (Freedman 9). Mahatma Gandhi's political manoeuvres and gender politics becomes an interesting study in this concern. Robert J C Young has commented on this issue as he discusses Gandhi's gendering politics in India in his book, *Postcolonialism : A Very Short Introduction*(OUP 2003).

In India Gandhianism still remains the touch stone of morality and values. Hence, the elitist women writers have not been able to completely move away from this comfort zone of Puritanism and moralizing.

If we consider literature as a reflection of our reality, that despite individual perceptions it mirrors social manners, then women's changing roles, be they social, political or emotional, in life and literature, must not be ignored. Writings about females by males may be suspect. We in the twenty first century feel that all literature, even women's writings about women needs to be re-read. Many women writers have strayed little from the given stereotypes of the female character that so plague society and literature. From Readers taught in primary schools, to the religious texts and classics, women have held tightly to several role models as their guides. While male characters have been given free rein to be and become what they like, even to fail if they choose, women characters have been written to play and re-play the same themes, limited as they are. Thus, when the female character deviates from the norm, from these stringent stereotypes, more attention is then called to the purity of what the female character is supposed to be. Men are encouraged to become men in both novels and life. Women are forced to stick to the subject position in the

narrative. When women strive to be more individualistic they are condemned because they take on male characteristics of aggression, ambition, etc. Bankim Chandra in his famous novel *Rajmohan's Wife*, which is incidentally the first novel written in English in India, serialized as *Wife* in a Calcutta weekly in 1864 and finally published in 1930 (General Introduction, sodhganga 2).

Female voices in Indian English novels in the early 20th century have been muted and women have been shown to be epitomes of sacrifice and suffering and thus ideal as per Hindu social norms. Acknowledged writer Mahasweta Devi's writing advocated struggles of tribal life that were revolutionary and anti-establishment. Later writers of the 1990s like Mahasweta Devi evolved a feministic dialogue contributing to a literary discourse representative of the problems of empowerment although with restraint.

Towards the later part of the 20th century the image of women in South Asian novels, especially Indian fiction in English underwent a change from the stereotype of ever-enduring, docile, self-sacrificing woman to the image of more complex human being capable of self assertion and participation in various facets of socio-political life, a woman exhibiting existential angst and in search of identity. Concerning herself with Indo-Anglican fiction Landow in 1989 writes that the interests of women writers have changed with South Asian society and its relationship with the West. This trend is visible if one compares the images of suffering women in Kamala Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* and Meera Mahadevan's *Shulamith* to recent subversions and expansions of the traditional image in works by Chitra Fernando, Anita Desai, Kamala Das, Sara Suleri, Anees Jung, Kiran Desai, Arundhati Roy,

Manju Kapur, Sashi Deshpande, Gita Hariharan, Shobha De, diaspora writers like Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Devakaruni, Bapsi Sidwa, Jhumpa Lahiri, Ruth Jabvala and many others. In Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* the protagonist endures abject poverty, takes responsibility of the family right in line with 'duty-to-family' conservative tagline, yet neither has any control over her own life or any say over the number of children she is forced to produce. In contrast to the main women characters in Markandaya's *Nectar in a Sieve* Mahadevan's *Shulamith*, female characters in the present Indian English fiction assert themselves and defy marriage and family strictures. In Sashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terror*, the protagonist a medical doctor, finds herself treated brutally by her husband because she does much better in her profession, there is a discord in her marital life, the discord for with she returns to her home. In the end, she decides to see her husband, but lives on her own and pursues her career with a new awareness and meaning.

Chitra Fernando's collection of short stories *Three Women*, Anita Desai's *In Custody*, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Jhumpa Lahiri's fictionalized women, particularly, Gauri in the *Lowland*, portray women who want their individual worth realized and attempt to break through the suffering that traditional society offers them. *Lowland* offers a contrast between Gauri, a woman who refuses to subscribe to Indian social norms in embracing either widowhood, marriage or motherhood; and her mother-in-law who fits into the ideal picture of the all enduring, ever-suffering woman who refuses to accept change. The comparison and the contrast educate and empower the reader towards choosing the proper. The most recent books explore an

educated woman's search for identity and meaning — in fictional, auto-fictional and autobiographical form, Kamala Das' *My Story*, Sara Suleri's *Meatless Days*, Anees Jung's *Unveiling India: A Woman's Journey*, Roy's *The God of Small Things* are cases in point. Women represented in recent fiction have been traversing the globe in search of identity and hold private space dear.

The reason for choosing to look into *The God of Small Things* (Indian Ink, 1997) is that it is an epoch making text and has its distinct place in the curriculum of most of the Universities across the globe. Arundhati Roy's writing is informed and challenged by what she perceives as human values, such as human rights, a non-discriminatory and participative society. *The God of Small Things* is set in the Southern Indian State of Kerala, in post-colonial India, populated mostly by Syrian Christians and Hindus. Born of a Bengali father and a Syrian Christian mother Roy has perceived deprivation and marginalisation in everyday life. Thus sensitized, she projects this in both- the characters in the text and the narrative itself. The human experience communicated to her is incorporated into the body of her narrative. Roy's portrayal of the Syrian Christian community, she herself grew up in, and its predication with pseudo-liberal ideology is evocative and telling. In the novel Roy presents a kaleidoscope of characters and situations in furthering her agenda of exposing the system and educating the readers. I would concentrate on some situations and the female characters depicted in the novel in order to show them as representative of women, either empowered or in need of empowerment. The Ipe family is representative of a conservative, middle class family, much respected in the area. Arundhati uses the story of this family as a microcosm of

modern Indian reality. The narrative appeals to the readers, in that, it informs and educates them regarding violence towards women and people of unprivileged classes by the State machinery, namely politicians and the police; domestic violence; discrimination; deprivation of the girl child especially where property and education is concerned.

Early in the novel we read Roy's account of the abuse, intimidation and humiliation suffered by a lone woman, Ammu, in the Police Station in front of her children.

Roy, in the novel, presents at least two stereotypical women, Mammachi and Comrade Pillai's wife. They are the epitomes of dutiful women who are subject to domestic violence; yet, make heroes of their aggressive men. Mammachi is constantly beaten by her husband and bears it silently, the narrator says 'every night he beat her with a brass flower vase. The beatings weren't new'(47). Later on it is her son Chako, who rules over her. He simply takes over the pickle industry that Mammachi had struggled to make and names it 'Paradise Pickles'. He underpays the local untouchable women who work in the factory and exploits them sexually, all in the knowledge of his mother. Mammachi is not a mute spectator, rather she is an abettor, she constructs a separate new door to Chako's room that opened to the outside, through which he could bring in the untouchable women from the factory and indulge himself. The same mother discriminates against her daughter Ammu. When Ammu's affair with the untouchable Velutha is discovered she throws Ammu out of the house to die a terrible death in penury and sickness in a small rented flat elsewhere. The 'Paradise Pickle' factory which could have been an instrument of sustainable development empowering local women

economically is shown threadbare as a den of corruption instead. Mammachi, partial to her son, encourages sexual and economic exploitation of the poor women workers.

Another stereotype is Comrade Pillai's wife Kalyani, who very quietly obeys all that her husband says. In the entire narrative she is only seen but never heard, constantly busy in household chores and catering to her husband's needs. Roy's Ammu breaks away from the image of the Indian female stereotype. She is the new woman aware of her rights, willing to make choices and bear the consequences thereof. She defies her father who did not want her to have higher education; moves away from home in search of a new self; works in Calcutta and marries a man outside her religion and culture. She is an empowered woman, a complex human being capable of self assertion and participation in various facets of life, a woman exhibiting existential angst and in search of identity and meaning. This new woman is a surprise to the patriarchal society. She is emancipated, hence called 'unsafe' and 'dangerous'. Roy says,

'What was it that gave Ammu this Unsafe Edge ? This air of unpredictability ? It was what she had been battling inside her. An unmixable mix.

Ammu is pronounced dangerous because she does not conform to society's norms. She is self-willed and claims her rights. She has been depicted as a many-time victim of domestic violence- first by her father, then her husband and lastly, by her Western educated brother, Chako. Willing to take responsibility for her deeds she welcomes exile and death rather than compromise to the controlling factors of society. Rahel, her daughter, the other protagonist of the novel, is another projection of the new woman and woman

empowerment that the narrative seeks to propagate. Both make their individual choices, seek economic independence outside of their family and explore the world alone. The surface structure of the narrative grammar presents the hardship and trauma faced by both mother and daughter, but the deep structure is more suggestive. They both face the consequences of their choices without running *volte face* in adversity. The complexities of their failure and their success make them participants in the existential angst common to humanity.

Roy vocalizes the discourse of feminism, which while being anti-patriarchal and anti-establishment Indian feminist discourse seeks to

attain towards equality and advocates the fundamentals of development. She looks at the status of women in postcolonial India where the Constitution and the State agencies claim to be ensuring safety, security, gender equality, equal rights in land and legal affairs, politics and economy to women. She posits binaries and teases the readers to alter their world view so far as orthodoxy and liberalism is concerned.

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Panchayats, Women and Sustainable Development Goals: Reaching out to the Last Person

Bidyut Mohanty

Abstract

The current Century saw new concerns of people of the world, such as gross inequality cutting across caste, class, ethnicity, and gender, conspicuous consumption and production, agricultural crisis, degradation of natural resources leading to Green House effects and extinction of other species at large and various forms of conflicts through out the world. World Communities as represented by UN bodies became aware of the new disturbing trends and started thinking about Millennium Development Goals(MDGs)-2000, and Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs)-2016-30. Unlike the formulations of MDGs, this time the local government may play an important role since a lot of *bottom up thinking* has gone into formulating SDGs particularly at the level of setting the priorities, executing the plans, monitoring local firms and communities. For all these the local governments are nearer to the ground realities and these institutions are better placed.

It is important to realize that before the initiation of all the above goals; panchayats in India were already earmarked for the devolution of 29 subjects- having in fact -the rudiments of all the above goals. It is equally important to emphasize the fact that women in panchayats take keen interest in fulfilling the delivery of basic services including monitoring the PDS, low cost shelter, drinking water, and other aspects which are important for fulfilling some of the important SDG goals.

In this paper we will not only compare and contrast various MDGs and SDGs with 29 subjects but also deliberate upon various gains and challenges the local government actors face while executing those. It is our contention that unless the local government system in general and the capabilities of elected panchayat women in particular are strengthened in terms of knowledge, financial power, administrative power and trust from the public; proper information to fulfill different targets to achieve goals can't be collected nor goals could be achieved within fifteen years. One ray of hope is the fact that Fourteenth Finance Commission has been relatively more liberal in allocating some additional funds recently. The Commission recommends not only allocate 42 per cent of the central pool, but the State to give more power to the local bodies. Further, it also advises to raise its own resources by raising local tax and other avenues¹. Based on that, the State of Kerala has already started preparing the bottom up planning which is the need of the hour.

MDGs, SDGs and Panchayats

Most of goals assigned to 8 MDGs-2000-2015; 17 SDGs to be implemented there after by 2030 and 29 subjects listed in Schedule XI of the Constitution of India for devolution to the panchayats have a lot in common(See Annexures 1, 2 and 3).

Goal No.1 'no to poverty' and that of 2 'no to hunger' of SDGs are overlapping and has relatively a wider meaning. Notably the definition of poverty is wider as it involves ensuring to have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services such as access to safe drinking water, education

and shelter under target number 1.4 including implementation of social protection systems and measures². In order to fulfill the Goal number - 2 it is important to double the productivity of agriculture as well as the income of small farmers, women and indigenous people among others; through equal access to land and other important inputs. In case of panchayats on the other hand, it very much depends on improvement of 'agriculture', including 'land', 'minor irrigation', 'utilization of minor forest produce', 'poverty alleviation programs' and 'Public distribution scheme'. Besides the emphasis is also on creation of water harvesting structures, and deepening of traditional water bodies to improve agriculture. Kerala has taken the lead at the panchayat to start cooperative farming by women groups in order to give them a dignified job locally. In addition giving power to collect minor forest produce under Pesa Act does contribute towards creating the income. But without linking it with market, and sustainable diversification of agriculture as well as manufacturing value added agro-based product and not depending on the local produce retards the whole effort³. Further alleviating hunger also meant monitoring Public Distribution System, monitoring of Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) and Mid Day Meals (MDM), assurance of additional jobs through the information of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme(MGNREGS). The Goal – 6 is akin to panchayats' role of ensuring safe drinking water and sanitation under the point 11 and 23 out of 29 subjects. Similarly one finds some sort of commonalities between the aspects of 'reduce child mortality' and 'improve maternal mortality' of MDGs (4 and 5) and 'good health' and 'wellbeing' of SDGs(3) with activities of 'health and sanitation', 'family welfare', and 'tribal

welfare'(23, 24 and 27). Recently for panchayats more focus has been on the maternal health and reduction of infant mortality through the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) but the SDGs goals focus on the health of all age groups and for male and female as well as on reduction in deaths due to infectious and non-infectious diseases.

'Women's empowerment' and 'Gender equality' of MDGs and SDGs are at par with women and child development programs assigned to panchayats. Quality education of SDGs and monitoring the education as in the 29 subjects should be read together. The quality education can be assured when definite indicators are identified. The Right to Education Act -2009 aims at achieving these objectives through panchayats. One of the weaknesses of the present education system is being averse to the physical work and devoid of human values. Education as a comprehensive attainment that respects all forms of labour has to be emphasized. Going beyond universality of literacy and achieving quality education for all is a laudable objective under SDG number 4. Goal-7 sustainable growth requires among others creation of decent jobs which goes against the use of unsuitable technology for utilizing the mineral resources leading to unnecessary destruction of forest and displacement of the tribals⁴. The panchayats under protection of environment can prevent this.

SDGs goals on environment and related issues, namely, 13, 14 and 15 are more comprehensive compared to MDGs since they aim at protecting animals of sea, and that of land and other green house impact taking universe at large. However, both the tasks of local government and that of SDG goals will not bear fruits unless devolution of three 'f's namely,

finance, function, functionaries to the panchayats by the higher tiers of government are done in letter and spirit and global partnership is ensured to realize.

In other words, the Panchayati Raj Institutions as well as women in panchayats are more or less familiar with the above issues having firm feet on the ground confronting the whole world, but their effort has to be synergized with other sectors of government. Only then perhaps we will be able to get accurate data from the field about various needs of the people, such as diversification of agriculture, locally available nutritious food, dignified job as well as health, sanitation and safe water. In addition, prevalence and prevention or outbreak of various kinds infectious and other types of diseases have to be closely watched and their prevention and treatment be planned along with the panchayats to take prompt action. The required amount of resources must be provided for meeting all the seventeen goals in every panchayat.

Uniqueness of SDGs

Undoubtedly, the MDGs and SDGs are more inclusive, universal and they require an effort at the global scale. The goals of SDGs in particular are based on the principles of human rights, equality and sustainability and deal with five 'p's such as people, peace, prosperity, planet, and partnership. The goals can be achieved only when the people of the world have a shared commitment *united will* to end conflict, reduce conspicuous consumption and production, harness sustainable energy, care for every type of animals beyond anthropocene, to promote all forms of equality in all spheres among individuals and groups.

Indeed SDGs tasks are much more formidable for which there are 169 targets and

numerous indicators for which efforts are still under process to finalize. Besides each target has many indicators for which data is lacking. Many people think if India having 1.2 Billion people can achieve some of the SDGs, the world will be better off. But will India be able to achieve the goals having myriads of problems at every level? First of all the indicators require detailed data and synergies with all the line departments, NITI Aayog and last but not the least Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Secondly to fulfill goals like gender inequality, the women not only need political representation in higher tiers of government but also the cultural attitude of the society to be changed. Finally, as mentioned above, the local governments are more familiar with the goals than others and if these institutions can be trusted upon then it would be easier to fulfill some of the goals with suitable data, policies and implementation. Secondly the Fourteenth Finance Commission has allocated an additional resources of 85 lakh of rupees for panchayats which can be utilized to deliver the basic services. Based on that the State of Kerala has started formulating the bottom up District planning.

Women in Panchayati Raj System

It is interesting to note that the Global Network of Cities Local and Regional governments is of the opinion that local governments form important bridge between national government, communities and will have a central role in a new global partnership. In particular the local communities have a critical role in setting local priorities, implementing the schemes meant for them.

It is a well-known fact that the structure of the panchayats is saddled with various systemic

problems. Women are subjected to various types of discriminations such as caste, class and patriarchy. The caste leaders, bureaucracy try to dominate them at the institutional level, where the husbands also don't spare. Secondly they work in such institutions where almost no power has been handed over. For example, except during the Panchayati Raj elections; the representatives are made to do many kinds of activities including record keeping for the state government. At best sometimes their work is to monitor the implementation of different developmental activities. Even there the government functionaries have taken over. For instance, the Pradhan/Sarpanch of the panchayat used to notify about the availability of work in the Gram Sabha, identify labour, keep job cards and made payments under MGNREGS. But now the Rozgar Sevak has taken charge of making the list of 100 labourers, identifying the work to be done without taking into confidence of Gram Sabha or Pradhan Secondly the payment is done from the state finance department directly. Sometimes the payment takes months together and people are not opting for the MGNREGS work. In many areas, the Rojgar Sevak does not have any accountability to the local people as the Pradhan used to have. One can multiply such examples. Besides there is much evidence to show that despite reservation the upper castes and middle class families directly and indirectly manage to control the panchayat affairs. In some places, the Dalit and tribal communities are not allowed to function independently or are compelled to quit or face severe violence.

Elected women representatives face additional constraints since they are subjected to patriarchal value system and are still double burdened with domestic obligations and give

relatively less time to the panchayat work. Besides, many state governments have put additional conditions such as two child norms, minimum educational qualification etc., which exclude those who deserve to be included in the development process.

However, many new trends have emerged and like male Pradhans, female Pradhans also are becoming successful implementers of the developmental schemes and try to increase the productivity of land, regenerate social forestry and provide basic services such as food security, supply of safe drinking water, monitor food security; ensure presence of teachers and protect forest⁵. The research journals are full of such success stories. The field studies conducted by the Institute of Social Sciences, (ISS) New Delhi in the tribal areas of Odisha during the period of 2013-15 revealed how tribal women took advantage of new schemes and used the institutions of panchayats to protect their rights. In many places, they have become part of the Self Help Groups and take the help of their husbands too but holding the rope of the decision making firmly in their hands⁶. In yet another survey report on their perception of violence conducted among 260 elected women representatives from eleven states by the ISS, New Delhi revealed that a significant percentage of women felt that husband's beating for burning rice while cooked is indeed a crime. Similarly they also were of the opinion that to beat up or scold for any offence committed by them should be considered as crime. In 2013 another Survey Report was conducted by the same Institute among 500 elected women representatives showed that most of the women knew about the role of Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) and institutional delivery as well as the amount of remuneration. They were

encouraging the other women to avail the opportunities. They were also aware of Standing Committee of the Health and Sanitation and tried to spend whatever money is given to them. But all of them said that the Line Department controlled the money part⁷. In other words, elected women representatives have a rising level of consciousness and are trying to bring forward gender equality and peace though on a limited scale. But unfortunately very insignificant percentage of women said that female feticide is an offence and it should be prevented. It was conducted in 2015.⁸

Thus the women in panchayats not only know about some aspects of SDGs in their own way but also fulfilling some of the objectives given many hurdles. However, it should be pointed out that the tribal women Sarpanches of Odisha whom we interviewed in 2013-14 were not aware of the Millennium Development Goals though they knew all the aspects of the goals in their own terms as the activities and needs of the daily life.

Way Forward

The UN authorities have set the timeline for the goals of SDGs to be fulfilled by 2030. Given the enormity and complexities of goals and lack of data as well as resources; the authorities of NITI Ayog, express helplessness. But the experience of grassroots democracy as discussed above gives a ray of hope of collecting data from the grassroots level.

At the same time it has to be remembered that the most of the tribal elected representatives (both men and women) are still lagging behind in both knowledge and consciousness; and are not given key role in development process. The Gram

Sabha is riddled with caste, class, ethnicity and is not trusted upon. The members of panchayats do not realize that they are accountable to the Gram Sabha and think themselves as the implementers of the welfare schemes which may not always suitable to the local conditions. They have to be responsive to the total welfare of the downtrodden of the panchayats more. Secondly women mostly cherish the patriarchal values hence they become insensitive to the crime like female feticide. The progressive educational curricula, gender sensitive media and even forward looking spiritual Gurus can play an important role in reshaping the cultural values.

Finally along with the financial resources, putting faith on the elected women representatives as well as expanding their capabilities to think, plan and implement a sustainable development program for the area would go a long way to fulfill some of the SDG goals.

Thus panchayats are uniquely placed at the grassroots level and are recently given responsibility for implementing several right-based essential services. Therefore, they have a clear capacity to pursue the SDGs. Constitutionally mandated not less than one-third representation to women enables them to overcome many cultural constraints and create new consciousness among both men and women about their rights. No doubt despite such possibilities there are many limits because even now the political system does not treat the panchayats as the fulcrum of the socio-economic transformation but mainly as the mechanism of delivery service. With the coming of the SDGs there is a new context to reconsider panchayats as the critical democratic institutions with women playing a catalytic role.

Annexure - 1**Millennium Development Goals(MDGs)**

1. Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty
2. Achieve universal education
3. Promote Gender equality
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development.

Annexure -2**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
6. Ensure availability of and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
7. Ensure access to affordable reliable, sustainable modern energy for all
8. Promote sustained inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
10. Reduce inequality and within and among the countries
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production pattern
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact
14. Conserve and sustainably use of the ocean, seas and marine resources, for sustainable development
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forest, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

Annexure -3

In the Constitution, the following Schedule shall be added, namely:-

“ELEVENTH SCHEDULE”
(Article 243G)

1. Agriculture, including agricultural extension.
2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation.

3. Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development.
4. Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry.
5. Fisheries.
6. Social forestry and farm forestry.
7. Minor forest produce.
8. Small scale industries, including food processing industries.
9. Khadi, village and cottage industries.
10. Rural housing.
11. Drinking water.
12. Fuel and fodder.
13. Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication.
14. Rural electrification, including distribution of electricity.
15. Non-conventional energy sources.
16. Poverty alleviation programme.
17. Education, including primary and secondary schools.
18. Technical training and vocational education.
19. Adult and non-formal education.
20. Libraries.
21. Cultural activities.
22. Markets and fairs.
23. Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries.
24. Family welfare.
25. Women and child development.
26. Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded.
27. Welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
28. Public distribution system.
29. Maintenance of community assets.”

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2. Interestingly even though it does involve in depending on subsidies which is just one of the targets but not the principal one unlike the case of panchayats which heavily depend on PDS to alleviate poverty. Instead of that it takes the recourse to the dignified job and improvement of agriculture.
3. In fact, the tribal area is full of highly valued forest produce such as *jaw, bajra and ragi* which are sought after the middle class people instead of wheat and rice but the tribals are thrust upon rice and wheat ! Similarly different oilseeds including Neem, ginjali and niger and turmeric are used to protect the face of fashion conscious women in the city. Besides the locally grown pine -apple, orange and jackfruit are sold at a distress price which can be used by using appropriate technology just like Himachal Pradesh. In other words the Smart India can start in the tribal areas using the young women and men by imparting them with some skill, instead of bringing them to the city. The local panchayat can be the store house of the knowledge to facilitate the information.
4. That displacement propels women and men out of the secured livelihood to uncertain domestic workers class in the city having no workers rights.
5. Vani Kulkarni and Raghav Gaiha ‘Is Empowerment of Women will of the Wisp’? November 10, 2015. <http://www.ipsnews.net/>
6. The Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi, conducted intensive study of three blocks of Mayurbhanj and two blocks of Rayagada which

have 55 per cent of tribal population. Altogether we interviewed 44 female sarpanches and 18 male Sarpanches constituting 10 per cent of the total sample. We also selected 12 case studies out of which four are male Sarpanches and eight female ones. Both form of evaluation studies revealed that both men and women are taking the advantage of the Panchayati Raj System to fulfill the developmental goals even within limited authority !

7. Bidyut Mohanty 'Report of Survey on National Rural Health Mission(NRHM).: To What Extent are the Panchayats Participating in Health

Policy' ? <http://www.mainstreamweekly.net/article4000.html>

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Mahanadi: An Ode on Immortality

Prabhudutt Dash

Mother, life-giver and ever flowing,
 River Mahanadi is sobbing with tearful eyes.
 A saga of endless journey and pain,
 A mute witness to history and vicissitudes of time,
 She has seen many dynasties fall and rise.

Many civilizations flourished near its shore.
 An emblem of spirituality and divine bliss,
 The Ganga of Odisha, she has an enrapturing beauty.

Enamoured by her majestic splendour,
 Litterateurs have sung of her immortality and grace.
 And epitome of biodiversity and ecological balance,
 She is a home to many birds and natural species.
 A treasure trove for lovers, poets and birdwatchers.
 If Mahanadi dries and perishes,
 It will erase our glory and pride.
 And if it flows increasingly,
 It will usher a new dawn of hope and peace for all.
 She invigorates, replenishes and heightens our soul.
 It is our moral duty to revive and regain her past image.

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A Bird's Eye View on Panchayati Raj Administration

Swarnalata Samal

Panchayati Raj is a system of governance in which Gram Panchayats are the basic units of administration. It has 3 levels: village, block and district. The term “**Panchayati Raj**” is relatively new, having originated during the British administration, Raj literally means “governance or government”. Mahatma Gandhi advocated Panchayati Raj, a decentralized form of Government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system. The term for such a vision was Gram Swaraj (village self-governance).

This system was adopted by state governments during the 1950s and 60s, as laws were passed to establish Panchayats in various states. It also found backing in the Indian Constitution, with the 73rd Amendment in 1992 to accommodate the idea. The Amendment Act of 1992 contains provision for devolution of powers and responsibilities to the Panchayats both for the preparation of economic development plans and social justice, as well as for implementation in relation to 29 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the Constitution.

The Panchayats receive funds from three sources:

1. Local Body grants, as recommended by the Central Finance Commission

2. Funds for implementation of centrally sponsored schemes
3. Funds released by the state governments on the recommendations of the State Finance Commissions.

In the history of Panchayati Raj in India, on 24 April 1993, the Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act 1992 came into force to provide constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions. This Act was extended to Panchayats in the tribal areas of eight states, namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan starting on 24th December 1996. Currently, the Panchayati Raj system exists in all the states except Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram and in all Union Territories except Delhi. The Act aims to provide a 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all States having a population of over 2 million, to hold Panchayat elections regularly every 5 years, to provide seats reservations for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women; to appoint a State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards to the financial powers of the Panchayats and to constitute a District Planning Committee to prepare a development plan draft for the district.

The 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj consists :

1. Village-level Panchayats
2. Block-level Panchayats
3. District-level Panchayats.

Powers and responsibilities are delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level:

- Preparation of the economic development plan and social justice plan.
- Implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice in relation to 29 subjects given in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- To levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

Block Panchayat

A Block Panchayat (Panchayat samiti) is a local government body at the tehsil or taluka level in India. This body works for the villages of the tehsil or taluka that together are called a Development Block. The Panchayat Samiti is the link between the Gram Panchayat and the district administration. There are a number of variations of this institution in different states. It is known as Mandal Praja Parishad in **Andhra Pradesh**, Taluka Panchayat in **Gujarat**, Mandal Panchayat in **Karnataka**, Panchayat Samiti in **Maharashtra** etc. In general, the Block Panchayat is a form of the Panchayati Raj but at a higher level.

Constitution

The constitution is composed of ex-official members (all Sarpanchas of the Panchayat Samiti area, the MPs and MLAs of the area and the SDO of the subdivision), co-operative members

(representatives of SC/ST and women), associate members (a farmer of the area, a representative of the cooperative societies and one of the marketing services), and some elected members.

The Samiti is elected for 5 years and is headed by the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman.

Departments

The common departments in the Samiti are as follows:

1. General administration
2. Finance
3. Public work
4. Agriculture
5. Health
6. Education
7. Social Welfare
8. Information Technology and others.

There is an officer for every department. A government appointed Block Development Officer (BDO) is the executive officer to the Samiti and the chief of its administration.

Functions

1. Implementation of schemes for the development of agriculture.
2. Establishment of primary health centers and primary schools.
3. Supply of drinking water, drainage, and construction/repair of roads.
4. Development of cottage and small-scale industries, and the opening of co-operative societies.
5. Establishment of youth organizations.

Sources of income

The main source of income of the Panchayat Samiti is grants-in-aid and loans from the State Government.

District level Panchayat

The governing system at district level in Panchayati Raj is also popularly known as "Zilla Parishad". Chief of administration is an officer from IAS cadre.

Functions:

1. Provide essential services and facilities to the rural population
2. Supply improved seeds to farmers. Inform them of new farming techniques
3. Set up and run schools and libraries in the rural areas
4. Start Primary Health Centers and hospitals in villages. Start vaccination drives against epidemics
5. Execute plans for the development of the scheduled castes and tribes. Run *ashramshalas* for Adivasi children. Set up free hostels for them
6. Encourage entrepreneurs to start small-scale industries and implement rural employment schemes
7. Construct bridges, roads & other public facilities and their maintenance
8. Provide employment

Sources of Income

1. Taxes on water, pilgrimage, markets, etc.
2. Fixed grant from the State Government in proportion with the land revenue and

money for works and schemes assigned to the Parishad.

Conclusion

However to give a boost on women empowerment the Union Cabinet of the Government of India, on 27 August 2009, approved 50% reservation for women in PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions). The Indian states which have already implemented 50% reservation for women in PRIs are Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. As of 25 November 2011, the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and Tripura also reserve 50% of their posts for women. Now the women are no more stagnant and isolated as they used to be in the past. They are now emerging as a big force in every walk of life.

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Implementation of National Food Security Act (NFSA) in Odisha

Subhranshu Kumar Satpathy

1. National Food Security Act'2013 came to effect on 5th July 2013. The dateline for implementation for National Food Security Act'2013 was 30th September 2015 (as per the latest circular by Government of India).

2. Beneficiary target estimated for the Country comes out to be 8,134 lakh (75 % of Rural & 50 % of Urban Population). Beneficiary coverage indicated by the Central Government for Odisha: 82.17% of 349.512 lakh of rural population, 55.77% of 69.961 lakh of Urban Population (as per 2011 census). Thus, a total of 326.21 lakh beneficiaries will get subsidized food grains in Odisha under the Act from Government of India.

3. As per the Section 10 of the Act, the responsibility of identifying the beneficiaries is with the State Government. The State Government has completed identification of the priority households by approving Nine Exclusion and Six Auto Inclusion Criteria in July'2014.

4. The Odisha Government has approved nine exclusion criteria considered as the important factors for identification of beneficiaries. These nine exclusion criteria covers monthly income of more than Rs.10,000 in Rural areas and excess of Rs.15,000 in Urban areas, income, persons

having four wheelers or two three wheelers, business with TIN (tax payer identification number), electric consumption above 300 units, any state government or central government employee, persons having tractors, power-tillers, fishing boats or other heavy vehicles, persons having entrepreneurship, professional tax payers and households having pucca and fire proof house with more than 3 or more rooms.

5. The identification and digitization process has been done in two phases at Odisha. The Pilot Phase consisted of the capital city of Bhubaneswar and the adjacent Bhubaneswar Block. Here the applications were collected in October'2014 and digitization of 1.94 lakh applications (families) was completed by November'14. The publication of draft priority list, receipt of objections and their disposal was done in December'14. The learning's from the Pilot Phase was handy while designing for the Roll out Phase. However, the processes for identification of eligible beneficiaries have been modified to overcome the issues confronted in the Pilot Phase.

Process of Registration, Digitisation and Identification of Priority Population

6. The eligible families (as per above criteria) were asked to apply in a prescribed forms

designed for being included as a beneficiary under the Act at Grampanchayat level in Rural areas and Ward level in Urban areas. A massive IEC campaign was undertaken for the dissemination of Exclusion and Inclusion Criteria and Process of Application across the State in several phases. Field level functionaries under the supervision of Senior Officials at the district level were engaged for collection, verification and submission of the application forms for digitization.

7. The Roll out phase was initiated on 28th January'2015 across the State. All applications (106 lakh families having 402lakh individuals) were collected by 30th July and these were digitized. For ensuring an error free Ration card, an abstract of the digitized application form in shape of an Acknowledgement Slip (AS) has been given to each applicant for verification and correction, if any. In case, there are mistakes in the AS, the corrected AS is sent back for updating the applicant database and a fresh AS is printed and given to the applicant. This process of correction has been completed.

8. Digitization was done after searching the applicant families from the National Population Registrar database and linking the NPR ID to them. This process helped to populate the names of the applicant family members in the data entry screen. This not only reduced the data entry process but also has ensured deduplication to a large extent. About 64% of applicant families (64.74 lakh) and 60% of applicants (2.328 crore) have been linked to NPR database in the process of digitization.

9. During the digitisation process, applicants were asked to provide Aadhaar number and/or Voter Card (EPIC) as proof of Identity. About 51% applicant families (52.09 lakh) have given Aadhaar number of at least one member.

However, the number of individual members with Aadhaar number in the Applicant database came to only 21.4 % (82.47 lakh).

10. Similarly, about 76 % applicant families (79.18 lakh) have given EPIC for at least one member of their family. Among individuals, those with EPIC number in the Applicant database was about 31.5% (1.235 crore) after digitization.

11. RGI through Director, Census, Odisha recently provided Aadhaar numbers of 1.75 crore people of Odisha with NPR TIN. By interfacing with the applicant database of 4.02crore (106 lakh families), the percentage of Aadhaar penetration of individuals increased by 20% to reach 41% (1.613 crore). Similarly, the NPR ID for applicant families increased from 64% to about 70% (73.01 lakh). It is expected that as more and more Aadhaar numbers are generated for the State, these percentages are going to increase.

12. Left out families of the Roll out phase were given another opportunity to enrol themselves within the extended period of two months (16th June'15 to 14th Aug'15) at their Block or ULB headquarters.

13. Three Divisional level Collectors' Conference have been held at Southern Zone (14th July 2015), Northern Zone (23rd July 2015) and Central Zone (25th July 2015) in order to discuss about further activities and timeline with district administration. (Collectors, District Nodal Officers (NFSA), Civil Supplies Officers and implementing Vendors).

14. De-duplication exercise of the applicant database has been conducted. A total number of 12.65 Lakh duplicate enrolment (Individuals) have been detected in the database on the basis of same name string, same Aadhaar numbers, same TIN numbers and same EPIC number. These applicant

individuals have been included in Suspect List-1 which has been hosted in FS & CW Department website www.foododisha.in under “e-Bitaran Odisha” link for physical verification by field functionaries.

15. FS & CW Department had requested PR Department to provide SECC data relating to the list of families to be excluded from availing Government benefits based on 13 criteria. The SECC Data was superimposed on NFSA applicant data and it has been found that 9.50 Lakh families (37.50 lakh individuals) have applied for new ration cards in spite of coming under the NFSA exclusion criteria. They have been included in Suspect List-2 which has been hosted in Department website for physical verification by district. All these exclusion criteria were on the basis of self-declaration during SECC survey. Similarly Suspect List-2A & 2B have been generated to exclude families having Pucca house and fire proof house with 3 or more living rooms at their disposal.

16. It was also found in the database that some applicant families/family members have not provided vital information like name of father and name of spouse in the prescribed columns. This created doubt about genuineness of such applicants. Around 23.71 Lakh members have not supplied such information. They have been kept in “On Hold” List and the list has been hosted in Department website for review at Block/ULB level. Once they will provide the information along with documentary proof, their case will be considered for inclusion in Draft Priority List (DPL) in a later stage.

17. FS & CW Department has received about 1.10 lakh voluntary withdrawal applications (both Online & Offline) from ineligible applicants who have requested to withdraw their applications.

These applications have been deleted from the applicant database. Similarly, information has been received for 287 cases from public in toll free and through website. The list of such cases has been forwarded to districts for field verification.

18. Similarly, the Draft Priority List (DPL) of 3.214 crore has been hosted in Department website on 17th July-2015. Objections for same have been invited at Block/ULB level and Desk Review has been conducted by a Team of government officials. Advertisement in leading Odia dailies have been released informing citizens about different lists such as On-hold list, Suspect-1, 2 & 3 were made available at Block/ULB level for further course of action.

19. IBM’s Master Data Management tool (MDM) was used for integrating the external exclusion criteria databases with NPR to create an integrated database. This integrated database was compared with the applicant database to weed out the rich and ineligible applicants. IBM has been handed over 33 lakh data of six exclusion criteria. So far, the tool has given only 2.0 lakh names linked to NPR ID with HRMIS, 4 wheeler & Pension database. By superimposing this list on DPL, the list of probable ineligible persons in name of Suspect List-3 has been generated and hosted in Department’s website.

20. In the meanwhile, Odisha Govt. has fixed District wise Targets for coverage of Priority Beneficiaries. As all the districts are not equal in terms of development in the state, percentage of SC & ST Population has been taken as weightage for determination of limits, for identification of Priority Population under NFSA in both Rural and Urban area.

21. It has been found that many families who are not eligible as per exclusion criteria had applied for new ration cards. It is seen that numbers of

applicant members have exceeded the population of 2011 Census in 5 Districts (Bhadrak, Gajapati, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Nuapada) and in about 78 Blocks and 2 ULBs of the state. The analysis of GP-wise population of 2011 Census with applicant numbers has been done and hosted in the website. It has been hosted under “e-Bitaran” Link under “Grampanchayat-wise analysis of NFSA Applicants with 2011 census population”. This Analysis was helpful to focus on GPs with more than 90% applicants for NFSA during desk review of DPL and field verifications of Suspect Lists. In case of about 4,100 out of 6,232 (66 %) GPs, the applicant population has exceeded the 2011 Census population.

Elimination of In-Eligible Households and Finalisation of Priority Beneficiaries

22. Steps have been taken for elimination of such ineligible applicant families by generating four types of suspect lists for field verification by a team of Government officials. Field Verification Team (FVT) for a Registration Centres (RC) is headed by either RI or VLW or VAW. The FVT have GRS or Jogan Sahayak and Local Anganwadi Worker as Members. For 5-6 RCs one Supervisory Officer from amongst the Extension Officer/ Revenue Supervisor were engaged for conducting some sample check. This FVT was notified on 25th July’2015 as the field verification was done from 26th July to 31st August’ 2015.

23. Suspect List-1: This list has been prepared by de-duplication of the applicant data base. The applicant database has been de-duplicated with respect to same Name string, Aadhaar Number, EPIC Number and NPR TIN Number. District-wise list of suspect families/ individuals generated though this exercise has been made available RC-wise in www.foododisha.in

for download at Block/ULB/District Levels and field verification by Government officials. These duplicates are categorised in to three groups: (a) those within the Registration Centre (RC) area, (b) those within the district but beyond RC area and (c) those beyond RC and beyond the district. About 57 lakh persons (15.76 families) were identified under various categories under Suspect List-1.

24. Within the RC: All the duplicates found within the RC area have been listed one after another as per Form Number serials. The teams of field officials visited the locality and verified regarding the entries. It is likely that only one of the two or more entries will be retained after field verification. The team would mention the same in the Remarks Column. These suspect lists were downloaded at Block/ULB level or district level.

25. Within District but beyond RC: Here, one of the duplicate is in the RC but other duplicate enrolments are beyond the RC but within the district. Such entries have been indicated in the list one after another as per serial number of form of the concerned RC. Here the field team will collect undertakings in the format given below from the applicants for retention or deletion. Their undertakings have been taken to Block/ULB offices (for those within Block or ULB) or District Offices (for those which are across Block/ULB). As the same duplicate entry would be reflected in two or more of the RC-wise list, the field team will check the document of concerned individual in the field and take an undertaking from him/her as to where s/he would like to be retained.

26. Across Districts: Here one of the duplicate is in the RC but other duplicate enrolments are from a RC located in another district and also beyond the district. The RC-wise list shows the duplicates together with the form

number sequence. Similar procedure would be followed by the field team at RC level for taking undertaking from the concerned duplicate individuals for taking appropriate decision and deletion of extra entries from the system.

27. On Hold List: Suspect List-1 is duplicates on basis of Name String, Aadhaar No, EPIC No and NPR TIN No. It has been decided to keep the families of the duplicate individuals 'On Hold'. Once the duplicate issue is settled after field verification, the applicant family would be released from 'On Hold' list and would come to Draft Priority List for scrutiny and approval. In addition, it has also been decided that those families where any member has not mentioned either the name of Father or the Spouse would be kept 'On Hold'. This is to ensure that genuine family members are kept in the final list. One copy of the 'On Hold' list was made available to Gram/Ward Sabha for gap filling i.e. filling up the names of relations and then submitting to Block/ULB Office for updating. The gap filling by Gram Sabha can only be done with support of documents which have to be attached with On Hold list while submitting the same to Block/ULB office. The concerned families can file objections with Block/ULB. The second copy of the 'On Hold' list would be kept with the Nodal Officer of Block/ULB for hearing objections as a reference.

28. Suspect List-2: This list has been created by super imposing the SECC Exclusion criteria relevant to NFSA over the applicant database. The exercise has identified about 9.50 lakh applicant families comprising of 36.50 lakh individuals coming under various exclusion parameters. RC-wise list has been made available in www.foododisha.in for download and printing. These were handed over to RC level Field Verification Team for verification within the above

time frame of 30th July to 14th August' 15. About 22.50 lakh applicant population out of 36.50 lakh were confirmed as ineligible after field verification and deleted subsequently.

29. Suspect List-3: This list has been generated by comparing applicant database with integrated database. The Integrated database has been prepared with the help of IBM's Master Data Management (MDM) tool after applying 6 external databases related to exclusion of ineligible applicants to the NPR database. About 1.75 lakh applicant population were identified as suspects, out of which 1.25 lakh were confirmed after field verification and deleted subsequently.

30. Suspect List-4: This list is the final output of the Desk Review of Draft Priority List (DPL) by a team of Desk Review Team at Block/ULB headquarters. The knowledge and information of local members in the team, such as AWWs and teachers has been the basis of the verification. The members reviewed the families included in the DPL case by case and apply their information about each family. The team would record the ineligibility criteria against these families they consider to be excluded in the list. The remarks of the team indicating at the exclusion of any family would be noticed by the Nodal Officer of Block/ULB to show cause as to why they would not be excluded from NFSA. About 62 lakh applicant population were identified under Suspect List-4 for deletion from the database.

31. AAY Verification: NFSA-2013 covers all the existing AAY Beneficiaries of the state. AAY Cardholders are entitled to obtain 35 Kilogram of Rice in a month irrespective of the number of family members. The FPS-wise list of AAY applicant families has been made available in the www.foododisha.in. This list needs to be verified by concerned Inspector of Supplies/Marketing

Inspectors with respect to available records or from the AAY sales register at FPS level. The verification need to be carried out with reference to ration card number, FPS and number of members in the family. Any correction in favour of such family was reflected in hard copy and corrected sheets were handed over to the Civil Supplies Officers (CSO). The CSO would ensure that the corrections recommended by the MI/IS are updated in the system.

32. Out of 76 lakh excess registration, i.e., 4.02 crore applicant population against 3.26 crore allocation, about 106 lakh in-eligible population have been identified under 4 types of suspect lists and they have been deleted from the system through online updation process at district level.

Publication of Priority List

33. The Outputs of various exercises such as Desk Review of DPL, Field Verification of Suspect Lists, objection Hearing and Correction of Erroneous Forms meant for identification of

in-eligible has been updated in the central server for finalization of the Priority Beneficiaries to be covered under NFSA-2013.

34. Based on the progress of field level activities, updation of the database and printing of ration cards, Govt. of Odisha had taken a decision to implement NFSA in 2 phases. In the first phase, 14 Districts covering Western & Southern Odisha was taken up in October 2015 and the remaining 16 Districts were covered in the second phase in November, 2015.

35. As a whole, about 82.50 lakh families consisting of 3.09 crore individuals have been brought NFSA as on 22 February 2016. Earlier 60.50 lakh priority households were covered under TPDS, i.e., an increase of 36 % coverage under NFSA. It may be mentioned here that, 3.26 crore beneficiaries of Odisha will be covered under NFSA to avail the subsidised foodgrains under this scheme.

ASPECTS	FIGURES
Existing Households (HH) Covered under TPDS	60,48,182
Households in Priority List (PL) under NFSA	82,49,634
Percentage PL HH to TPDS HH	136 %
Population in Final Priority List under NFSA	3,08,76,245
Target Population to be Covered under NFSA	3,25,78,820
Percentage of PL Population to Target Population	94.70 %
Percentage of PL Population to 2011 Census Population	73.48 %
Percentage of Target Population to 2011 Census Population	78 %

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Elected Women Representatives in Panchayats : Path for Effective Political Participation

*Prof. Asha Hans
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Background

A core need of good governance is gender equality which the Constitution of India guarantees. This is supplemented by India's ratification of Convention of Elimination of All forms of Discrimination and as a participant of the Beijing Action Plan in 1995. This framework assures women's equality in all spheres including political. Women demanded equal power in decision making and political representation. Though the demand was not met, it remained a part of the struggle to enhance women's right. In 1972 the revival came with the Towards Equality Report. The Committee recommended one-third reservation for women at the Panchayat level but took more than two decades to achieve. The pressure from the women's movement was consistent and finally in 1993 the 73rd Constitutional amendment was made to provide affirmative action in the field of local politics.

The Indian government has enacted the 73rd amendment to the Constitution in 1993 for the reservation of a minimum of 33% seats within Panchayats for women in order to democratize and engender the local governance. This process has a clear purpose to impact issues that concern women's empowerment and promote gender equality and social justice. It is a process that

promotes and sustains the ability of women to fully participate in the governance and development process, enhances their ability to raise critical questions about inequity and collectivize without fear and pressure and ensures gains from the services.

In Odisha, the first comprehensive law for the establishment of the rural Government at the village level was enacted in 1948 through the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act. This legislation prescribed constitution, power and functioning of Grama Panchayats.¹ In 1955 a new system named Anchal Sasan was introduced over and above the Panchayat system. It had both elected and co-opted members. Women were co-opted members from Panchayats, Municipalities and Notified Area Councils (NACs). This structure was changed to a three-tier Panchayati Raj system (Orissa Panchayat Samiti & Zilla Parishad Act in 1959) on the lines of Balwantraji Mehta Committee Report of 1957.²

Women participation in Pre 73rd amendment period

With the objective of reforming the Panchayati Raj system in the state, the Government of Odisha in 1991 under the Chief Ministership of a very gender sensitive and visionary leader Biju Patnaik passed three

important Acts- Orissa Gram Panchayat Samiti Amendment Act, Orissa Panchayat Samiti Amendment Act and Orissa Zilla Parishad Act³. The most significant was the reservation for women including those belonging to Scheduled castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in all the levels on rotation basis. This was the first time a political reservation became a reality in India. Besides one third reservation for women in the Panchayats, the post of the Vice Chairperson was reserved for a woman if the Chairperson in the Panchayat was not a woman. This was a tremendous boost to women's decision-making power.

73rd Constitutional Amendment

The most radical feature of the 73rd Amendment is that it reserved 33% for women so the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act was amended in 1994 and 1995 to meet the requirements of the amendment. It empowered the State Government to establish and constitute the Gram, the Gram Sasan, the Gram Sabha, the Palli Sabha and the Gram Panchayats. In 2012 the Government of Odisha declared 50% seat reservation for women in the three tiers of Panchayati Raj system. By amending the Panchayat Laws, the Bill also provided reservation of the seats and offices of chairpersons for two terms (10 years) instead of a single term.

Women's representation in the three levels of Panchayat system has been always more than the reserved quota (it was 35% in 1997, 36% in 2002, 36% in 2007 and more than 50% in 2012).

Study on Women Panchayat Members

Sansristi, a research based organization in Odisha, conducted a study related to elected women panchayat members of Gajapati District. The study was done in 129 panchayats in 7 blocks of the district covering 975 members (463 women

and 512 men). Gajapati was selected as it has a predominantly tribal population, and changes mandated by the Constitution (73rd Amendment Act) have been superimposed on the tribal systems of community planning that have existed previously. The district has a good sex ratio even though there is low education status. The sex ratio of the district is 1,043 females to 1,000 males, and Child Sex Ratio stands at 967 females to 1000 males (2011 data). There is disparity in literacy levels, with 65.58% for men and 43.59% for women. The study was conducted just prior to the 2012 elections.

Marital status :

In terms of marital status there was little gender differentiation. More than 90% of the male and women elected panchayat members covered in the study were currently married. However there were some women who were divorced and separated. The high proportion of married women as elected representatives flags the inherent gender issues particularly the reproductive role. Motherhood is a natural consequence of marriage and the constraints that it brings in is reflected in the narratives of the women Sarpanchs. They have expressed that child care is an essential role that mothers have to play and it is here that the family's support become vital.

Occupation before being elected :

Women Sarpanchas who stood for elections ranged from being an ASHA worker or ANM, President of a NGO, SHG President, teacher, agriculture worker and home makers. The survey revealed that the vast majority of them were not PRI members earlier. But 5.6% of the women were ward members earlier. The previous experience and exposure as a PRI member is definitely an enabling factor for the current performance.

Reasons for contesting elections:

Women as expected were more motivated by others. Support from political parties come third after support from family and community in case of women elected members. Most of the elected women responded as being forced by village people as the reason behind being a ward member, followed by being asked by village elders. Interested to work for development is the reason for most of the males though. It is interesting to note that self interest is the reason for more men than women. Personal motivation as a cause is however lower than being forced/asked by the village people.

The socio cultural context of the area (mostly rural based) is such that women are still not able to exercise their own interest/ choices and have to go by the guidance of the elders. Of course, this is facilitating factor for it at least pushes the women to join the political process. But there are some exceptions wherein women have emphatically stated that it was their own decision to contest.

Women Related Issues in Panchayat meetings:

Discussion on women-related issues raised in the last three Gram Panchayats (GP), meetings revealed that most of the issues prioritised were in the context of available schemes for women such as Widow Pension and Indira Awas Yojana. Schooling of girls is also a topic of discussion. Issues such as domestic violence, dowry, sex selective abortions, girls marrying at an early age seem to be far away from the agenda of the GP.

It was observed that PRIs at all levels have not yet become spaces to discuss and deliberate on women's issues, though a substantial proportion of PRI representatives are approached

individually to deal with these problems. This highlights a glaring gap between people's concerns and expectations of Panchayat members, and the role and institutional mandate that the panchayats are currently pursuing.

Violence in women's lives:

Due attention was paid to domestic violence in women's lives and lives of elected women Panchayat members and continuance of violence against them. The findings in Gajapati is that 28 per cent of GP members reported that domestic violence is raised by community women in meetings. Men led in reporting even on issues of child marriage (14.8% men/ 13.3% women respondents said this). Whether GPs consider domestic violence as an important issue, 66.2 women and 55.9 men agreed and on reporting to GP there was a substantial decline with 33.3% men agreeing and 22.7 women in agreement on reporting. On the awareness of rights over body whether women should tolerate violence to keep family together 13.2% women and 26 % men agreed while a high 33.8 women agreed partially to it. On the issue of whether outsiders should intervene on perpetuation of domestic violence 20.01% woman and 24.4% men agreed on intervention.

Women GP members themselves reported domestic violence used against them. This remains a key constraint in the functioning of the Panchayat System.

Training:

More members who reported that the training equipped them for their GP role have higher education levels, suggesting a possible reason why women GP members who are less educated (than their male counterparts) are more likely to be dissatisfied with the training. Over 48 per cent men and 30 per cent women reported

that education has helped them function effectively. Training and education are perceived as unmet needs, as overall education levels are low. Trainings need to meet the demand of women who have no or limited exposure to education; these need to go beyond information to include a focus on concepts of social and gender justice.

Training programmes are structured and provide knowledge on their roles and schemes. This narrow learning process with no pedagogic input keeps women outside the learning process. Many may attend but the process of transfer of information has no social setting and thus operational problems and how to deal with them is left out. Gender is not mainstreamed, so what is required is a two track system with a specific focus on women in the teaching modules and mainstreaming in all modules. There are also gendered issues such as child marriage, domestic violence, declining sex ratio which need a forum for discussion with male members but is not paid attention, thus keeping gender biases in tact.

Desire to recontest:

Due to rotation of seats in many cases it could be that women stood for elections only once in a life time with five years being too short a time for empowerment in leadership role expected as a Sarpanch. This has been rectified with the Government extending the rotation to two terms in the 2012 amendment. However the study showed that women GP members reported increased self confidence as a result of being an elected member. The proportion reporting enhanced status in their family was also high, nearly 70 per cent. Gains in the ability to make decisions, including financial decision in the household were reported by similar proportions and improved status within the community is reported by a high proportion of women members.

Many myths were broken. It was observed that women's decision to re-contest was

not influenced by their age. It was noticed that the higher the education the higher the desire to stand for elections in the future. The decision to re-contest elections was dependant on interrelated factors. Both male and female GP members who had stated that they entered into politics due to pressure from or desire of others were least likely to report that they would stand for elections the next time around. Thus, self-motivation alone and support from others was a significant factor contributing to an increased aspiration to stand for elections. Men who reported no involvement of the family were significantly more likely to want to re-contest than those who reported family involvement. Women who reported that their status in the family and/or community improved or that they gained self-confidence because of being a GP member were significantly more likely to state that they would stand for elections again, as compared to those who report no or very little change.

Constraints

The study findings reaffirmed that women elected representatives face varied gender specific constraints. As more and more women find their place in this local governance system it is imperative that Governments pay attention to their lower education levels, division of labour, patriarchal norms that create biases and violent spaces both in private and public spheres. More important is the violence at the work place.

Many women reported that they were ignored by the Government Officials especially the Executive Officers. Most issues which are raised are far from the reality of the situation they come from where girl child and honour killings exist, where reproductive health issues and education of the girl child takes a back seat. If the Panchayat system finds no space for these

issues then it becomes a governance which has a structure but no substance.

The existing two child norm as a disqualification criteria for Panchayat members in Odisha is a drawback and has a gendered impact. The norm affects those who have children after 1994 and is based on the wrong notion of Family Planning. India is a signatory to the International Conference on Population and Development which emphasized on population, sustainable development and good quality reproductive health care system and people's right to decide the number of children and their spacing. This was announced in the 1998 Reproductive Health Programme of 1998 and National Population Policy (NPP) of 2000. The two child norm therefore goes against the NPP and the force used during the emergency is an indicator of what happens when there is State intervention. Disqualification of women panchayat members when they have little or no control over their bodies in a patriarchal system works against their fundamental rights. The practice of hiding children, forced abortion affects both mother and child. It is therefore important that it be removed as it has been in many other States.

Conclusion

Whilst the Panchayat System has opened up for political and decision making spaces for women and their increasing confidence is highlighted in this study. With the assurance of two terms, women's capabilities and capacity will increase. With support from communities, women will be able to deliver the good governance required. Their reproductive health needs have to be met as well their training needs. Monitoring and evaluation are needed to understand if the training is achieving the desired objectives. Sustained capacity building of women not only after being elected but much before that in schools,

in community is the need of the hour. Addressing issues of domestic violence in public spaces such as the panchayat will go a long way in its prevention and prohibition. Sexual harassment of elected women at workplace is a serious violation which needs urgent attention. Effective political participation by elected women is only possible when these barriers and challenges are addressed in a committed way. The path towards substantive empowerment of women through participation in decision-making bodies such as the Panchayats have to be not only sensitive and responsive to the needs of women in general but more so of the elected women representatives. Overall there has to be an enabling climate and conducive environment which facilitates the efficient and effective participation of women rather than the path being full of barriers. Thus recognition of the barriers is a significant step towards its removal. The grass root people's representatives, half of whom are women, have to be equipped instead of just being notional.

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4. Biju Patnaik will be remembered for his contribution to women's rights in Odisha. Besides setting up structures he brought women activists as leaders in government decision-making.

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Those Two People

Sonril Mohanty

When you scream your first cry, with your lungs full of your first breath of earth's air, a warm, cosy chest comforts you, quietens you, hands trembling with fragile affection caress you. Two people, with weary dark circles yet smiles bursting with unconditional love, spend weeks without a wink of sleep so that you slumber in peace. Gentle hands clasping your tiny fingers tight guide you through your first steps of civilization.

You are five, and they learn the Alphabet with you all over again; hear you chant nursery rhymes incessantly all day long; record your antics, your noises on a camera and, more permanently, in their hearts, to replay it over and over again – to feel you are there whenever you are not.

The years fly by, on their wings engraved millions of memories you have created together with them. You are a teen, filled with the heat and spirit of youth. You desire to break free of your leash, to break free of anything that fetters you back, even their voices that quiver with the fear of having to lose you. You are so enticed by the adventure that the world has to offer that your eyes fleet past little things: that you have grown with time, they have aged; brushing your hair every single morning, theirs' has greyed; making

your face glow with the luxury of life, their skin has sagged. . . Yet they forgive you for never noticing them.

And when the time comes to leave the nest, you, the wilful nestling, do so ever so eagerly. You board the ship and set off, their tear-ridden eyes can't bind you from touching the skies. They know it too. They love you enough to let go.

Caught in the furious days of a new world, new joys, new places, their hopeful phone-calls are met with hurried monosyllables. They worry . . . and age some more. 'Has my little princess eaten?' haunts them more than the possibility of an Economic Depression in the country. But you seek more pleasure among a party of friends yelling obscenities those two people had shielded you so cautiously from, than hearing them out for five meaningful minutes – the little things that happened to them that day.

You refuse to return to the nest: Yes, you admit, it is dear to you but the memories that it holds ought not to stand in the way of the endless freedom that you desire. You construct an entire monument, invite them over and take immense delight in their praises; yet you fail to grasp that

little tingling note of plea in their voices – pleading you to come back.

The calendar turns over several years. One fine day, you realize that those two people are not anymore the same young healthy people *you* knew. Their hairs are white, their teeth have fallen out. You remember two people with inexhaustible energy attending to your every need, now their pace is slow, unsteady, joints wracked with pain; You remember two people whose piercing eyes caught your most skilfully shrouded mischiefs, now their sight is weak, unfocussed. You remember two people who had memorized your entire syllabuses, courses and appointments once, now keep saying the same story about the burnt vegetables of last Thursday over and over again.

Your leaping spirit has calmed down. Suddenly, you crave to care for them, be near them, to spend sleepless nights and restless days as they have done for you. It is your turn to plead now: to shift to your place, yet they attach negligible importance to your star-rated dwelling and your private theatre, in front of the four walls

they've spent amazingly beautiful lives in. You are on the verge of giving up, and then. . .

That one phone call shatters your entire existence, breaks into pieces the reason you are alive – that those two people . . . are really . . . no more? When you light the pyre, you wonder whether you were . . . worthy enough.

The following days are spent in numbness and the life after that, in remorse.

The pleasures of your successful life help you gulp down the sorrow and carry on. And you are one of the two people in a new human being's life now.

And each time you tuck *your little princess* in bed, deep-buried memories snap past in a millisecond. And as you kiss your little princess goodnight, you hope she too returns to kiss you goodnight the day you need her.

Sonril Mohanty, Buxi Bazar, Cuttack.



National Science Day - 2017

Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati

The term science derived from Latin word Scientia means knowledge. Aristotle speaks about science as a body of reliable knowledge that can be logically and rationally explained. Rashtriya Vigyan Evam Prodyogiki Sanchar Parishad (RVSP) (National Council for Science & Technology Communication) of the Ministry of Science and Technology (NSD) asked the Government of India to designate February 28 as **National Science Day**. The event is now celebrated all over the country in schools, colleges, universities and other academic, scientific, technical, medical and research institutions. Various activities are organized on the day like debates, quiz competitions, exhibitions, lectures, etc., in which college students, school students and teachers too participate. On the occasion of the first NSD (28th February 1987) NCSTC announced institution of the National Science Popularization awards for recognizing outstanding efforts in the area of science communication and popularization, which have been given annually since 1988. Every year we celebrate National Science Day on 28th February to honour our Nobel laureate Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman for his invention of the Raman Effect through his experiments on the scattering effect of light.

Sir CV Raman was born in a Hindu Brahmin family in Tiruchirapalli, Tamilnadu. Fortunately, he proved his academic excellence at a very young age. Raman passed his secondary school education at a tender age of eleven and entered Mrs. AVN College, where his father served as a professor in Mathematics.

Two years later, he went to the prestigious Presidency College in Madras, and completed his B.Sc at the age of fifteen, topping the class with a gold medal in Physics. Barely at seventeen, he had finished his M.Sc obtaining the highest distinctions. Then, he joined the Indian Finance Department as Assistant Accountant General. But, he resigned from government service in 1917 and became Professor in Physics at the University of Calcutta.

On February 28th, 1928, he announced the discovery of the Raman Effect at the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, and was awarded the 1930 Noble Prize in Physics for his work. Raman was the first Asian and first non-White to get any Nobel Prize in science. He was elected to the Royal Society of London in 1924 and knighted by the British Empire in the year 1929. In 1954; Raman was awarded the Bharat Ratna and honoured with the Lenin Peace Prize in 1957. He became the director of the Indian

Institute of Science, Bangalore in 1934 where he served as a Professor in Physics two years later. In 1947, Government appointed him as the first National Professor. He left the Indian Institute of Science in 1948 and set up the Raman Research Institute in Bangalore, serving as its Director and remained active there until his death in 1970 at the age of 82.

Status of Research & Development in India

India has a long and distinguished history as a country of knowledge, learning and innovation. In the recent past, however, it has failed to realize its undoubted potential as a home for world class research. India is one among the top 10 researchers in science based on the quantity. Scientific research in India has grown by 14.3% and China by 22.8%. Based on 2006-2010 Scopus data, India has 159 research leadership areas and China has 885 research leadership areas during 2006-2010. Just 3.5% of global research output in 2010 was from India. In Mathematics, India's share of world output stood at around 2% in 2010, while it was 17% for China. In case of materials sciences, India's share of world research was at 6.4% in 2010, while China's stood at 26% — a rise from 5% in 1996. While India's research on Physics was 4.6% in 2010, China's stood at 19%. In 2010, India's largest shares of world research output were in Chemistry (6.5%), Materials Science (6.4%), Agricultural Sciences (6.2%), Pharmacology and Toxicology (6.1%), Microbiology (4.9%), Physics (4.6%) and Engineering (4.2%). India is often referred to as the next big place for computer sciences. But the figures on its research are abysmally low. Only 2.4% of global research on computer sciences was from India in 2010 while the world share moved to three emerging research economies - China (15%), Korea (6.3%) and Taiwan (5.7%).

The Ministry of Science and Technology was established in 1971 to formulate science and

technology policies and implement, identify, and promote “frontline” research throughout the science and technology infrastructure. The Department of Science & Technology plays a pivotal role in promotion of Science & Technology in the country. The Department has wide ranging activities ranging from promoting high end basic research and development of cutting edge technologies on one hand to service the technological requirements of the common man through development of appropriate skills and technologies on the other.

Every year a different theme is selected and this year the theme is “**Science and Technology for Specially Abled Persons**”. Modernization in every aspect of life is the greatest example of the implementation of science and technology in every nation. With the introduction of modern gadgets in every walk of life, life has become simple and this is possible only because of implementing science and technology together. Without having modern equipment's in all sectors, be it in medicines, infrastructure, aviation, electricity, information technology or any other field, the advancement and benefits that we face today would not have been possible. Villages are developed into towns and towns to cities and cities are expanding to greater horizons. This expansion has occurred through the expansion of science and technology over the years passed and will be more in the coming years. Today, countries are classified as developed and developing countries. The major categorization is based on economy and the application of science and technology.

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Sundial of Baramba

Nikunja Bihari Sahu

Known for the famous temple of the goddess Bhattarika on the bank of the river Mahanadi, the erstwhile princely state of the British colonial period, Barambagarh is located nearly 84 km West of Bhubaneswar. The Baramba palace still stands in testimony to this glorified past of the royal period. A British period sundial that adorns the Tahsil office premises of Baramba adds further to this great colonial legacy. There was a time when the device was quietly ticking away under the Sun and people, from far and near, were thronging the site for checking time, as there was no other time keeping device then available. However, things have changed a lot over the years. Time has clearly taken a toll on this tell-tale artifact of time and signs of ruin are writ large on the face of this priceless heritage. At present, a part of the device is broken leaving it in a state of defunct. The graduation marks made on the dial to display time are withered away and the pedestal that supports the device is also damaged due to ageing. Apathy by the Government and neglect due to ignorance by the locals has left the device in a state of ruins. Added to this, many tall trees growing around the device obstruct the sunlight in the sky for some part of the day that impairs the uninterrupted operation of the device. Unless urgent action is taken, the device may soon lose

its importance and succumb to the onslaught of time.

Concept of Sundial

For early man, the Sun was the guide in the sky to tell time. The Sun rises in the east at dawn, climbs the sky with time and eventually sets below the horizon at dusk. Thus the changing positions of the Sun in the sky with time offer a scope to foretell time. It is easier to ascertain the time of the sunrise or sunset simply by looking at the Sun directly in the sky as it grazes the horizon. However, it is quite difficult to do so corresponding to other positions of the Sun in the sky. Man observed that the shadow of a pole cast by the Sun keeps on changing both in 'length' and 'direction' throughout the day as the Sun goes in its daily path in the sky. Hence, it was quite natural for the early man to observe the shadow of an object cast on the ground rather than looking at the Sun in the sky to have a precise measurement of time. This possibly gives rise to the concept of sundial.

A sundial is a simple instrument that consists of a staff (called the Style) to cast shadow on a graduated scale (called the Dial) indicating time. Sundials are classified as Horizontal, Vertical or Equatorial depending on the orientation of their dial planes.

Device

The sundial of Baramba belongs to the Equatorial type where the dial is kept parallel to the Earth's equator. For this, the dial is tilted by an angle nearly 21 degrees (equal to the local latitude) from the vertical line towards the South as the equator is located south of our place. The Style is aligned perpendicular to the dial plane in a direction parallel to the Earth's axis, and hence, it directly points to the Pole Star in the sky in its Northward direction. As the Sun goes in its daily orbit across the sky, the shadow keeps on moving over the graduated dial indicating time.

Made of brass, the dial of Baramba device is designed into a beautiful crescent moon shape which is suitably graduated to indicate time. Each hour is divided into 4 parts and each part into further 3 divisions to indicate a minimum time span of 5 minutes. However, the Style of the dial is completely dislocated leaving the device in a non-operational state now.

Like all other sundials of the state, the Baramba sundial indicates the Local Time i.e. the time corresponding to the place of observation. However, this can be readily converted to Indian Standard Time (as indicated by a Watch) by subtracting from it a time interval of 14 minutes, as the Indian Mean longitude is located West of our meridian by 3.5 degrees and taking into consideration that each degree of longitude difference accounts for a passage of 4 minutes of time.

Construction Period

Unfortunately, there is no mention anywhere about the designer and the construction period of the sundial. In Odisha, most sundials were constructed during the British colonial period.

These were mostly built by the kings and kept at public places like temples, palaces, schools and *kacheries* to facilitate people keep track of time. In spite of the obscurity of the historical account of the sundial, its genesis may be safely traced back to the early part of the 20th century when all other sun-dials of our state were supposedly built.

The Baramba sundial is one of the seven known historic sundials of Odisha located at Cuttack, Kendrapara, Konark, Bhubaneswar, Khandapara and Madhupur (Jajpur district). The sundials enjoyed a period of monopoly till replaced by the mechanical clocks introduced by the British brought from London.

Conservation

As the monument is one of the heritage assets of our state and represents the best scientific and technological skill of our ancestors, utmost priority should be given for its conservation and upkeep so as to bring back its lost glory. Measures should be taken to replace the dislocated Style of the sundial and to redraw the obscure hour-lines of the dial.

Instruction depicting the use of the sundial should be provided for the benefit of common people visiting the Tahsil office on their daily business. Obstructions that hinder the sunlight from casting the shadow on the dial should be cleared or the device should be re-located to a suitable place within the same premises so as to ensure its continuous operation under the sunlight.

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Our Sincere Obeisance



Sambit Mohanty



Biju Patnaik : His Place in Indian History

Sudhakar Panda

Some leaders in history are born and destined to enjoy more fame far beyond the reputation of their contemporaries. Sri Biju Patnaik was one such rare personality. Everyone in Odisha remembers him with love and admiration. Few writings can capture the commanding presence and political influence of this great man on Odia minds over the past half a century. And no assessment can do justice to his courage and remarkable valour, his overflowing love for his people and his commitments to his beloved state Odisha. Widely known for his adventurous spirit, he was assigned the great challenging task of rescuing late Sukarno of Indonesia from a dangerous situation that threatened his life. It would always be remembered as a rare moment in history and as an outstanding achievement in the life of Sri Patnaik when he pulled up all his courage to save the late President Sukarno of Indonesia at great risk to his own life. He, in fact, gave a brilliant account of his fighting spirit and achieved international fame.

He lived a life with malice towards none and unbound love and good will to one and all including his political competitors and adversaries. Born in a rich and aristocratic family in the year 1916 at Cuttack, he left the comfortable life of an industrialist and saw a bigger role for himself in

state and national politics that would satisfy his passion for serving the people of the country and of his state. His entry into politics with his focus on Odisha's economic development to give its people a life of dignity free from poverty and deprivation, and a voice and an identity to them in national politics stirred up a hornet's nest in a state that was viewed as a calm and quiet state for a long time by the Indian people and authorities. A veteran politician, he fought against any injustice to the state. His politics reflected his passionate will to win and command the situation and imbue in the people a sense of faith and courage to assert their rights and cry out against any injustice to the state. He was one of the few political personalities in India who could convey his powerful feelings to any political personality or any authority in power. He had the courage to stand up and protest against any injustice to the people and was always prepared to suffer for his convictions. He played an important role in crystallizing political alignments in the Centre in the late seventies for the formation of the national government and held a responsible post in the Cabinet. He was always ahead of his time in his thinking and ready to help other political parties to forge constructive relationships. To build a richer and stronger Odisha, he was always ready to forgive the

dissidents and build new partnerships with others. And this made him distinctly different from other politicians of his time. This may help us to understand the gripping influence he had on so many politicians in the state and in the country. Notwithstanding the ups and downs in political life, he remained the ever green and charismatic leader of his people.

He began his political career as a Congressman under the inspiring leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and enjoyed his love and confidence and was widely regarded as the potential Defence Minister of India in 1962 after the Chinese aggression of India. His massive popularity in the state, his closeness to Pandit Nehru and his statesman like qualities increased his national credibility and he was also considered as one of the likely successors to Pandit Nehru.

He served the state as its Chief Minister in 1961-63 and during that period he developed his strategy to revamp the rural economy of Odisha with his emphasis on small and cottage industries. He had a greater vision for the state to see it industrially developed and vibrating. Rourkela Engineering College(REC), now the National Institute of Technology(NIT) came up. Paradip Port was set up and the state highway to link the port with the mining areas of the state was also built. His effort was to build up strong infrastructure for the future prosperity of the State.

Fed up with the inner politics of the Congress Party, he moved out of the party. He fought and lost elections but was never shaken and always looked to the future with optimism. It was Odisha's good fortune that he became state's Chief Minister again in 1990. It was a great and decisive political victory for the people of the state.

He was a great man who could understand the anguish, helplessness and cruelties that women suffered in the Indian society. His greatest gift to the nation was the legislative act to reserve 33% of seats for women not only in the Panchayati Raj Institutions but also in all government jobs. No other political act could have such powerful impact on the Indian polity and society as this thoughtful act of Sri Patnaik. This opened up social, economic and political opportunities in a scale that would go a long way in empowering women. Not only that, he fought against official apathy and indifference to ensure justice to the poor and needy and did everything he could do for the development of men and women belonging to disadvantaged social groups.

It is worth recapitulating the history of this magnetic personality. Biju Patnaik was a big man with a great mind and the country is yet to appreciate his thoughts and contributions that has shaped the thinking of generations here in the state and in the nation.

Animal Treatment at the Doorstep : A Benevolent Scheme of Government of Odisha

Prof. (Dr) Bhabesh Chandra Das

Prof. (Dr) Jayakrushna Das

Livestock have been an integral component of Odisha's agricultural and rural economy since time immemorial. Animal Husbandry (AH) sector plays a vital role in promoting the standard of living of rural livestock holders for generations by providing additional income and employment. The dependency of majority of rural people on livestock sector for their employment and livelihood is quite visible. The animal husbandry sector has potential of providing much needed insurance against the crop losses which occurs frequently due to natural calamities. This sector has the highest potential for rural self-employment generation at the lowest possible investment per unit. Development of livestock sector is critical to rural prosperity because it provides subsidiary income to the large numbers of cultivators, small farmers, marginal farmers, BPL families and agricultural labourers. Livestock are always considered as bank on hooves, and the small animals especially sheep and goats are considered as ATM for the rural poor. Animals also provide nutritional security for all and improve the purchasing power of farmers.

In the last two to three decades, it has been observed that the contribution of agriculture sector to gross domestic product (GDP) has been in declining trend whereas the contribution from

livestock has been in increasing trend. In 2014-15, the contribution of agriculture and allied sectors to Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) at current prices is 53,995 crores which is 20.75 % of NSDP. The contribution of Animal Husbandry sector to the agriculture and allied sector is about 25%.

Livestock holding in Odisha is equitable distributed with marginal, small holders and the land less farmers. About 80 per cent of the rural households have livestock of one or more species or a combination of some of them. Among them cattle is the most popular and prominent species in rural areas.

19th Livestock Census (2012)

According to livestock census 2012, the livestock population of Odisha was 207.33 lakh. Out of these, 59.56 % were cattle and buffaloes, 38.39% small ruminants and 1.35 % pigs. Besides these, the state has also 198.91 lakh poultry as compared to 7292 lakh in India. Out of total poultry in the state, 70 percent were local backyard breeds. Odisha contributed about 4.5% livestock population in the country as compared to 13.42 % in Uttar Pradesh, 11.27% in Rajasthan and 10.96 % in Andhra Pradesh.

The impetus behind the surge in demand for livestock products is a combination of

population and income growth combined with urbanization. The livestock owners need veterinary services particularly preventive, curative and advisory services to improve their productivity. With the rapidly increasing demand for livestock products, and the priority given by the Government to improve livelihood through animal husbandry, this sector needs special attention to provide veterinary services at door steps of the rural farmers.

Need for Mobile Veterinary Services in Odisha

Provision of providing timely veterinary services to such vast livestock population (spread all over the state) is quite difficult due to:

- Distance of remote villages from veterinary institutions.
- Natural barriers like rivers, hills, forests etc. to reach out to such pockets.
- Lack of inadequate public transportation network and difficult terrain, isolating the vulnerable sections of the society.
- No provision of exclusive veterinary team to reach out these disadvantaged sections and locations.
- Inadequate number of veterinary institutions in the state to provide prompt services to such huge population.
- No exclusive team to provide services during natural calamities like flood, cyclones etc.
- No exclusive veterinary team to provide services during emergencies like bird flu, swine flu outbreaks or other natural calamities.
- Inadequate number of veterinary doctors to provide animal health services.

- Under sick, accident or some of the emergency conditions like dystocia, the animals remain in non-ambulatory conditions, which become very difficult to transport the sick animals to veterinary institutions for treatment.

Launching of Mobile Veterinary Unit (MVU) Services in Odisha

In order to ensure effective veterinary service delivery in remote areas, the Department of Fisheries & Animal Resources Development, Govt. of Odisha introduced Mobile Veterinary Units (MVU) in 261 Blocks under Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana (RKVY) and 53 MVUs under State Plan. The scheme was launched by Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha on 10th July 2011 at Umuri, Jeypore, in Koraput district. During the year 2011-2012, the MVU programme was initially started in 40 Blocks under RKVY and by 2013-14, all the Blocks of the State was covered under mobile veterinary services. This scheme registered a huge success due to overwhelming response of farming community in the remotest part of the state.

The aim of the programme was to establish "Mobile Veterinary Unit" in order to strengthen service delivery mechanism so as to ensure better accessibility of veterinary services. The scheme was implemented with the following objectives mentioned below.

Objectives of the scheme

- To examine the general health condition and to treat the livestock.
- To provide "On the Spot" free diagnostic service to ascertain diseases.
- To detect the common diseases prevalent in the area.

- To provide doorstep veterinary services.
- To educate people to adopt appropriate modern technology for improving the productivity.
- To make disease surveillance and monitoring of livestock and poultry diseases.
- To control and contain disease outbreak.
- To popularize the departmental schemes
- To create awareness on livestock preventive health care and fodder cultivation.

Veterinary Services provided through MVU

1. Curative measures:

- i. Treatment of minor ailments,
- ii. Referring of complicated cases for better health care services,
- iii. Early detection of communicable and non-communicable endemic diseases,
- iv. Minor surgical procedures.

2. Breeding services:

- i. Artificial Insemination
- ii. Pregnancy Diagnosis
- iii. Treatment of anestrus, repeat breeding and dystocia management

- iv. Castration and sexual health control

3. Preventive measures:

- i. Vaccination of animals
- ii. Public health awareness

4. Diagnostic services:

- i. Fecal Sample examination,
- ii. Examination of urine sample
- iii. Examination of blood for ketosis and blood protozoan diseases,
- iv. Collection of blood and serum samples to referral laboratories for further investigation.

5. Emergency services:

- i. Animal health care services in natural calamities,
- ii. Public health emergencies

6. Extension activities:

- i. Proper implementation of various departmental programmes
- ii. Fodder cultivation by creating awareness among the public.

Composition of MVU Team

The Government of Odisha has made provision of following personnel to be in a MVU team.

Position	Number	Minimum Qualification	Remarks
Veterinary Officer	1	B.V.Sc. & A.H.	Retired / Fresh vets
Livestock Assistant	1	Trained at LITCs	Retired LI / VT / VSAS
Attendant	1	8 th pass	Engaged through service provider

Budget provision for each MVUs

Sl. No.	Particulars	Cost
1.	Veterinary Surgeon	Rs. 14,000/- month
2.	Livestock Assistant	Rs. 5,000/- month
3.	Livestock Attendant	Rs. 3,000/- month
4.	Hiring charges of MVU vehicle	Rs. 16,000/- month
5.	DOL Charge per month	Rs. 7,500/- month
6.	Miscellaneous expenses	Rs 1000 per month per MVU
7.	Miscellaneous Expenditure for district monitoring cell	Rs. 18,000/- per year, Rs. 1500/- per month per district
8.	Medicine Cost	Rs. 12,500/- per month per MVU
9.	Equipment (One time)	Rs. 40,000/-

Activities of MVU in a month

Activities	Days	Remarks
Health Camps, Vaccination camp along with Awareness Camp & other departmental activities at village level, Collection of samples	20(20 camps per month)	The monthly Programme schedule be prepared as per the local need. The departmental activities will be carried out along with this programme.
Delivering of sample to District Laboratory	1 day	Chief District Veterinary Officer (CDVO) fixes the date
Attending monthly review meeting and lifting of medicines, equipments/ instruments etc.	1 day	Chief District Veterinary Officer (CDVO) / Sub-Divisional Veterinary Officer (SDVO) fixes the date
Emergency services	As and when required	In natural calamities, emergency cases to perform duty during the month including holidays alongwith normal work.
Reserve Days	Rest of the days in a month	Other departmental activities

The MVU vehicle is available at veterinary dispensary throughout the month. In case of the breakdown of the MVU vehicle, the owner has to arrange an alternate vehicle. On reserve day, the districts headquarter MVU vehicle may be utilized by SDVO/CDVO for supervising the departmental activities without hampering the normal MVU work.

Target for Each MVU in a month

SL No.	Activities	Target for the month
1	Vaccination camp, Health camp	20
2	Villages to be covered	40
3	Treatment cases	1000
4	Inoculation	2000
5	Sample collection for disease surveillance	24
6	On spot pathological sample examination	60
7	Awareness camps about departmental activities	20

Role and Responsibilities of different Veterinary Officers of the District

a) Chief District Veterinary Officer (CDVO)

- Selection of members of MVU team.
- Arranging vehicles and required inputs.
- Keeping records and intimating progress to the higher quarters.
- Proper stickering of MVU vehicles.
- Approve the tour programmes of the block and communicate the same to Directorate, Collector, Chairman, Zilla Parishad.

b) Additional District Veterinary Officer (ADVO)

- District monitoring officer of the MVU programme for the district.
- Submit the consolidated inspection report.

c) Sub- Divisional Veterinary Officer (SDVO)

- Monitoring officer of the MVU programme for the Sub-division.
- Submit the consolidated inspection report.

d) Block Veterinary Officer/Deputy Director

- Supervising and monitoring officer at the Block level.
- Maintenance of records and cash books related to MVU.
- Preparation of tour programme according to need and in consultation with field level functionaries.
- Submission of monthly approved tour programmes to BDO, Chairman, Panchayat Samiti, Sarpanchs and PRI members on quarterly basis for wide publication.

e) Livestock Inspector (Govt. staff)

- Prior information and propaganda about the camp
- In case of non availability of the LI in the MVU team he/ she should help in conducting the MVU camp.

f) I/C Veterinary Officer (MVU)

- Collectively responsible for effective implementation of livestock health care, breeding and advisory services.
- Take immediate and appropriate measures during outbreak and inform the local Veterinary Officers.

- Undertake the vaccination work at the village level in consultation with local Veterinary Officers.
- Maintain records about the MVU activities.

g) I/C Livestock Inspector (MVU)

- Take up the vaccination work.
- Maintain all the registers and records.
- Prepare the reports in time.

h) Attendant (MVU)

- Carry out the instructions and help in restraining of animals.

Preparation of the Mobile Veterinary Unit

- The Block Veterinary Officer (BVO) in consultation with subordinate local field staffs and M.V.U staffs, prepare a monthly programme of the M.V.U functioning in the Block. The programme schedule for each month is approved by CDVO of the concerned district.
- Fixed day and fixed time is intimated to all concerned villages in advance and care is

taken to maintain regularity in these camps as per the schedule.

- The schedule is made available at State Directorate and nearest LACs so as to facilitate proper coordination of the respective activity. A copy of the schedule is sent to Collector, Sub-Collector, PD DRDA, BDO, Zilla Parishad Chairman, Block Chairman, Local GP Sarpanch to facilitate effective monitoring at their level.
- MVU used to take care to serve in inaccessible and distance villages, and in those villages where there is no veterinary institution or the post of LI /BVO lying vacant.

User charges for Mobile Veterinary Unit:

The user charges collected from the livestock owners is same as in the departmental institutions except that Rs.2/- is taken as treatment charge for the small animal instead of Rs.1/-.

By 2013-14, the Government of Odisha provided MVU in all the Blocks of the State.

Performance of Mobile Veterinary Units up to January 2015

Name of MVU scheme	Year of starting	No. of operational MVUs	No MVU days conducted	No of village covered	Cases treated	Vaccination done
MVU-40	2011-12	40	7748	13734	4,20,972	4,19,750
MVU-65	2012-13	65	12448	21064	5,12,889	6,53,450
MVU-53	2013-14	53	10219	18559	5,30,418	8,56,770
MVU-156	2014-15	156	22803	38648	11,50,880	14,04,099

(Source: Orissa Livestock Resource Development Society)

Constraints in operation of MVU in Odisha

- Non availability of Veterinary Professionals (Retired/Fresh Graduate) in the state to be employed in Mobile Veterinary Units.
- Low remuneration to veterinary professionals and livestock assistants discouraging them to join in MVU.
- Lack of active participation of local level PRI members in implementation of the programme.
- Low level of awareness among the rural livestock owners about the MVU services.
- Inadequate supply of required medicines, AI instruments and other diagnostic equipments.
- No clear-cut guideline to MVU members about the extension activities.

Conclusion

The noble concept of MVU, which is the first of its kind in the country, has been designed as a synergistic model to the existing institution providing animal health care. This rural service providing network that was constrained to provide AH services in far flung areas, require continuous support from the government and other institutions to establish itself in the district to provide livestock services to the poor.

Each MVU carries a team of veterinary professionals with supporting equipments and medicine for providing basic treatment and advisory services to the livestock farmers at their doorstep. The response of the livestock owners to this programme is found to be overwhelming day by day, hence the infrastructure and service delivery mechanism may be further strengthened to enable MVU to work as a complete service provider. Further, the remuneration to both the veterinary professionals and the livestock assistants may be increased to attract the best talents of the State to join the MVU. Noticing the success of the MVU programme in our State, Government of Gujarat, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are planning to replicate this model in their states.

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Gender Equality in Halls of Power

Abhay Dwivedi

‘Panchayati Raj has to develop a whole system of governance that includes both men and women at the grassroots level. My colleagues, on both sides, are aware that unless 50 per cent of the nation’s authority vests with women and 50 per cent of the elected representatives are women, this country can never make or register any progress. Of that, I am sure. And I know this from recent experience in my state. Orissa was the first state to implement 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in municipalities and panchayats, in 1992. At that time the Centre was still only discussing this provision. The constitutional amendment passed by Parliament two years later had the same provision. My only regret is that we had 33 per cent reservation for women in Orissa. We should have made it 50 per cent.’

- Biju Patnaik

This dream of Biju Patnaik, one of the tallest figures in Indian Politics, turns to reality by the cabinet decision of our state in February 2011, to increase the women’s representation in three tier Panchayati Raj institutions upto 50%. It is a positive step furthering the cause of women’s presence in decision making process in grass root level.

Biju Patnaik was a visionary, a statesman of highest calibre. He wanted decentralisation of power with equal importance on women empowerment. The above address by Biju Patnaik in national Panchayati Raj conference is truly reflected in United Nations declaration in 1995 - "while women represent 50 per cent of the world adult population and a third of the official labour force, they perform nearly two-third of all working hours, receive a tenth of world income and own less than one per cent of world property.

So women must be reasonably represented in decision making process. Therefore, reservation for women is not a bounty but only an honest recognition of their contribution to social development.”

BPFA, FWCW, BEIJING 1995

In 1990, the women representation in national legislatures of the world was less than 10%. The United Nation’s Economic and Social Council endorsed the implementation of measures to reach a target of 30% by 1995. But quantitative target remained elusive. At the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW, Beijing 1995), there was global consensus around women’s advancement in the public sphere through the institutionalisation of national machineries for women, as well as, the affirmation of the gender quota in policy and decision-making spaces. In Beijing, 189 countries pledged to promote the

equality of women in decision-making and in strengthening national machineries for enabling women's co-equal governance with men. Section-G on "women and power and decision-making" of the Beijing Platform for Action [BPFA] supports the advancement of women's participation in public leadership and governance. Central to this commitment is the goal of achieving gender balance in political representation and decision-making. In response, a significant number of women's groups and individuals took up the challenge more strongly addressing male domination in politics. Still, nearly 15 years later, women occupy only 18% of parliamentary seats around the world, and at the current rate of progress it has been estimated that gender parity in Parliament will not be achieved until the turn of the twenty-second century. More countries are therefore deciding to implement a "fast track route" to tackling structural discrimination and increasing female participation. During the last 15 years, nearly 50 countries have introduced quota systems (fast track route) for women, which guarantee a minimum representation of women in their highest decision making bodies.

In 2010, percentage of women representatives in Parliaments of the world :

Nordic countries - 41.4%

America - 21.8%

Europe (excluding Nordic countries) - 19.1%

Asia - 17.4%

Sub-Saharan Africa - 17.2%

Pacific - 13.4%

Arab states - 9.6%

The Nordic countries make up a region in Northern Europe and the North Atlantic which

consists of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden (all of which use a Nordic Cross flag) and their associated territories which include the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Svalbard and Åland. Scandinavia is sometimes used as a synonym for the Nordic countries.

WHY FAST TRACK -

Fasttrack route involves setting aside a quota in form of percentage or number for women in electoral process. This is a measure to increase the representation because they are historically excluded from decision making process. In this category, broadly speaking, there are two methods involved : Legal Quota and Party Quota. Legal quota is mandated in a country's constitution or by law, usually in the electoral law. This regulates the proceedings of all political parties in a country and prescribes sanctions in case of non-compliance. Voluntary party quotas are voluntarily decided by one or more political parties in a country. In such cases some political parties may have quotas, while other parties reject them. Gender quotas have been introduced in quite a number of countries around the world, countries of various political and socio-economical backgrounds. The idea of introducing quotas has usually travelled between countries in the same region. In Latin American, for example, Argentina was the forerunner with its introduction of legal candidate quotas in 1991. Since then this type of quotas has spread all over the Latin-American region. In Africa, South Africa has inspired other countries in the region to adopt voluntary party quotas, while Uganda has led concerning reserved seats. In South Asia gender quotas at the local level have been introduced in recent years in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, even if these three countries do not openly refer to experience made by their neighbours. As of 2006, around 40

countries have introduced gender quotas in elections to national parliaments, either by means of constitutional amendment or by changing the electoral laws (legal quotas). In more than 50 countries major political parties have voluntarily set out quota provisions in their own statutes (party quotas).

In the high performing Nordic countries, no constitutional clause or law demands a high representation of women; rather, women's groups have exerted sustained pressure on the major political parties to voluntarily ensure increases in the number and calibre of female candidates being fielded through party lists. However, this was not introduced until women were already present in the Parliament, and already holding between 20 and 30% of the seats. Elsewhere, there have been numerous problems with implementation and

enforcement of party quotas. In France, for example, many political parties have preferred to pay fines rather than put their women candidates up for election. In October 2003, Rwanda came closer than any other country to achieving parity between men and women in a national legislature, with reservation of seats securing 48.8% women in the Lower House and 34.6% in the Upper House. Neighbouring countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan have laws that currently give women a higher representation than India in their national parliaments.

Here is the list of countries with highest and nil number of women representation in the lower house of the Parliament. The highest number has been possible due to the legal quotas enforced in those countries. Very interestingly, the top thirty of the list does not include the so called advanced countries.

WORLD REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LOWER HOUSE AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2010

Rank	Country	Elections	Lower House		
			Seats	Women	% W
1	Rwanda	9 -2008	80	45	56.3%
2	Sweden	9 -2006	349	162	46.4%
3	South Africa	4- 2009	400	178	44.5%
4	Cuba	1- 2008	614	265	43.2%
5	Iceland	4 -2009	63	27	42.9%
6	Netherlands	11- 2006	150	63	42.0%
7	Finland	3 -2007	200	80	40.0%
8	Norway	9- 2009	169	67	39.6%
9	Mozambique	10 -2009	250	98	39.2%
10	Denmark	11 -2007	179	68	38.0%
13	Spain	3- 2008	350	128	36.6%
14	Andorra	4- 2009	28	10	35.7%
15	New Zealand	11- 2008	122	41	33.6%
16	Nepal	4 -2008	594	197	33.2%

17	Germany	9- 2009	622	204	32.8%
18	The F.Y.R.	6- 2008	120	39	32.5%
19	Ecuador	4 -2009	124	40	32.3%
20	Belarus	9 -2008	110	35	31.8%
21	Uganda	2 -2006	324	102	31.5%
			118	37	31.4%
23	Tanzania	12 -2005	323	99	30.7%
47	U. A.E.	12- 2006	40	9	22.5%
48	Pakistan	2- 2008	342	76	22.2%
51	United Kingdom	5 -2010	650	143	22.0%
61	France	6- 2007	577	109	18.9%
62	Bangladesh	12 -2008	345	64	18.6%
69	USA	11- 2008	435	73	16.8%
90	Japan	8- 2009	480	54	11.3%
92	India	4 -2009	545	59	10.8%
118	Sri Lanka	4- 2010	225	12	5.3%
128	Egypt	11-2005	454	8	1.8%
131	Saudi Arabia	2 -2009	150	0	0.0%
131	Solomon Islands	4 -2006	50	0	0.0%
131	Tuvalu	8- 2006	15	0	0.0%
131	Colombia	3 -2010	166	0	0%
131	Dominican Republic	5 -2010	183	0	0%
131	Ethiopia	5 -2010	547	0	0%
131	Mauritius	5- 2010	70	0	0%
131	Philippines	5 -2010	287	0	0%
131	Sudan	4- 2010	450	0	0%
131	Suriname	5- 2010	51	0	0%
131	Tajikistan	2 -2010	63	0	0%

WOMEN STILL SECOND RATE CITIZENS:

From the list above, it is evident that the bottom thirteen countries have no women

representation in the Lower House. And strange enough, there are still countries, where women's suffrage is denied or conditioned. In Lebanon, proof of elementary education is required for

women but not for men, while voting is compulsory for men, it is optional for women. Women's suffrage is denied in Saudi Arabia. The first local elections ever held in the country occurred in 2005. Women were not given the right to vote or to stand for election, although suffrage was slated to possibly be granted by 2009, but these elections have been postponed for the time being. Similarly in Vatican City, the Pope of the Roman Catholic Church is elected only by the College of Cardinals, who are currently a small selected group of men. Cardinals aged 80 and older no longer have the right to vote, thus there is no suffrage for women nor most men either.

After Women's Reservation Bill has crossed the first hurdle, India is all set to join a league of around 40 countries, including Pakistan and Bangladesh, which have quota for women in Parliaments. But certain factors are still forestalling the bill in the name of religion and quota within quota. Just few years ago when women were given

33% and in some states even 50% representation in Panchayats, Zilla Parishad and Municipal elections, a Muslim woman from Deoband filed her nomination for Municipal board election. A fatwa was issued by Muftis of Deoband that it is *haram* for Muslim women to fight elections and campaign among men. However, the Muslim woman showed determination and refused to withdraw her nomination. The Muftis then relaxed and asked her to wear *hijab* for campaigning among men. The woman again refused to bow down to wishes of muftis and campaigned and even won the election. Even now some muftis have opinion that women should sit at home and perform her domestic chores rather than enter into public arena. In this backdrop Women's Reservation Bill is the only hope of fair representation for fare sex.

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Is Social Transformation and Economic Prosperity Possible Through PRIs?

Baidhar Biswal

Panchayati Raj Institutions are the local self government at the grass root level. Participation of the people is a key element in the process of good governance. The philosophy of power to the people at the grassroots level emanates from people's participation through economic development to meet their aspirations and improve their quality of life through better service delivery. Aristotle, the noted Greek Philosopher trained that participation in the affairs of the State for a citizen was essential to development and fulfillment of human personality. In his view, the best State is broad participation with no class dominating over others. He had established clearcut relation between participation and development leading to good life.

In the 21st century we all talk of a democratic set up of administration because it provides ample scope for people's participation hastening up economic prosperity ensuring social justice to the marginalized and deprived. The present governance structure in India is known for its professionalization in ensuring laws, evoking schemes / programmes, making plans and projects but does not have the capacity to translate the same into action and produce the expected outcomes. It is found that people centric activity are missing in the process of development in almost

all levels of implementation. The state with its bureaucratic system claim ownership of development which reduces the citizens to beneficiaries without involvement. To reverse this paragon of development and governance from supply driven and government centric to demand driven and people-centric, role of PRIs are most suited to provide the framework for ascertaining the needs and aspirations of the people of the local level through PRI representatives available in 3 tiers of local governance structure along with effective functioning of Palli / Gram Sabha. It has been acknowledged by all sections that sitting at national/State capitals the people's representatives can not fulfill the aspiration of the local people and solve their problems. By empowering the PRIs and its elected representatives the overarching influence of bureaucracy can be curbed to a great extent. Besides, when governance is established at the grassroots the procedure and practices of community come to foreplay vis-a-vis the governance structure and legal provisions. This will also free the Indian polity from middle men who have mediated in the system. As a result the voices of the people are seldom heard, if heard are not taken into consideration. The voiceless people are brought to the election platform as voters through mediation by local mediators belonging to dominant castes and communities.

Judging in the above backdrop, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment has provided the institutional mechanism for creating an enabling environment for people's participation through Panchayats / Gram Sabha and shaping the felt needs of the people through PRIs and to a great extent, implementing the schemed programme for economic development and social justice.

- The 73rd Constitutional Amendment, if properly carried out in letter and spirit has enough potential to alter the nature of governance and power relations amongst the unequal. It has tremendous scope to solve the problem of exclusion. Having realized the full implication of the Amendment, those who are in power corridor have devised new ways of sponsoring wives / daughters in local body elections the landlord is sponsoring his farm labourer for election for the seat reserved for Dalits.
- Even after 18 years of the Amendment confusion has been created deliberately on devolution of powers to PRIs. Some states argue that neither PRI being a State subject they are at liberty to devolve powers by taking their own time and by interpreting the provisions of the Amendment as not mandatory nor any time frame has been prescribed thereunder. Even some states have not framed conformity legislations in time with the spirit of the amendment, even different Departments of Central Govt. have not amended their Acts/Rules in conformity with PESA Act, for Scheduled Areas. Govt. either State or Central, people's representatives should remember that the 73rd Amendment is the outcome of the failure of the State Govt to make the Panchayat institutions of self-governance. Judging in this perspective State Govts do not devolve powers to PRIs by not taking them into trust on the plea that PRIs indulge in rampant corruption, they do not have

required staff and infrastructure, even efficiency to cope up with the extra load of devolution. The basic reason at the root of such reluctance is the hesitation of people's representatives to part with their power / authority which they exercise through Block/ District Administration by influencing the Govt. machinery. This sort of nexus also results in corruption and impartiality and neutrality of bureaucracy is shattered and worst of all the people never set their needs and aspirations fulfilled.

- Local self-governing bodies form an integral part of a democratic society. They are designed to play an effective role in the evolution of people's participation from the lowest level, giving scope and opportunity for expressing themselves in administration, solving economic and social problems as per community interests thus paving for integration of the community and its welfare.
- The term 'development consists some complicated process/stages like people's participation, planning at the grassroots, transparency and accountability of the implementing agencies, desired outcomes ensuring quality which can be integrated holistically for all round development and economic prosperity. Hence to make PRIs work like a mass movement it should start from the grassroots for socio-economic transformation to instill a mindset amongst all i.e. planning administrators, peoples representatives, NGOs social activists to realize the potential of the new dispensation.
- It is now widely debated that whatever could not be done by 73rd Constitutional Amendment has been done by MGNREGA. The Act has not only transformed the rural scenario, it has changed the face of PRIs participants for the two tiers at the lowest level. The Act has

stepped the abilities of the GP in terms of finance as an implementing agency bringing about grassroots planning, supervision in implementation, social audit grievance etc. It is clear-cut case of people's participation at its best eventhough the implementation of the scheme is still grappled with many deficiencies. The Central/ State Govt. should come forward with schemes which will strengthen the PRI infrastructure including financial activity and more people's participation. Besides, some incentive schemes are to be introduced by Central Govt. which will allow the state Govt. for transforming power to PRIs in tune with 73rd amendment.

- Despite all drawbacks the Panchayats have started transforming the living conditions of the rural poor by its functioning. By now more than 30 lakh PRI representatives are in position in India who mainly come from middle classes SC/ST/OBC categories and are thread of them are women. In Kerala due to well functioning of PRIs endowed with developed powers rural development has been phenomenal and it has contributed a lot for alleviating poverty in the state. In W.B., PRIs have taken deep roots and it was instrumental in successfully carrying out land reforms by involving itself in Operation Bargadars. In southern state like Karnataka, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh PRIs also function up to satisfactory level even amid deficiencies. In a country like India rural development and banishment of poverty is only possible when PRIs are fully empowered with powers and they work effectively without hostels.

- Presently the PRIs are ridden with rampant and corruption for which both representatives and officials are responsible. Some of the procedure /process of PRIs are obsolete and need urgent attention Corruption scenario can be tackled by setting state/district level ombudsmen and tracking down exemplary anti-corruption cases. The efficiency of PRI representatives and officials, RD functionaries can be raised by constant capacity building efforts. Infrastructure of PRI can be strengthened by developing a computerized scientific database, more trained and skilled manpower like JEs, Accountants . Overall the Palli / Gram Sabha should also be empowered to encourage people's participation in decentralized planning, supervision in implementation, social audit, grievance redressal . In India the media is not championing the cause of PRIs as it does for Central/ State Govts. Wherever in India , committed leader with vision and capability is emerging, decentralized governance has worked wonders. Therefore our people's representatives and bureaucrats should accept PRI representatives role as complementary to them. They should not work as development brokers and think for aspirations of the people . Enlightened citizens can set on the mindset of officials and people's representatives and bring about a transformation. RTI Act, 2005 should be treated as a tool in their hands to toe the administration to their line . Then only Gram Swaraj as thought by Gandhiji will be reality.

Agenda for Improving the Role of Panchayats in Social Sector Governance

Saroj Kumar Dash

The 1990s represents the reform decade for the Indian Economy. The 8th and 9th Five Year Plan made attempts to reduce poverty and unemployment. Poverty Alleviation and Unemployment Reduction require growth, although the composition of growth is equally important. Further growth requires efficiency and efficiency requires effective service delivery through governance. Let us introspect the objectives of stepping up growth during the few plan periods. Till the fifth plan, the Indian Economy chugged along at real Annual rates of growth of not more than 3.5%. The Eighth Plan brought 6.8%. More importantly the Ninth Plan brought us down to earth with an average of 5.35%. Although the Tenth Plan still talks of 8%, but it could not happen even during the present plan period (2012-17), as it is around 7 to 7.5%. So to make this magic growth rate of 9% to be possible during the 13th Plan, we need, Core Reform Agenda, to be implemented, especially in Rural Sector.

This brings us to Social Infrastructure, Physical Infrastructure and Law and Order which form the core elements of Governance. Add to that, the Government has a role in protecting the disadvantaged and the deprived and those who are also voiceless and choiceless.

In the above backdrop the most significant experiment in reforming Governance in India from a Participatory Democratic Decentralization point of view, has been the introduction of Panchayat system through 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments along with other host of social legislation. It was expected that newly created Panchayat System, would emerge as effective tools of local self governance and would strongly further the primary objectives of Economic Growth and Social Justice.

Now let us examine the role of Panchayat in social sector. Though there is no precise definition available for “social sector”, the traditional welfare activities aimed at helping the poor and disadvantaged and in general enhancing human development are called “social sector”. The Social Sector is the concern of all tiers of the government – from the centre at the national level to the Gram Panchayat at the grassroot level. When we examine the role of Panchayat in social sector, the following areas broadly constitute social sector-

- (a) Education, Sports and Youth affairs.
- (b) Health & Family Welfare
- (c) Water supply, sanitation and housing
- (d) Welfare of SC/STs and OBCs

- (e) Labour, Employment and Labour Welfare
- (f) Social welfare and Nutrition
- (g) Rural Development – Wage Employment & Self Employment programmes for sustainable rural livelihood
- (h) Minimum Basic Services

Article 243G of the Constitution, which now governs the entrustment of above functions to the PRIs makes it clear that the primary role of the Panchayats will be in the area of development. Planning and implementation of the programmes of economic development and social justice ought to be focal points of their activities. The passage of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment over a decade has created a space and opportunity for decentralized participatory local development efforts with inbuilt pressures for accountability. The PRIs have legislative power to control Rural Development and Social sector programmes. However above programmes in India are often conceived and implemented as part of a National Development strategy and respective state policy for governance and development.

Further the national goals like “Health for all by 2020”, “House for Houseless”, “Education for all” and healthy rural community based on sound Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI) can be a reality, if the cordial and effective interface are developed among the PRIs, Respective Administrative Departments and People at large. In this endeavour, the role of Government at Union and State level is critical. The various Ministries at Union Government have started empowering Panchayats at the appropriate level to plan, implement, monitor and supervise their programmes. The various line departments have started reposing trust on the PRIs and devolved

funds, functions and functionaries. Further, the 14th Finance Commission have rightly assessed the needs of the poor living at rural areas and given suitable awards to the GPs for taking up of amenities like providing basic services for primary education, primary health, safe drinking water, street lighting and other services of public conveniences. Even the 4th State Finance Commission awards in these regards are equally more encouraging for PRIs in strengthening their role in the field of social sector Governance.

Recently launched Programmes by both Union and State Government namely Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Surakshya Bima Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana, Ujjala, PAHAL, Deen Dayal Uapadhyaya Gramin Kousal Yojana, Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana, Gopabandhu Gramin Yojana, Biju Krushak Bikash Yojana etc. and National Campaigns like Swachh Bharat Abhijan, National Horticulture Mission, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sanchaya Yojana, aimed at building healthy rural infrastructure along with creating enabling environment for economic development and social justice for the Rural Critical Masses and will no doubt change the face of Rural India under the leadership of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Further, the Panchayats will have a crucial role to play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals which has local implications. In this regard the Panchayats are to be equipped with required legislations and powers and responsibility to play an effective role in planning and implementation of schemes relating to realization of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The Gram Panchayats across the country have begun preparing Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP), presenting an opportunity for the GPs to synchronize their plans

with SDGs by utilizing fund under Finance Commission Award Grant in convergence with different flagship programme fund. The resources – Human and Financial from various centrally and state sponsored schemes are being leveraged and converged at the GP level.

PRI has the overall responsibility for Social and Economic Development within their jurisdiction. So a well equipped Panchayat with Fund, Functions and Functionaries can play very proactive role in bridging the gaps between rich and poor and urban and rural equally. Further giving 50% reservation for women through Panchayati Raj Governance is not only a matter of equity, but also correction of an unjust and unrepresentative system. This has already created an enabling environment at rural areas, by giving space to elected woman leaders and other informal leaders in their participation in decision making and local governance and resulting in new culture of empowerment.

Thus now the Panchayat in Social Sector Governance see entrepreneurship and participation of people as a strategic developmental intervention that could accelerate the Rural and Social Development Process. All stakeholders of Rural India like Government, Civil Society, Private Sector etc. seem to agree on the urgent need to empower Panchayats with effective devolution of 3Fs – Functions, Functionaries and Funds – to correct the status quo pattern of Social Governance. Panchayat should be encouraged to act as “Institution of Self Government” instead of an arm of “Extended Agency of Government” in realizing the Union and State Government Plans & Programmes.

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Traditional Tribal Self-Governance in Odisha: Notes from Two Tribal Districts

Bishnu Prasad Mohapatra

Abstract: This paper reviews the functioning of the traditional tribal self-governing institutions in the two tribal districts of Odisha. It tries to shed light on the institutional arrangements and functioning of these institutions, the leadership pattern and interfaces of these institutions with the PRIs in these districts. It reveals that these institutions form an important aspect of the village self-governance system despite the presence of the Panchayats. Their role in influencing local level decision-making processes, resolving local disputes, protecting customs, traditions and cultural practices and fostering local economic development are observed quite vibrant and proactive in nature. This paper argues that despite the institutionalisation of the PRIs, these institutions are still upholding their importance in the polity and the economy of the villages in the tribal areas. However, the functioning of these institutions and decision-making process has observed many changes in the context of the functioning of the Panchayats.

Introduction:

The traditional self-governing institutions such as the village councils and the caste councils have become an important instrument of promoting effective and transparent village self-governance system in Odisha despite the institutionalisation (institutional arrangement) and functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). These institutions are strongly linked with the cultural, social, religious, political and economic matters of the people of the villages, both the tribals and the non-tribals. In the case of the tribals, these institutions still occupy a

prominent position in the social, cultural, political and economic life of the tribal people and their villages. While the social and cultural functions have continued since the time immemorial, the political and economic functions in many cases are observed more explicitly in the recent period, in particular after the extension of the Panchayats in the tribal areas (as per the PESA Act). The politico-economic role of the tribal village councils and the caste councils are observed in the form of fostering peoples' participation in the local democracy and decision-making processes, discussing development plans and programmes

in the councils' meetings, and supporting PRIs for achieving their overall socio-economic development agenda. The process of interface between the traditional council leaders and the Panchayat leaders is also to some extent influence the functioning of Panchayats in a positive way. However, increasing competition among the leaders of these two categories of institutions to control the polity and the economy of the tribal villages also created tension in many cases. Notwithstanding this, the tribal leaders of these institutions are still upholding their significance as the actual leaders of their villages and playing a key role in the matters of the village governance system.

Objective and Methodology:

The main objective of this paper is to examine the functioning of the traditional tribal self-governance system and institutional arrangements in Odisha while focusing on how and to what extent the modern Panchayats have been influenced (positively and negatively) the functioning of these institutions in the era of so-called extinction. The study reviews the case of 16 tribal villages in Sundargarh and Koraput districts of the State. Based on field level observation, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth discussions, this paper tries to highlight the three key features of traditional tribal self-governance system and functioning of the institutions (councils) such as (I) the institutional arrangement and functioning of the councils, (II) the Village/Caste Councils and pattern of leadership, and (III) interfaces of the tribal councils and the Panchayats and their overall implications on functioning of the traditional tribal governance system in the study villages. It argues that these councils still occupy a prominent place

in the matter of managing village governance in the tribal areas and have contributed positively towards the functioning of the Panchayats, despite the much debated issues of extinction.

Key Findings and Discussion:

(I) Institutional Arrangement and Functioning of the Councils:

The institutional arrangements of the traditional tribal self-governance system shows that the traditional village councils and the caste councils are the two major institutions in all the 16 sampled villages though there are functional variances. It further shows that the 'caste councils' (*the Samaj*) are quite visible in all the 8 sampled villages in Sundargarh district and the 'Village Councils' (under a village headman) are quite visible in all the 8 villages in Koraput district.

In the sampled villages of Sundargarh district, *the Samaj* are quite active in managing the overall socio-cultural matters of their respective caste/ tribal group. In these villages, the various types of tribals such as the *Oram*, the *Bhuyan*, the *Gond*, the *Paudi Bhuyan*, and the *Kissan* have their *Samaj* such as the *Oram Samaj*, the *Bhuyan Samaj*, the *Gond Samaj*, the *Kissan Samaj* and the *Paudi Bhuyan Samaj* which are the highest decision making bodies of the respective caste/ tribal groups. These institutions are institutionalised at the various levels, such as village level, intermediary level and district level. Each *Samaj* is managed by a tribal headman, who is a deeply respected person. These institutions are functioning within their respective caste members. So in all the villages, there is no unitary village level council and the role of the caste or group leaders is confined within their respective caste or social group only.

However, in any common matter of the village, these leaders usually sit together and take the decision collectively, which sometimes create conflicting scenario. In the context of changing political-economy, these institutions are observed to be quite aware about such changes happened within their own groups and their villages.

In the case of Koraput district, the functioning of the traditional tribal self-governance system and institutional arrangement is quite different from Sundargarh district. A main reason of such difference is prevalence of the homogeneous tribal groups in the villages and the existing socio-cultural set up. In Koraput, the concept of a traditional village council under the village headman is quite strong and these councils play a greater role in the socio-cultural and politico-economic matters of the villages. Though there are various non-tribal groups living in the villages, but they have also much regards towards the tribal dominated village council and its institutional arrangement. In all the 8 sampled village councils, the headman belongs to the Tribes, that of a particular tribal groups, either from the *Perajas* or from the *Gadabas*. In each village, there are two persons such as the village priest (*Disari*) and the village communicator (*Bariki*), those who are the parts of the functioning of the Village Councils.

Each council has a unique pattern of institutional arrangements, though there are functional differences observed among these institutions in the sampled villages. The functioning of these institutions in Koraput district was observed more informal in nature and based on the traditional value system like mutual trust and cooperation. But in the case of Sundargarh, on any issue related to the socio-economic and cultural matters of the village, the caste councils'

leaders usually take decisions collectively which sometimes lead into conflicting situation. This is because of the prevalence of multi-social tribal groups (heterogenous groups) and competition among them to control the overall governance system of the village.

In the matter of the functioning of these councils, it was observed that the participation of people forms an important part of the functioning of these institutions in both the districts. On the meeting days², one member from each tribal household usually comes to attend the meetings, though there is a restriction for the women in the meetings. In these meetings, the discussion usually takes place on the socio-cultural issues such as organisation of festivals, celebration of various rituals, settlement of disputes related to caste such as inter-caste marriage, inter and intra caste conflicts, performing of various religious practices such as the *Puja*, the *Parab*, the *Jatra* and the overall matters related to caste or social groups.

However, in the recent period, the meetings of these councils and issues that used to be discussed in these councils witnessed a change. Apart from the socio-cultural issues, the development issues were also figured out in the process of discussion. Our interaction with the various tribal leaders in the sampled villages revealed that, issues related to education, health, drinking water, forest conservation and plantation, child marriage, migration and various development programmes are being discussed in these meetings which show the changing nature of these institutions.

The issues related to the functioning of the Panchayats were also discussed in the council meetings in various villages. The issues such as planning for villages through the *Palli Sabhas* and

the *Gram Sabhas*, selection of beneficiaries, management of village forests, issues related to liquor, related to migration and issues related to implementation of various schemes and programmes of Panchayats were sometimes discussed in these meetings considering the importance of such issues. But the issues related to Panchayats have not been discussed frequently in these meetings.

(II) The Village/Caste Councils and the Pattern of Leadership:

The leadership at the village level, at the level of various traditional tribal institutions and at the Panchayat level forms three important components of local level leadership which was found during the process of data collection. Apart from these three components of leadership and categories of leader (village leader, council leader and Panchayat leader), there are also leaders of the various formal and informal institutions such as the leaders of the Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Clubs, Farmers' Groups, Joint Forest Management (JFM) and Community Forest Management (CFM) Committees, Village Health Committees, and Village Education Committees/School Committees. However, since one major aspect of this study was to understand the nature of the functioning of the leaders of various traditional tribal institutions and how these leaders are involved with the functioning of the Panchayats, so based on this, the data collection process was concentrated to unravel the functioning of these categories of leaders and their interface with the elected PRI Members (particularly the Ward Members and the Sarpanches). It was further focused on to understand the role of the traditional leaders and the PRI Members in the overall matters (Social, Economic, political and cultural) of the villages

and their present position in the policy and the economy of the villages.

The overall trend shows that the introduction of the Panchayats in the study areas has not been diluted in the importance of the traditional leaders as majority of the respondents acknowledged the importance of these leaders in the villages. The introduction of Panchayats has rather created many new leaders in the tribal villages. Many traditional tribal leaders have also become part of the Panchayats. In this case the provision of seat reservations for Tribals at the various tiers of the Panchayats has also contributed positively towards enhancing their degree of political participation and leadership quality. (FGD Note). Many traditional tribal leaders, those who have become members of the Panchayats acknowledged the provision of seat reservation which has helped them in contesting elections and projecting them as the future leaders of the Country.(Field Note/In-depth interview)

(III) Interfaces of the Tribal Councils and the Panchayats:

A main aspect of interface that was observed through this study is the nature and degree of the participation of the traditional tribal councils and the caste councils in the functioning of the Panchayats. The nature of participation of these councils in general and leaders of the councils in particular in the various matters of the functioning of the Panchayats in sampled villages was observed positive as well as negative, collaborative as well as contesting and individualistic oriented as well as institution oriented. The traditional tribal village councils and the caste councils have become instrumental in promoting peoples' participation in the functioning of the *Palli Sabhas* (Village Assembly) and the

Gram Sabhas (Panchayat Assembly) in the study area. This study in the various stages of data collection has also revealed positive interface between tribal councils and the *Palli Sabhas* in many cases, despite some degree of conflict and confusion (Field Note).

A main indicator taken on measuring the degree of interface between these two institutions was to understand the degree of the participation of the council leaders in the *Palli Sabha* meetings and issues raised by these leaders in these meetings. On this issue it was revealed that a majority of respondents have observed the participation (physical presence) of the council leaders in the *Palli Sabhas* (Village Assembly) and issues raised by these leaders on various aspects pertaining to their villages and their castes. In this context it is worth to be mentioned that the nature of participation of these leaders in *Palli Sabhas* was based on various socio-political attributes such as availability of the these persons at the time of *Palli Sabhas* (timing factor), nature of their relationship with the PRI Members (social relation), and understanding the overall socio-economic issues of their respective village and how those issues can be channelised through *Palli Sabhas* (level of awareness and personal interest). Their participation was also varying from place to place (geographic variance), from one meeting to another (institutional variance) and from one person to another person (personal variance). However, their participation in the meetings of the *Gram Sabhas* was not quite encouraging because of the various reasons like distance of the *Gram Sabha* venues³ from their villages.

Further, the participation of the council leaders in the matters of implementing various socio-economic development programmes of the

Panchayats were also observed in the sampled villages. In many cases (11 out of 16 sampled villages) the council leaders and the Ward Members are involved closely on various development matters of the villages. On the issue of socio-economic development of the villages and involvement of the council leaders, many of them pointed out that the Panchayat leaders usually take the suggestions of the traditional institutions and the traditional leaders at the time of planning for implementation of the various development programmes.

The perception of the respondents about the functioning of the traditional councils and the Panchayats also in many cases reinforced the degree of interface which was observed through this study. The respondents in all the sampled villages were observed to be more aware about the fact that the Panchayats' main work is to promote socio-economic development programmes while the traditional councils' main work is to look into the socio-cultural matters of the villages and their respective groups.

The caste factor in some cases (3 villages) was also observed as reinforcing the degree of interface. While interacting with various traditional leaders, they highlighted that 'the caste of the elected PR Members usually reinforce the degree of interface' between the two leaders (ward members and the traditional leaders) in particular and the two institutions in general. (In the sense that if the Panchayat members and the traditional leaders belong to the same caste, the relationship is believed to be more positive). In the case of one study village in Koraput district it was revealed that the nature of interface between the village council head and the ward member was extremely contesting because of the caste affiliation of the two leaders (the traditional leader

was from ST category and the Ward Member was from SC category). However, caste was not a factor in determining the degree of interface in all the cases.

However, in some sampled villages (5 of the 16 villages) there was a tension observed between the traditional leaders and Panchayat members because of the rapidly changing role of both the categories of leaders and increasing competition among them to control the political-economy of the villages. In this case many traditional leaders have also a strong feeling about the fact that the elected PR Members are the real leaders of the village which is observed to be emerged in the context of the institutionalisation of Panchayats. While discussing with the various traditional leaders in Koraput, it was revealed that because of the presence of the Panchayat leaders such as Sarpanch and Ward Member, many traditional leaders have lost their importance. Earlier (before the introduction of the Panchayats) the traditional leaders used to manage the overall affairs of the villages. During the Princely rule, they were part of the revenue collection system. As a part of this, they were responsible for the collection of land revenue (*sistu*). Even they were also part of the village justice system. But now things have been changed. The functions and importance of these leaders are believed to be diluted in the course of the emergence of the modern Panchayat. (Field Note, Koraput). However, this was not the case of all the study villages. In majority of villages our interaction revealed that 'there is a positive interface between the traditional leaders and PR Members'.

Conclusion:

The study conducted in two tribal districts of Odisha presents the changing nature of the traditional village councils and the caste councils in the tribal areas in the context of the changing polity and economy of the villages. In many cases, these institutions have become an important instrument of stimulating the socio-economic and cultural system of the people, particularly the tribals, despite the existence of the Panchayats. These institutions have been influencing the functioning of the Panchayats in a positive way, despite various modes of contestations observed in various sampled villages. In the context of the functioning of the PRIs and increasing involvement of these institutions in the matters of local governance and economic development, these councils have also faced multiple challenges, but these challenges have not paved the way to their extinction.

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1. The meetings of the tribal self-governing institutions usually take place before the time of observing various festivals (*Pujas, Parabs and Jattras*) to decide the manner, date and timing of organisation of these festivals.
2. The Gram Sabha meetings usually take place at the Panchayat offices which are far away from many remote villages.

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Biju Patnaik : A Pioneer of Women Empowerment

Balabhadra Ghadai

Women constitute 38% of India's population. They are valuable human resource and their socio-economic development is imperative for sustainable growth of the economy. Despite the implementation of several welfare measures by the Government of India as well as Government of Odisha, they lag behind men in many social indications like health, education and economic opportunities.

History bears ample evidences that from ancient to modern period women's condition-socially, politically and economically remained same and it kept changing with times. In early Vedic period they were very educated and there are references of women sages such as Maitreyi in ancient texts. But with the coming of various treatises of Manu i.e. Manusmriti, the status of women was relegated to a subordinate position to men.

During medieval period the condition of women got worsened with the advent of Muslim

rulers in India as also during the British period. But the British rule also brought western ideas into the country. A few enlightened Indians such as Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami



Vivekananda, Acharya Vinoba Bhave worked for the upliftment of women in India. During the freedom movement of India almost all the leaders of the struggle were of the view that women should be given equal status in the free India and all types of discriminatory practices must stop. India's Constitution makers and our founding

fathers were very determined to provide equal rights to both men and women. The Constitution of India provides provisions to secure equality in general and gender equality in particular. Various articles in the Constitution safeguard women rights by putting them at par with men-socially, politically and economically.

In the post-independence era a number of Acts have been implemented and a galaxy of luminous social reformers, thinkers, politicians and statesmen have voiced their concern for women empowerment. Among them Bijayananda Patnaik, popularly known as Biju Babu, the illustrious Chief Minister of Odisha, is remembered by posterity for the different steps he took for the empowerment and upliftment of women. To be specific, it was during his second term as Chief Minister of Odisha from 1990 to 1995 that he undertook a number of commendable programmes for the upliftment of women. Delivering Binod Kanungo Memorial Lecture 'Orissa of my Dream' on 27th July, 1992 at Bhubaneswar, instituted in memory of his dearest friend encyclopedist, he has said, ".....In my dream of Orissa of tomorrow, I will not like to hear a whisper about oppression to women. I dream of a day when women will play equal role with men. They will exercise with men equal power and enjoy the same privilege. This should be my dream of tomorrow the 21st century."

Biju Babu was well aware of the fact that education plays an important role in increasing the awareness level on women's right. He was instrumental in setting up a large number of Girl's High Schools, Women's Colleges, Women Polytechniques and Women's B.Ed Colleges throughout Odisha including a large number such institutions in tribal dominated areas. He gave

particular emphasis to science education, skill development and vocational training of girls. In 1994 he took a bold decision to raise the upper age limit by five years for women candidates for various State Govt. jobs.

With the objective of improving the economic and social status of women through the development of entrepreneurship, supply of credit and acquisition of skill, the Govt. of Odisha under the Chief Ministership of Biju Patnaik, established a Mahila Mandala Vikash Samabaya Nigam in 1991. It was a joint venture by the Govt. of India, the Govt. of Odisha and a number of Women organizations for implementing income generation schemes as well as redressing grievances.

In the second phase of his Chief Ministership, Odisha State Commission for Women came into existence in the year 1993 by virtue of Panchayati Raj Department Resolution No.11399, Dt.30.11.1992 which aims at protecting, preserving and safeguarding the rights and dignity of women folk in every sphere of life. The Commission is functioning as an apex body with the following objectives:

- I. To receive complaints of atrocities against women and to create mass awareness against all types of atrocities including dowry torture and dowry death.
- II. To establish co-ordination with Human Rights Protection Cell for elimination of torture.
- III. To involve Non-government Organizations for fighting against dowry problems and to rehabilitate destitute and deserted women.
- IV. To impress upon government for solution of women problems with provision of minimum wage.

- V. To ensure compulsory registration of marriage and to provide health care and maternity facilities.

Mahila Samruddhi Yojana (MSY) was another welfare step launched in 2nd October, 1993 with the objective of empowering the women through building thrift habit, self-reliance and confidence. Under the plan, the rural women of 18 years of above age can open their saving account in the rural post office of their own area with a minimum deposit of Rs.4 or in multipliers of Rs.4 to a maximum of Rs.300/-. On the amount not withdrawn for one year, 25% of the deposited amount is given to the depositor by the government in the form of encouragement amount.

Biju Patnaik, during his first spell of chief Minister augmented in Odisha the programmes of peoples' empowerment through the implementation of the Panchayati Raj system. He felt that the governance of a state would not lie only with the bureaucrats or with peoples' representation but it should be and must be based by collective participation of the people. Biju Babu was the first leader in India to take very bold step in regard to grass root level democracy and participation of women in Panchayati Raj system. During his second term as Chief Minister, he was more passionate about women development through empowerment as he once said, "I have always maintained that development will be of no value until we improve the social condition of our mothers and sisters, 30% of the seats I have reserved for them in new Panchayati Raj System. I am confident that the mothers and sisters who run their household so efficiently will run the Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad with

equal competence. Since almost half of the country's population is women, any further negligence in the field of women's welfare will be creating awareness among women and assuring them of their legitimate rights and privileges". And true to his word, he saw to it that the Orissa Zilla Parishad Act of 1991 and the Gram Panchayat Samiti Amendment Act of 1992 were passed by the Odisha Assembly that provided for 33% of reservation for women including SC and ST women. Further provision was made so that one third of the Zilla Parishad would have exclusively women chairpersons. In case of Panchayat Samities and Gram Panchayats one of the two office bearers, i.e. Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson in case of Samiti and Sarpanch or Naib-Sarpanch in case of Gram Panchayat must be a woman. As a mark of his profound love for Panchayati Raj institution the people of Odisha observe his Birth Day (March 5) as Panchayati Raj Divas.

It is difficult to give in detail in the space of this short article the contributions of Biju Babu what the nation owes to him. As we come to the end of his centenary celebration, I hope and earnestly hope that the Government of Odisha will try its best to follow the ideas and ideals of Biju Babu that may enable it to carry on the unfinished tasks of the departed soul.

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Panchayati Raj in Odisha : Problems and Suggestions

Rabindra Kumar Behuria

A few days before death Gandhiji wrote in Young India "True democracy can not be worked out by twenty persons at the centre. It shall be worked out only by the villagers." Again in Harijan he wrote : "Independence must begin at the bottom when Panchayati Raj established public opinion will do what violence can never do" [Harijan, 26.07.46 and 01.07.47].

Our Constitution in Article-40 directs to form village Panchayat as the unit of self governance. In 1958 to make Community Development Programme a reality Balwant Ray Committee recommended to introduce 3-tier Panchayati Raj in the entire country with the objective of removing illiteracy, poverty and diseases. It was however amended in 1962, 1965 and 1968. The 1965 amendment provided direct election of the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat by the people. The 1968 amendment substituted the District Advisory Council in the place of Zilla Parishad.

The Panchayati Raj system during 1950's and early 1960s was under the control of different departments like Board of Revenue, Dept. of Agriculture and Community Development and Political services Department before it was placed under the Department of Planning and Coordination with a secretary to head the Department. In July 1962, a new Department of

Community Development and Panchayati Raj was created. The Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads and former District Boards came under its purview.

In 1978 Ashok Mehta Committee offered some important suggestions on the basis of which some states introduced Panchayati Raj. The recommendations could not be implemented in all states due to the short-life of Janata Government. Rajiv Gandhi Government in 1989 had offered a proposal to introduce uni-pattern Panchayati Raj in all states. Strong opposition of some states and the sudden demise of Rajiv Gandhi brought an end to this effort. In early 1990, Biju Pattnaik in his second spell as CM of Odisha was more determined and exhibited sheer self confidence and unremitting zeal to streamline Panchayati Raj. For him, "Let them chalk out plans, schemes for the improvement of their respective areas and let them execute their plans." According to Biju Babu the goals of the Panchayati Raj can not be fructified unless there is proper devolution of financial power to Panchayats. His Government made concerted effort for appointment to a special Finance Commission to look after the domain of devolution of financial powers. Moreover, Biju Patnaik introduced in Odisha a progressive Panchayati

Raj providing 30 per cent reservation for women to applause of the people of the state.

Recognizing the importance of the Panchayati Raj, Article 40 (Directive Principle of state policy of our Constitution states, "The state shall take steps to organise village Panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of Local-self Government."

April 24, 1993 is a Red Letter day in the history of Panchayati Raj in India as on this day the Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 came into force to provide constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions.

The Salient Feature of the Act :

- (i) To provide 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all states.
- (ii) To hold Panchayat elections regularly every five years.
- (iii) To provide reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women (not less than 33%).
- (iv) To appoint State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards the financial powers of the Panchayats.
- (v) To constitute District Planning Committee to prepare Draft Development Plan for the district as a whole.

Powers and Responsibilities :

According to the Constitution, Panchayats shall be given powers and authority to function as institutions of self - Government. The following powers and responsibilities are to be delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level:

- (i) Plan for economic development and social justice.

- (ii) Implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice in relation to 29 subjects given in Eleventh schedule of the Constitution.

- (iii) To levy, collect appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

The history of Panchayati Raj has been one of success and failure in different states. A phase of success during 1959-64, a phase of stagnation during 1965-69, and phase of failure during 1969-77. In state of Maharashtra and Gujrat, Panchayati Raj has shown a good scene of success and took planning and development sincerely.

This Act gives constitutional status to the Gram Sabha. According to Article 234 B of the Constitution, Gram Sabha means a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls of a village within the area of the Gram Panchayat. As per Article 243 A, a Gram Sabha may exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village as the legislature of a state, by law, provide. Accordingly all villagers over 18 years of age, have an inherent right to determine their own destiny. This is the forum where even a poor villager can make his presence felt. Moreover, Gram Sabha plays a very important role in functioning of the Gram Panchayats in ensuring transparency in the working and equitable distribution to benefits in creation of community assets bringing about social involvement in the developmental process.

On December 24, 1996, the Panchayat network has been extended to the tribal areas of the country. The provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Schedule Areas) Act 1996, extends Panchayats to the tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Gujrat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan. A conference of Ministers

of Panchayati Raj of the state was held on July 11, 2001 in New Delhi, to discuss and analyse the progress in respect to devolution of power upon Panchayats and to find out the steps needed to make the Panchayats emerge as real “Institutions of Self-Government”. The necessity of time bound and regular election to Panchayats, completion of devolution of powers with regard to the 29 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule and the constitution of the District planning committee was felt.

On an average Panchayat covers two to three villages and a population of approximate 2400. There are 4526 Panchayat Samities at Block / Tehsil Level. There are 330 Zilla Parishads covering about 76% of the district in the Country and Zilla Parishad on an average 13-14 Panchayat Samities and about 660 Gram Panchayats. If all the units became active and sincerely plan for the real development of the villages, there is no reason that the villages do not make rapid progress. The institution of Panchayati Raj, enshrines the villages as model units for the development. It is the foundation on which lies the fortress of democracy. Success of Panchayati Raj depends much upon the enlightenment of the rural people, real support and involvement of the general mass.

Odisha Panchayat Laws were amended in consistent with the provision of the Act and Provision of Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Area Act, 1996 (PESA). Odisha is the first state to conduct PRI election in 2002 according to PESA Act, thereby ensuring social justice to scheduled tribe communities. Government of Odisha is committed to strengthen PRI as institutions of self-Government. In the year 2003, 21 subjects of 11 departments were transferred to Panchayati Raj Institutions, District Level Officers, Block Level Officers, and village level functionaries of 11 departments have been made

accountable to Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat respectively for the implementation of subjects / schemes transferred to PRIs. They will place plans and schemes for discussion and approval in the meeting of the respective level of PRIs for economic development and social justice of the people. Government has signed an MoU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India for effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries as per the mandate of 73rd Amendment of the Constitution.

Working of PR in Odisha :

The structure of PRIs varies from state to state from 3-tier structure in village, Block and District level to a 2 tier structure at the village and Block level. A few states had only a single tier panchayat at village level. The experiment was started in Rajasthan with 3 statutory institution of Village Panchayats, Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads. This 3 tier model structure was adopted by the state of Odisha and has continued to operate over a period of three decades up to the historic amendment of 1992. Out of 3 tiers of Panchayati Raj, the intermediate - tier, the Panchayat Samiti is made the implementing agency for all programmes.

Funds for community Development given as Grant-in-Aid to Panchayat Samities, Zilla Parishads were abolished in the year 1968. The Panchayat Samiti emerged as an important institution for implementing developmental programmes, poverty alleviation programmes and social security schemes. However, even before the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution, Odisha had taken the lead in providing reservation in favour of SCs, STs and women in 3-tier PRIs. A distinguishing feature of the Panchayati Raj System in Odisha is that either the Chairperson or the Vice-Chairman of all the 3-tier PRIs is a

woman. Despite these important roles, PSs and GPs could not emerge an institution of self-Government. Those wishing to take a deeper look into the malady would find factionalism, casteism, communalism and groupism and the nasty game of politics that has been carried to the doorsteps of innocent villagers. In fact, the PR began to totter and in some states even crumble, under the heavy weight of political factionalism, scramble for control over patronage among politicians and bureaucrats, scarcity of economic resources and not the least of all the general apathy of the people.

Activities and Achievement of PR Dept. : Odisha Scenario

The Panchayati Raj Department has been entrusted with implementation of various Poverty Alleviation programmes in the state. The Poverty Alleviation programmes mainly cater to the needs of rural families living Below the Poverty Line. These programmes can be grouped under the following four broad categories :

(1) Self Employment Programme :

(i) National Rural Livelihood Mission :

During the financial year 2014-15, up to January 2015, an amount of Rs.3709.28 Lakh has been utilised out of the total available funds of Rs. 9756.13 Lakh and out of 57237 number of targeted SHGs 5132 numbers of SHGs have been validated 4088 SHG and 1044 SHGs have been graded as Grade-1 and Grade - II respectively out of total functional SHGs.

(2) Wage Employment Programme :

(i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) :

The basic object of this scheme is to enhance livelihood security of the rural poor in rural areas by providing at least 100 days of

guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work. This work guarantee can also serve other objectives like generating productive assets, protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural - urban migration and fostering social equity among other.

It is a centrally sponsored programme with the following funding pattern between the centre and the state. While the central Government will bear the entire cost of wages of unskilled manual workers and 75% of material cost and wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers, the state Government will bear 25% of material cost and wages of skilled and semi-skilled workers. In case of failure to provide employment within the stipulated period, i.e. within 15 days from the date of application, unemployment allowance has to be paid to the concerned job seekers and the same is to be borne by the State Government.

Up to the end of 2007-08, 24 districts were covered under this scheme. During the financial year i.e. 2008-09, six more districts have been added with effect from 01.04.08 and the SGRY scheme which was being implemented in these districts, namely Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Khurda, Nayagarh and Puri have been merged with MGNREGS. At present all the 30 districts are being covered under MGNREGS.

Up to January 2015 in the financial year 2014-15, an amount of Rs.105658.47 Lakh has been utilised against the total available fund of Rs.106980.26 Lakh. The utilisation of fund is 99%. 405.60 Lakh person days have been generated against the total target of 633.13 persondays.

3. Rural Housing Programme :

(i) Indira Awas Yojana :

The scheme provides coverage of atleast 60% SC/ST BPL rural households and 40% from other categories. Priority is given to freed bonded Labourers, fire victims, families of defence personnel and paramilitary force killed in action and physically handicapped persons. The beneficiaries are selected by Gram Sabha / Pali Sabha from among rural families living Below Poverty Line. Grant-in-Aid is provided to the beneficiaries under the scheme and houses are constructed by themselves. It is a centrally sponsored scheme with funding pattern of 75:25 between centre and state.

Up to January, 2015 in financial year 2014-15, an amount of Rs.41926.72 Lakh has been utilised out of available funds of Rs.172577.54 Lakh. The utilisation of funds is 24%. 13528 number of houses have been completed against the total target of 152966 houses.

(ii) Indira Awas Yojana (FRA) :

Government of India sanctioned 99,986 number of additional houses under IAY in 18 IAP districts with an amount of Rs.75000/- per unit and 10 Non IAP districts (except Jagatsinghpur and Puri districts) Rs.70000/- per unit for the beneficiaries of Scheduled Tribe and other Traditional Forest dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 during 2011-12. During 2013-14, an amount of Rs.141.30 crore has been released against the target of 36238 number of houses. It is centrally sponsored scheme with funding pattern of 75.25 between centre and state.

Up to January 2015 in the financial year 2014-15, an amount of Rs.6773.04 Lakh has been utilised out of available funds of Rs.17853.10 Lakh. The utilisation of fund is 38%.

3720 houses have been completed out of under construction houses of previous year.

(iii) Biju Pucca Ghar (BPG) :

The 'Mo Kudia' scheme is termed as "Biju Pucca Ghar" (BPG) Scheme. The unit cost for new construction of dwelling house for the year 2014-15 is Rs.70,000/- for non IAP districts and Rs.75,000/- for IAP districts. The entire fund is provided by the state Government. Up to January 2015, in the financial year 2014-15, an amount of Rs.10779.26 Lakh has been utilised out of available funds of Rs.76863.26 Lakh. The utilisation of fund is 14%. 1108 number of houses have been completed against the total target of 42829 houses.

4. Infrastructure Development :

(i) Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) :-

The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) is designed to redress regional imbalances in development. The fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows in to 20 identified districts. It is a central plan scheme being implemented from 2006-07. The entire fund is borne by Govt of India.

Up to January 2015 in the financial year 2014-15, 6484 number of projects have been completed with expenditure of Rs.19783.64 lakh out of the total available fund of Rs.3103.07 lakh. The utilization of fund is 64%.

(ii) Gopabandhu Grameen Yojana (GGY) :

It provides additional developmental assistance to targeted 11 districts the state which are not covered under Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). The principal objective is to provide rural infrastructure primarily Bijli, Sadak and Pani to every revenue village in the identified districts.

It is a state plan scheme launched in 2006-07 and the entire fund is provided by the State Government. Expenditure to the tune of Rs.6876.03 lakh has been incurred up to January, 2015 in the financial year 2014-15 against the available funds of Rs.24877.69 lakh which constitutes 28%. 3027 number of works have been completed out of 6221 number of works taken up.

(iii) Cement Concrete Road (CC Road):

The State Government have decided to give thrust to the scheme of construction of cement concrete roads in the villages in every nook and corner of the state with special focus on SC/ ST / PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group) habitations. It is a state plan scheme launched in 2010-11 and the entire fund is provided by the State Government.

Expenditure to the tune of Rs.25495.75 lakh has been incurred up to January 2015 in the financial year 2014-15 against the available funds of Rs.54440.54 lakh which constitutes 47%. 9168 number of CC Roads (991.92 kms) have been completed out of 15964 number of CC Roads taken up.

Problems :

Diverse and huge problems in the functioning and working of the Panchayati Raj system which are facing in the day to day activities can be broadly described as mentioned below :

Initially there was domination of the bureaucracy over PRIs. The agent of implementation of all major programmes (CDP or IRDP) has always been the state administration, various parallel bodies that have grossly undermined the importance of PRIs.

Secondly, inadequate financial resources to carry out the administration is a serious problem. The grant-in-aid is the major component

of the PRI revenue. The Government should realise the difficulty and try to solve it permanently.

Besides, other major problems are also affecting the structure. These are :

- (a) Incompatible relations among 3-tiers;
- (b) Undemocratic composition of various PR institutions;
- (c) Political bias, and
- (d) Uncordial relations between officials and public.

A very peculiar thing is being observed that inspite of lot of powers given at grassroot level, the actual development work is not being carried out. Corruption and groupism at village level, casteism, nepotism, in creating community assets is gradually becoming rampant. A lot in the fields of education, health, family planning, land improvement, minor irrigation, sanitation, animal husbandry etc are to be done, but instead of concentrating on development activities the elected representatives are found busy in fulfilling their personal interest, and benefiting to their caste men or other fellows which directly indirectly serve their vested interests. If the evil of corruption, casteism groupism be allowed to penetrate to grass root level, the whole system of Panchayati Raj will be collapsed one day and it shall be most disastrous to the democratic values envisaged in adopting the Panchayati Raj institutions.

Suggestions:

The Government should take steps to spread education rapidly. The government should also change its former attitude towards the local bodies. The local bodies need better personnel as well as better office organisation and methods. The local bodies should have adequate finance at the disposal to take up manifold developmental activities. Local bodies should be away as far as possible, from the arena of nasty party politics.

Last but not the least, the Panchayati Raj and other local self governing institutions, public life should be free from corruption. People and the leaders should possess a high moral standard. They should be honest, truth-binding, vigilant and well-informed. The establishment of the Panchayati Raj has led to the quest of new leadership. The new leadership should be “development oriented” and not “Power-motivated”. The success of Panchayati Raj much depends on this pattern of emerging leadership. If it is successful, it will bring to a new era of prosperity. We may quote De Jocquevilla, “Local institution constitute the strength of free nations. A nation may establish a system of free government, but without local institutions, it can not have the spirit of liberty.”

Conclusion :

The whole exercise of decentralisation of powers is equivalent to the transfer of power from British to the Indians. The Panchayati Raj set up is still in experimental stage. Every experiment has its problems and promises. The Panchayati Raj may have weakness today, but it will be a vital force of tomorrow in shaping and developing the richer and prosperous life of people of India. It requires a movement of the masses. For mobilising the masses for a new task, the leaders are to be trained. It is needless to say that the Panchayati Raj system acts like the grassroot of democracy and a time may come when Jay Prakash Narayan’s dream of “Gram Sabha to Lok Sabha” may be materialised through it. Besides, democratic decentralisation took its shape for better administration and developmental perspectives for quick rural development and cooperation of local people. State Government does not possess adequate wisdom of local affairs and problems. It constitutes a significant constitution to the theory and practice of nation - building activities in the developing areas.

In the words of Professor Dr. Anup Dash, “Given the history and culture of the functioning of Government institutions, especially in rural communities- poor sense of accountability, no learning culture, no culture of interacting with citizens around common goals and objectives, the Result - Based Panchayat Governance is a Paradigm shift and involves cultural change among public officials at the grass root level. But as the process will move, it will generate a lot of hope, excitement, positivism and confidence as also ownership among the different governance partners. Odisha should lead this new initiative and provide a model for others.

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Biju Patnaik : A Man of Patriotic Adventure

Dr. Saroj Kumar Patnaik

The final struggle against British rule in India was launched on 9th August 1942 and many young men and women of our country, in almost every region emerged into standard bearer of Quit India struggle launched by Mahatma Gandhi with a command to every adult Indian to 'Do or Die' for the country's liberation.

Among thousands of youth who came forward to take up the challenge, Mr. Biju Patnaik, Chief Pilot of the Dalmia Jain Airways (nationalised after 1947) was one of the most fearless (dare-e'-devil) who mobilised his fellow pilots and inspired them to help the 'Underground Directorate' consisting of Jaya Prakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Achut Patabardhan, Aruna Asaf Ali etc. The problem of communicating their secret plans to their comrades of underground units at Calcutta, Madras, Bombay and New Delhi was facilitated by Mr. Biju Patnaik. For instance, when Sri Rajgopalchariji wanted to meet and dissuade others from carrying out the plans of underground resistance Biju Babu flew Rajaji from Madras to New Delhi to meet Jaya Prakash Narayan in January 1942-43. The British bureaucracy was infuriated over Biju Patnaik and appointed whole army of informers for the specific task of unmasking this dangerous 'airmen' and later he was arrested. But the admiration for men



like him and his courageous comrades remain undiminished even today. He was an adventurer par excellence and an extraordinary pilot. The private aircraft company which Biju Babu joined was also involved by British govt. in the Second World War to carry men and military equipments. Biju Babu took dozens of flights to flew over the Himalayas to China, carried the British families from Burma to London and also carried vital

military information to Stalingrad in Russia. For his big name as an efficient pilot, even Viceroy Wavell did not mind of being one of his passengers. To quench his thirst for extra-adventure he flew underground congress leaders like Jaya Prakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Aruna Asaf Ali, Manubhai Shaha etc. and sometimes dropping pamphlets supporting Azad Hind Fauj of Netaji. The British could hardly suspect that such a truthful efficient pilot of their transport unit could have established any secret liaison with the most 'dangerous' underground revolutionaries. Jaya Prakash Narayan was looked upon as an extremely dreaded man by the British Police for which they spared no means not any effort. His frantically sought-after fugitive found in Biju Patnaik, his most reliable escort in giving him hidden air-lifts from one place of India to other in his transport plane. Jaya Prakash Narayan was eager to establish contact with Netaji in Burma and chose Biju Patnaik to make a air-dash to Akyab for the purpose. But before he could succeed in his secret mission he was suddenly arrested and thrown into a solitary jail cell in a British prison where he was kept enchained for many days, even he was not allowed to be unchained during night. He had to face brutal torture at the hands of British but remained definitely unyielding. During second world war also he directed military help to Russia against Nazi. Germany and earned pride and glory for himself and endowed with gallantry awards during Golden Jubilee of USSR.

A fresh opportunity came for him after his release from jail to throw himself again into another rare feat of revolutionary adventure. In 1948, an Asian conference was being held in Delhi in support of the freedom struggle of Indonesia. On the advice of the Prime Minister Pt. Nehru he

took upon himself a daring assignment of contacting the Indonesian leaders and air-lifting them to Delhi. Java was then under the siege of the army, navy and air force of the Dutch Military. This hazardous move was made amazingly look like something romantic. In his Dakota Plane accompanied by his young wife Gyan Patnaik which was made to appear like going to make an excursive flight to the old city of Batavia (now called Jakarta). As he landed in Singapore, came a Dutch message threatening that his aircraft would be shot down if it entered the Indonesian airspace.

Biju Babu roared from his hotel room : "Resurgent India does not recognise Dutch colonial Sovereignty over the Indonesian people. If my aircraft is shot down, every Dutch plane flying across Indian skies will be shot down in retaliation."

He also dashed off a message to Prime Minister Pt. Nehru : "Take necessary steps should my aircraft be shot down".

As the world watch him with admiration, the 32 year old ace pilot eluded the Dutch, landed in Jakarta and successfully flew back to Delhi carrying in his plane the rescued leaders of Indonesian freedom struggle Dr. Mohammad Hatta and Mr. Sjahrir. The very presence of these two Indonesian leaders in the Delhi Conference proved fruitful for the freedom of their country in recognition of which the Indonesian govt. profoundly acknowledged their debt to Biju Babu decorating him with highest civilian honour 'Bhumi Putra' in return for the bravery the Indian leader had displayed at his hours of crisis.

He became the focal point of all activities relating to India support to the Indonesian freedom struggle. He was also called upon by President

Suekarno to carry out certain top secret and important assignments for the Indonesian Govt. with senior British Cabinet Ministers like Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr. Bevan, the foreign minister of U.K. having the full authority of the President and his Government.

For an adventurer like Biju Babu, every call is properly listened to. Once more he jumped to undertake another task of gun-running from Burma in the aid of Nepalese uprising of 1953 against the Rana regime. Ranas were ultimately ousted from the control of authority of Nepal.

Thus his background is one of the challenge, adventure, fearlessness and seeking protection in every sphere of his activity. He was a dare-e'-devil freedom fighter, with patriotic adventure par-excellence. His mind was as broad as sky and as high as the Himalayas. The call of the unlimited sky made his mind romantic. He was endowed with exceptional talent and courage.

Jawaharlal Nehru was moved by his "energy and certainability" and drew him to politics and after about more than five decades in politics, through good and bad times, he retained his spirit of adventure. For the image of the archetypal adventure stuck to the man whom many considered a potential successor to Pt. Nehru as Prime Minister of the country for his courage and gallantry and that at a time when the country was not as desperate in its hunt for a Prime Minister as it is now. Like his role model Napoleon he deleted the word 'impossible' from his dictionary, who inspired him a deep interest in military strategy. Even Pt. Nehru had to consult him on military strategies.

During 1962 Indo-China war Pt. Nehru appointed him as Special war Advisor. He was also a front runner with all requisite qualification

for the post of Defence Minister after the war. Nehru had profound belief in Biju Babu's ability as a man who could always be at his command in a short notice. But as politics would have it, it was Mr. Yashwant Rao Charan who was called upon to take up the job relinquished by Mr. Krishna Menon.

Pt. Nehru also sought his help to thwart Pakistan's sinister design of occupying Kashmir. The King of Kashmir Maharaja Hari Singh has already signed the 'Instrument of Accession' with India on 26th October 1947, but Pakistan had by then forcibly occupied a major chunk and advancing towards Sri Nagar. An hour delay would have turned the pages of history to cost India heavily. The Bannihal Pass was closed but the Indian troops had to be taken to Kashmir valley through a narrow strip which really posed a challenge for the mercurial pilot. However, Biju Babu flew to the valley in his plane with troops on 27th October 1947 and forced Pakistan to recede.

Jawaharlal Nehru has rightly said, "Biju is remarkable, dynamic young man who is utmost daring-dashing and pushing". Once Nehru asked Bidhan Chandra Roy, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal – 'Have you met a young man called Biju Patnaik?' He replied, 'I have heard about him, but not yet met'. Nehru said, "meet him sometime, I like such forward looking brave people. The only difficulty is that 'sometime you do not know where he will land.'"

During 1965 Indo-Pak war Indonesia govt. was against India for some reason and President Sukarno was sending three military submarines and one mirage airforce plane to help Ayub Khan of Pakistan. On the advice of the Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Sastri, Biju Babu requested President Sukarno to withdraw the

naval fleet but he refused. Biju Babu roared, ‘I had sacrificed my life for the cause of your nation and you will help my country during this critical moment’, and President Sukarno had to ultimately recede from the scene.

During the years of emergency when all the big political leaders like Ashok Mehta, Chandrasekhar, Raj Narayan, Pilo Mody, Devi Lal, L. K. Advani, Madhu Dandabate, Bairon Singh Sekhawat and Samar Guha were arrested and put to Rohtak jail, virtually leaders’ jail, Biju Babu became its unrivalled mentor for all his distinguished friends. The long detention which created many complications in jail life turning the prisoners unwearingly fretful, sensitive and often melancholic, Biju Babu arranged to provide outlet from such spurts of moods like arranging for their food, health, sports, entertainment and telling them his thrilling and adventurous stories. He also told them how he arranged night-shelter for Nehru when Delhi was thick with rumours about a probable coup after the Indian army suffered shameful reverses at the hand of the Chinese in 1962.

Of course Biju Babu was not in habit of writing them all except keeping them in memories. Of course he had a passion for reading. It we could have preserved his narrations what he did in recklessly risking his life while performing many patriotic acts in the past and tape record the whole

story it would have been indeed a real glaring tribute to the patriotic adventure of the octogenarian on his **birth centenary celebration year 2016-17**.

He was in a position to chase an opponent up the tree and roll up his sleeves for an encounter, a rare feat at his age. An adventurer in life, and attitude he had turned politics too into an adventure of sorts. He had a strain of defiance in whatever he does or says, stemming from his robust self-confidence and can’t-take-a-defeat stance.

The people of Odisha recognise Biju Patnaik as their most eminent political leader but particularly the younger generation have something more to know about him. He belongs to that dare-e’-devil genera of old patriots who in their younger days shirked no challenge to respond to many patriotic calls of adventure for the cause of their country. For those young men and women of Odisha and other parts of the country as well, who aspire to experience the thrill of the adventure of life, not merely for any empty excitement but in fulfilment of a higher cause-Biju Patnaik’s life will instill inspiration and is a becoming example for them.

Dr. Saroj Kumar Patnaik, 64A, Kalpana Area, BJB Nagar, Bhubaneswar – 751014.

Address of Hon'ble Governor Dr. S.C. Jamir to the Odisha Legislative Assembly on February 22, 2017

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members,

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome all of you to the Ninth Session of 15th Odisha Legislative Assembly. Let me take this opportunity to extend my heartiest New Year Greetings to all the Hon'ble Members of this August House as well as to the people of Odisha.

1. This August House has expressed its deep condolence on the sad demise of Late Jayalalithaa Jayaraman, Ex-Chief Minister of Tamilnadu. This house has also expressed its condolence on the sad demise of Late Raghunath Patnaik, Jagannath Mallik, former Ministers, Lalit Mohan Gandhi, former Minister of State, Late Biswanath Sahu, Biswanath Nayak, Rudramadhab Ray, Madhabananda Behera, Durgasankar Das, Sribatsa Nayak, Abhimanyu Ransingh, Binod Bihari Singh Bariha, Lalatendu Bidyadhar Mahapatra, Gorsango Sabar, Bhanu Charan Naik, all former members of this August House and Late Suwendu Mishra, Ex-Captain, 23, Para Regiment, Late Md. Abu Baker, Ex-Commando, Andhra Pradesh, Late Pitabas Majhi, Ex-Jawan, Late Narayan Chandra Pradhan, and Ranjan Dash, Ex-Constables, C.R.P.F., Late Paran Hansda, Ex-Constable, Odisha Police, whose contribution towards the State was very significant. I request Hon'ble Members to join me in paying tribute to Late Kumar Behera, Basanta Kumar Singh Dandapat and Rajkishore Ram all former Members of this August House and Late Somanath Sisha, Havildar, Sanjay Kumar Das, Subarna Kumar Raj, Pradipta Kumar Rout, Arun Kumar Nayak, Ganesh Prasad Sha all former Assistant Drivers and Tulasidhar Majhi, former Driver Havildar of the Odisha Police who attained martyrdom in the Landmine blast on Sunki Ghati of Koraput District on 1st February 2017. The House may convey our heartfelt condolence to the bereaved families of the departed souls.

2. The State Government is celebrating the Birth Centenary of the legendary Biju Patnaik, and the 80th year of formation of Odisha as a separate State in befitting manner. To commemorate the completion of 200 years of Buxi Jagabandhu led Paika Rebellion of Khordha, a valiant uprising of soldiers prior to Independence that occurred in 1817, my Government proposes to organise events befitting the heroic history of the land and its people.

3. I am proud that my Government has stood firmly with the people of Odisha to ensure their due share of water from Mahanadi River. To prevent the unauthorised construction activities by the Chhatisgarh

Government on upstream of river Mahanadi, and to safeguard the interest of the people of Odisha for whom Mahanadi River is the lifeline, my Government has moved the Government of India to constitute a tribunal to resolve the issue and also moved the Apex Court of the country under Article 131 of the constitution of India. My Government will leave no stone unturned to protect the interest of the people of Odisha on river Mahanadi.

4. We live in an era largely driven by technology, and my Government is very keen to spread and assimilate the use of such technologies that will positively impact our living conditions. While solving social or economic issues, improvising and aligning governance measures to meet the challenges ahead of us, one of the foremost interventions of my Government would be to leverage technology in all our endeavours for achieving excellence.

5. To align with the challenges and needs of our times and to bring in new focus and direction, my Government has changed the name of Agriculture Department to Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment, Planning and Co-ordination Department to Planning and Convergence Department, Employment and Technical Education and Training Department to Skill Development and Technical Education Department, Information Technology Department to Electronics and Information Technology Department and a new Department called Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disability is created by my Government bifurcating Women and Child Development Department.

6. My Government has consistently and continuously strived to achieve a sustainable and inclusive higher economic growth, accelerated overall development, reduction of regional, social and gender disparities, faster rate of poverty reduction and allocation of higher resources for planned development of the State. The State Plan outlay has been increased to Rupees 50,200 crores for Annual Plan: 2016-17 from Rupees 11,000 crores for Annual Plan: 2010-11.

7. Odisha has made impressive achievements in terms of economic growth and poverty reduction. The size of Odisha's economy has increased by 22.27 percent in real terms (at 2011-12 prices) during the last six years, in terms of GSDP, achieving an annual average growth rate of 6.23 percent. The real per capita income increased from Rupees 47,632 in 2011-12 to Rupees 61,678 in 2016-17 at 2011-12 prices. The growth rate in economy which was 4.61 percent in 2012-13 has reached 7.94 percent in 2016-17.

8. The State Government has recommended 17,596 projects worth Rupees 7,686.88 crores for RIDF-XXII for 2016-17 and has so far availed RIDF loan amounting to Rupees 17, 148.07 crores for 1.99 lakh sanctioned projects.

9. My Government has provided Rupees 250 crores in the Budget of 2016-17 under Biju KBK Yojana for implementation of projects and programmes in the field of irrigation, welfare of ST and SC and connectivity in the KBK districts. Western Odisha Development Council is working relentlessly to reduce regional imbalances and accelerate the pace of development in Western Odisha. Similarly, Biju Kandhamal O' Gajapati Yojana is being implemented since 2009-10 in Kandhamal and Gajapati districts out of State's own resources for infrastructure development in the areas of roads, electricity, water resource and livelihood initiatives.

10. To increase the participation of local people and their representatives in the planning process, funds to the tune of Rupees 1 crore under MLALAD and Rupees 50 lakh under Special Development Programme (SDP) per constituency is being released every year to be utilised for small but essential projects / works based on felt needs of the local people.

11. My Government has amended Odisha District Planning Committee Act during 2015 and corresponding Rules during 2016 for better participation of public representatives in planning process. To encourage the participation of more women in the planning process, as nearly as may be, but not less than one-half of the total number of elected members of the District Planning Committee has now been reserved for women. Similarly, the posts of Vice Chairperson of the District Planning Committees have been reserved for women in those districts where the Chairpersons nominated by the Government are not women for their effective participation in the decision making process. Following the amended provisions of the Act, 11 members of the Odisha Legislative Assembly have also been nominated as Chairperson of DPCs along with the Ministers.

12. Innovation is important at all stages of development. My Government has always encouraged achievements in the field of Innovation and partnered with National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela, Berhampur University, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bhubaneswar and Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla for establishment of Innovation-cum-Incubation Centres in the State. In order to focus on convergence in the planning process a Convergence Cell has been created in the Planning and Convergence Department.

13. Odisha Knowledge Hub (OKH) Lecture Series has been launched with a view to promote innovative ideas in different priority areas of development and governance by inviting eminent persons in different fields to deliver lectures and participate in discussion with senior functionaries of the State. District level functionaries are also participating in the event through Video Conferencing. A new Scheme “Critical Gap Fund for District Plan” has been introduced in 2016-17 to address the basic rural infrastructure needs on priority with special emphasis on zero connectivity areas, health and drinking water etc.

14. The State has achieved significant improvement in finance during last 15 years through various fiscal reform measures, as a result of which the State is able to undertake various developmental activities from its own resources.

15. The effort of my Government in achieving debt sustainability from a position of debt stress is significant. The Debt Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) ratio has been brought down to 15.7 percent in 2015-16 from the level of 50.7 percent in 2002-03. Similarly, the Interest Payment to Revenue Receipt ratio has been brought down from 40.2 percent in 2001-02 to 4.9 percent in 2015-16. Prudent level of debt stock has now given the State an opportunity to go for higher capital investment through borrowing, which would accelerate the growth process.

16. For increasing capital investment both in economic and social sector, the State has started borrowing from the Open Market from 2014-15 after a gap of eight years within the overall borrowing

ceiling fixed by Government of India. As the State has been generating revenue surplus continuously from 2005-06, the borrowed fund is entirely utilized for creation of income generating capital assets.

17. The impact of demonetization of specified bank notes on the economy is yet to be assessed fully. However, in the aftermath of the withdrawal of legal tender character of specified bank notes of Rupees 1,000 and 500 denominations, economic activity has been interrupted in the segments which are cash intensive. It has brought about a steep deceleration of State's economy and public finances in the initial period. It is evidenced by a decline of over 11% in the own tax collection in December, 2016 over the previous month.

18. Priority of my Government has been efficiency in public spending and productivity. In order to improve the quality of public spending, the State has been taking a number of reform measures in budgetary and expenditure management, project formulation and accountability.

19. As empowerment of the farmers is one of the top most priorities of my Government, Rupees 13,182 crores have been allocated in the special agriculture budget. We have an Agriculture Cabinet to look into issues like self-sufficiency in food grain production, employment creation, infusion of technology in the agriculture sector, address price index fluctuations, raising income of farmers and enhancement of investment in the agriculture sector. The Agriculture Cabinet has decided to take up 1 lakh dug wells, improve Agriculture extension services, transfer seed subsidy directly to the farmers' account and sign agreement with International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) for the development of agriculture in the State.

20. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) survey of 2012-13 indicates that farm income has doubled as compared to the survey of 2002-03. Our food grain production touched an all-time high of 118.24 lakh Metric tons during 2014-15 registering 22.7% growth over 96.36 lakh tonnes during 2013-14, and has doubled itself in comparison to what we produced during 2000-01. The Seed Replacement Rate (SRR) in paddy has increased to a record high of 37%.

21. In addition to these, the State is also collaborating with International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre for popularising stress resilient maize and IRRI for rice based crop production technology. To improve nutritional security of the people of the tribal areas a special programme for Millets is being implemented in seven tribal districts of the State from 2016-17. Odisha is the first State in the country to introduce online subsidy administration for Farm Mechanisation.

22. Extensive use of IT tools has helped the State to boost the Farm Mechanisation adoption and delivery system. More than 22 lakh farmers are regularly receiving SMS with information and suggestions regarding best farming practices. Emphasis is being laid for creation of additional irrigation potential under Jananidhi and Biju Krushak Vikas Yojana. Private Lift Irrigation Points (Shallow Tube Well, Bore Well, Dug well and Surface Lifts) through individual and cluster approach are being promoted under these schemes. Post harvest management is being promoted by Construction of Concrete Drying Platform-cum-Threshing Floors (CDPTF) in the rural areas of the State.

- 23.** Direct Benefit Transfer of input subsidies under various schemes is being implemented in the State. 17.89 lakh farmers have already been registered and it is ongoing. More than 25.50 lakh farmers have registered in *M-Kissan* portal and information relating to crop weather, plant protection and pertinent crop production technology are disseminated to them through mobile messages.
- 24.** Farm Information Advisory Centres have been established in every block and participatory planning and implementation of programmes are being encouraged. So far, 57.61 lakh farmer families have been enrolled under the Biju Krushak Kalyan Yojana (BKKY) and are being provided health insurance coverage. My Government has further reduced the interest rate from 2% to 1% upto Rupees Fifty thousand farm loan for the non-defaulter farmers.
- 25.** Odisha Fisheries Policy, 2015 has been approved and is being implemented to double fish production in the State in five years. Sea Food export has touched Rupees 1791.81 crores during 2015-16. My Government has set a target Rupees 20,000 crores worth export in the coming years. For enhancing the Brackish Water Shrimp production, 32 clusters have been identified in the State, where infrastructure like electricity and road connectivity has been developed during 2016-17.
- 26.** 1,601.83 hectares of new water bodies have been created during 2016-17. 3,74,800 SIM cards have been distributed to the fishermen and fish farmers of the State. Under Matsyajibi Basagraha Yojana, 3,725 houses have been allotted to fishermen. To promote small fish culture and quality seed production MoU has been signed with World Fish during 2016-17.
- 27.** 50,000 dairy farmers have been benefited under the scheme “Supplementation of Mineral Mixture for Enhancing Milk Production in Odisha” during 2016-17. 75,000 hectares of land has been covered under fodder cultivation in the State through Rashtriya Krushak Vikash Yojana (RKVY). 44 hatcheries have been made functional with weekly production of 30,000 of chicks to strengthen the Backyard poultry production in the State.
- 28.** During 2017-18, average Milk production and procurement per day is expected to reach 6.6 lakh litres. Chilling and processing capacity are likely to be enhanced to 9.4 lakh and 7.0 lakh litres per day respectively.
- 29.** My Government fully recognises the importance of Cooperatives for rendering a wide range of services like Crop Insurance, Paddy Procurement, Efficient management of Warehouses, Agricultural market reforms and developing the PACS as one stop destinations for all agricultural inputs at Gram Panchayat levels for the farmers and other weaker sections of the State. 65% of the total crop loans dispensed to farmers of the State are provided through the PACS.
- 30.** Significant amount of assistance is provided to the Cooperatives for development of infrastructural facilities, strengthening working capital in shape of share capital and margin money for augmenting business and manpower development and motivation of personnel in Cooperatives and emphasis is given on infrastructure development by village level Cooperatives, such as establishment of modern office and banking facilities, setting up of consumer shop, construction of scientific storage, godowns, facilities for food processing for value addition, marketing of agricultural and horticultural produce etc.

31. My Government has taken a decision to provide crop loan to farmers at 1% rate of interest. To increase transparency, concurrent audit system has been introduced for the PACS and computerisation of 2,600 PACS has been done. Crop insurance indemnity of the farmers is being directly credited to their accounts. Replacement of Kisan Credit Cards with Rupay Debit Cards is under implementation and 11.46 lakh Rupay Cards will be provided to farmers by mid of 2017. Construction work of 737 threshing floors have been completed thereby ensuring threshing facilities to farmers and reducing post harvest loss.

32. Agricultural Marketing Sector is playing a vital role in upgrading the financial conditions of the farmers in the State. There has been rapid progress of Information and Communication Technology which has revolutionized the market place. e-auction and e-marketing of agricultural produce to provide wider access for the producers to larger markets across the country has become a regular phenomenon. A proposal for setting up 10 e-platforms in selected markets under Regulated Market Committees of the State is in process.

33. To instantly access market information to facilitate proper crop planning and to get better prices for their produce, 59,000 mobile phones have been distributed to the farmers. In order to create scientific storage facility, 180 godowns have been completed and the rest 292 will be completed by the end of 2017 creating an aggregated capacity of 2.11 lakh metric tons.

34. Sustainable Irrigation and efficient management of the irrigation systems has been a major area of focus of my Government. Budgetary allocation has been enhanced to Rupees 7,200 crores to boost irrigation in the State. During the last two years, 2.94 lakh hectares of additional irrigation potential has been created through all sources. The State has set a target of 10 lakh hectares of additional irrigation potential by 2019. It has been programmed to create additional irrigation potential of 2.954 lakh hectares during 2017-18.

35. 54 Parbati Giri Mega-Lift Irrigation Projects, 17,000 Deep Bore Wells, 3,000 Shallow Tube Wells, 7,099 Micro River Lifts, 2,512 Lift Irrigation projects, and 4,300 Check Dams have been targeted to be completed during 2017-18. My Government's flagship programme, Mega-Lift irrigation scheme has been named as "Parbati Giri Mega-Lift Irrigation Scheme", after the renowned freedom fighter and social worker from Western Odisha.

36. It is the constant endeavour of my Government to provide 24x7 quality and uninterrupted power at affordable cost to the people of Odisha. To achieve this, my Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to augment generation and transmission capacity and the distribution infrastructure within the State. Our focus this year is to energize all the un-electrified census villages in the State.

37. Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS) is being implemented in the State to facilitate strengthening of sub-transmission distribution networks, metering of Distribution Transformers / feeders / consumer in urban areas along with IT enablement in order to reduce the AT & C loss in the Distribution Sector as well as to provide quality power to consumers. OPGC has started construction work of Unit-3 and 4 at Ib TPS of 2x660 MW to augment power generation and development of

captive coal mines with an investment of Rupees 11,547 crores. OHPC has taken up massive renovation, modernization and up rating programme to upgrade the existing Hydro Power Stations in Hirakud, Chiplima and Balimela to ensure increased availability of Hydro Power.

38. My Government is very keen to augment the development of green energy. A proactive Renewable Energy Policy has been notified during 2016-17 for translating the objectives. 20 MW solar project at Manmunda has been commissioned successfully and 1,000 MW solar power is being proposed to be set up at suitable locations by GEDCOL.

39. OPTCL is undertaking massive addition, up-gradation and modernization of the transmission lines and Grid Sub-stations for smooth flow of power from generating stations to load centres which will go a long way in mitigating the transmission constraints. It has achieved a record system availability of 99.95% with reduction in transmission loss from 3.88% to 3.67%.

40. My Government puts in around efforts to bring down rural poverty by promoting diversified and gainful self-employment to the rural poor. Poverty eradication programmes in my State run on a mission mode with the focus to create and sustain livelihood opportunities for the rural poor households.

41. My Government is committed to convert all kutcha houses in the rural areas to pucca houses by 2019. Construction of 10 lakh pucca houses during last two years has been possible due to the sincere and relentless efforts of my Government.

42. I am happy to share that more than 500 new Gram Panchayats have been created by my Government to improve administrative efficiency at the grassroots level. My Government is also providing free legal assistance to the people living in the villages through “Madhubabu Aain Sahayata Sibir” which are being held twice a week in each Gram Panchayat of the State.

43. To address the issue of declining Child Sex Ratio in the State in general and in the low Child Sex Ratio districts in particular, a new scheme “Biju Kanya Ratna Yojana” is being implemented in Angul, Dhenkanal and Ganjam for a period of three years.

44. To safeguard the interest of the children in need of care and protection in the State, a new scheme “Biju Sishu Surakshya Yojana” (BSSY) has been launched in order to provide financial support to children bereft of biological/ adoptive parents and children who are infected by HIV and found to be the most vulnerable.

45. In order to tackle malnutrition in the State, Odisha Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan (ONAP), in association with Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives, has been launched. Under Supplementary Nutrition Programme, more than 43 lakh children in the age group of 6 months to 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers are provided supplementary feeding through Angan Wadi Centres (AWC) for 300 days a year. More than 25 lakh women have been covered under “Mamata” scheme and nearly Rupees 11 hundred crores have been released directly to their accounts.

46. I am delighted to share with you that the State has achieved significant reduction in infant mortality rate which has been a cause of concern for long time by reducing it from 65 in 2005-06 to 40 in 2015-16 as per NFHS.

47. I am happy to state that out of the seven new Government Medical Colleges established by my Government, two Government Medical Colleges at Koraput and Baripada will start their academic session from 2017-18. Academic session of the other three colleges at Bolangir, Balasore and Puri are expected to commence from 2018-19.

48. My Government is providing free medicines to patients under “Niramaya”. To bring in investment into the health sector to widen the health delivery system, the Odisha Health Care Investment Promotion Policy has been enacted. Steps are being taken to set up Low Cost Hospitals in all District Headquarters in the State through promoters. MoU has been signed with M/s Care Hospital Ltd. for establishment of a new Cardiac care 100 bedded Hospital at Jharsuguda in PPP mode.

49. My State has already eradicated Polio and eliminated Neonatal Tetanus. In the recent past the State has launched 4 new vaccines, viz., Pentavalent, Rota, Inactivated Polio and Japanese Encephalitis vaccines to prevent deadly diseases in Children. Besides, my Government has taken numerous steps like provision of place based incentives to place doctors in remote locations, as a result of which the retention of doctors in remote and inaccessible areas has substantially increased.

50. My Government has restructured the Odisha Medical and Health Services Cadre, creating 1,330 additional posts of Doctors in different ranks of the Cadre by raising the existing sanctioned strength from 5,389 to 6,719. My Government has created 5,120 additional posts of Paramedics in order to provide better health services to the people of Odisha from District Head Quarters Hospital to Sub-Centre level.

51. Further, in order to strengthen the regulatory measures for private clinical establishments, the Odisha Clinical Establishments (Control and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016 has been enacted and the Odisha University of Health Sciences Act, 2016 is going to be enacted very shortly.

52. My Government has taken all possible steps to make paddy procurement transparent and systematic. Through integration with Bhulekh data, an authentic database of farmers selling paddy to Government has been put in place, leveraging technology. For the first time, Minimum Support Price (MSP) is being transferred online from a central account at Odisha State Co-operative Bank, Bhubaneswar to the accounts of farmers across the State.

53. National Food Security Act, 2013 has been implemented in the State since November 2015. Food security coverage is being provided to more than 86 lakh families consisting of 323 lakh individuals under Priority Household (PHH) and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) categories. Subsidized rice or wheat or combination of both are being supplied to the most vulnerable sections of the society @ 5 kgs per person per month for PHH category and 35 kgs of rice to AAY household per month @ Re.1/- per kg of rice or wheat. My Government is going to automate around 14,300 Fair Price Shops (FPS) in the State with installation of e-Point of Sale (PoS) devices by the end of March 2017 which will ensure complete transparency in Public Distribution System.

54. My Government has created “Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities” to specifically focus on social security measures. At present 43,23 lakh beneficiaries are receiving pension each month and this year unmarried women above 30 years have also been included in the pension fold. 3 lakh of additional beneficiaries have been included in “Madhubabu Pension Yojana” during 2016-17 and are receiving pension regularly.

55. My Government has provided ‘Banishree’ Scholarships to 41,729 students with disabilities during 2016-17. A special ITI has been established at Jatni for Skill Development of Youth with disabilities. Skill development training programme for PwDs in collaboration with the Vocational Rehabilitation Centre for the Handicapped at Bhubaneswar is being carried out. 1,768 persons were provided financial assistance in shape of DRI Loans along with CMRF support to pursue livelihood and self employment activities by the Government during 2016-17.

56. Submission of application and issue of Disability certificate has been made online and 7,61,000 Disability certificates have already been issued. Last year, 219 laptops were distributed to visually impaired students studying at graduation level. The Odisha State Senior Citizen Policy 2016 has been formulated by my Government. My Government has also been emphasising on the need to bring transgenders into the mainstream of the society by extending the benefits of different schemes to them.

57. My Government has revised the minimum wages payable to the Unskilled, Semiskilled, Skilled and Highly Skilled category of employees. Similarly, the minimum piece rate of wages in 15 scheduled employments have also been revised and notified in the Odisha Gazette.

58. In order to combat child labour issue, my Government is strictly implementing the State Action Plan (SAP) for elimination of child labour in Odisha. My Government has approved a State Action Plan for the Safety and Welfare of Inter-State Migrant Workmen which is under implementation. A Shramik Sahayata Helpline for migrant workmen has been set up at Labour Directorate for providing support and information on issues concerning migration.

59. Seasonal Hostels for children of migrant worker families in the migration prone Blocks of Bolangir, Bargarh, Kalahandi and Nuapada have been opened. My Government has issued instruction for covering Odia migrant construction workers under the Odisha Building and other Construction Workers’ Welfare Board. Odisha Migrant Labour Help Desk is being created in five States namely Delhi, Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telengana.

60. For the benefit of construction workers, my Government is providing housing assistance through, ‘Nirman Shramik Pucca Ghar Yojana’ and social security assistance to people with disability, old age and widows through, ‘Nirman Shramik Pension Yojana’.

61. A new Scheme namely “Construction of Rental Housing Complex in Urban areas (RHC)” is going to be undertaken by the Board for providing temporary accommodation with basic amenities at affordable rent to the migrant construction workers. Funds to the tune of Rupees 40 crores have already been placed with Housing & Urban Development Department for implementation of the scheme.

62. My Government has taken several initiatives for achieving the goal of planned and inclusive urbanization in the State in a balanced and equitable manner. Efforts are on to develop and upgrade the urban infrastructure such as roads, drainage system, bus terminals, water bodies, parks, street lights etc. to make our cities liveable and sustainable. An ambitious programme to convert the conventional street lighting to energy efficient street lighting is under implementation in all the Urban Local Bodies of the State. Apart from this, energy efficient street lighting system will be implemented in the newly added urban areas as well as areas which are not presently provided with street lighting system.

63. To manage drinking water crisis situations in the water scarcity pockets arising during the summer, my Government has identified 422 hot spots in 24 ULBs and both short term and long term measures are being implemented in these identified places. It has been targeted to replace all the age old water supply pipelines in the State (234 Kms.) which are prone to leakage and contamination to prevent water borne diseases. The work is likely to be successfully completed by March 2017 with a total investment of Rupees 53.30 crores.

64. The work for Berhampur Mega Water Supply Project has been awarded with an investment of more than Rupees 430 crores with a provision for 5 years of operation and maintenance, which will provide safe drinking water to Berhampur town and also to 53 villages located en route from Janibili Reservoir to Berhampur. This is a first of its kind combined drinking water project to be implemented in the State which will benefit both urban as well as rural population. Apart from this, several other projects with a total investment of more than Rupees 1,500 crores are under various stages of implementation throughout the State in the Water Supply Sector. Adherence to quality standards is paramount in drinking water supply. To ensure this, NABL accredited water testing laboratories at 9 places on PPP mode with State-of-art facilities are being established.

65. My Government has implemented a number of urban reforms and has achieved 3rd position in the Country in achieving 28 reform milestones mandated under AMRUT during the year 2015-16.

66. To provide sufficient number of toilets for the communities having no individual household toilets and for the floating population in the State, an MoU has been signed with M/s. Sulabh International for construction, operation and management of hybrid toilets (Combination of Public and Community Toilets) in 9 AMRUT cities of the State on saturation mode. Under this, 1,500 seats of toilets are in various stages of construction.

67. In addition to Bhubaneswar, Rourkela has also been declared as Smart City in the 2nd round of competition under the Smart City Mission of Government of India. To implement the Smart City Projects, Special Purpose Vehicles Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited and Rourkela Smart City Limited have been created to implement projects worth Rupees 4,537 crores and Rupees 2,206 crores in respect of Bhubaneswar and Rourkela Cities respectively.

68. The Aahaar initiative which was launched on 1st April, 2015 in 5 Municipal Corporation areas to provide food security to the vulnerable and needy people in the urban areas has been further expanded

to cover all the 30 districts. Currently, 110 Aahaar Centres in 74 towns are serving cooked hot meals at Rupees 5 per Meal to 67,000 people everyday thus benefitting more than 2 crores population annually.

69. My Government has established 100 Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas in the State to provide the opportunity of quality English medium education to rural students. 23,051 students have been enrolled in these Vidyalayas during 2016-17. In the academic session 2017-18, 60 more Adarsha Vidyalayas will be made functional benefitting 14,400 students. Vocational Education in Information Technology (IT) and Information Technology enabled Services (ITeS), Retail, Travel and Tourism and Banking Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) have been started in 208 selected schools to enhance the employability of secondary school students through four years of skill based training in vocational subject of their choice. The vocational subject has also been included along with the 3rd language in secondary curriculum.

70. 100 seated Girls' Hostels have been sanctioned in 173 Educationally Backward Blocks of the State out of which at least 60 hostels will be made functional from the academic year 2017-18. State Institute of Open Schooling (SIOS) has been started in all 30 districts in 344 centers with an objective of providing opportunity to the school drop-outs and similar other children who have left schools and are deprived of formal education to pass secondary level education.

71. My Government has provided Bi-cycles worth of Rupees 255 crores to 9,81,087 Class-IX and X students. Free uniforms have been provided to nearly 46 lakh students and more than 2.82 crore free Text Books have been distributed to Class I to VIII students of Government and Government Aided schools. Braille books to 2,100 blind students, Educational assistance to 13,000 differently-abled students and travel assistance to more than 6,000 students have also been provided by my Government.

72. Higher Secondary Education (+2) has recently been brought under the Secondary Education System. Multilingual text books have been provided to impart mother tongue based education at primary level to the scheduled tribe students and special teachers have been appointed to impart such education.

73. My Government has undertaken major administrative and educational reforms since 2000 to make Odisha a knowledge hub of the country. During 2015-16, three new Universities have been established amongst which Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar has earned the rare distinction of being India's first State-owned Women's University. Eight new Model Degree Colleges have been established in Educationally Backward Districts of the State from the academic session 2015-16. Besides, a State Open University has been established at Sambalpur for ensuring access and equal opportunity for the students in interior areas of the State aspiring for higher education.

74. Under "Biju Yuba Sashaktikaran Yojana", 45,000 laptops have been distributed during the last three years to +2 Pass meritorious students. Free education from +2 to Post Graduation is being

provided to all orphan students of the State through the Green Passage Scheme. My Government has introduced an innovative Education Loan Scheme, the 'Kalinga Siksha Sathi Yojana' to facilitate education loans at 1% interest to poor and meritorious students to pursue higher education. My Government will spend Rupees 500 crores towards this. For the first time, students have taken admission in +2 vocational courses online through SAMS in 231 Government Vocational Junior Colleges.

75. My Government has streamlined the process of application, selection, renewal and distribution of scholarship through an on-line system and scholarship amount is being transferred to the bank account of all the students through DBT. Coaching assistance and other facilities are being provided to candidates, who clear the Civil Services Preliminary Examination and other National Level Examination from the State.

76. My Government has accorded utmost priority to development and expansion of Technical Education and Training sector for creating employment opportunities for the youths in the emerging industrial scenario of the State.

77. Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) has been formed since 06.12.2016 under Odisha Skill Development Mission to advise, coordinate and supervise skill development policy and activities to make Skilled-in-Odisha a reality. 61,004 youths were under Placement Linked Training (PLT) programme during 2011-12 to 2016-17 out of which, 10,437 youths have been placed in gainful employment. During the current financial year, 7,212 youths have been trained under the programme and during 2017-18, 20,000 youths will be covered under the programme.

78. A Central Placement Cell has been created for providing placement to the Diploma and ITI students. During the year 2016-17, 289 Diploma students and 574 ITI students have been engaged through placement cell in various companies. 6 Advanced Skill Training Institutes (ASTI) are going to be set up in the State with the help of State Government and Asian Development Bank.

79. In order to accelerate promotion of MSMEs, New Odisha MSME Development Policy-2016 has been announced by my Government. To provide required infrastructural support, encourage value addition and minimize wastage, my Government has also announced the new "Odisha Food Processing Policy-2016". The policy envisages setting up of mega State food parks at strategic locations in the districts of Deogarh, Bhadrak, Bargarh, Nowrangpur, Sambalpur, Ganjam, Bolangir, Kandhamal and Kalahandi.

80. In order to boost and strengthen the startup eco-system in the State, the State Government has announced dedicated "Startup Policy-2016" to develop a world class 'startup hub' in Odisha by 2020 and facilitate 1,000 startups in the next five years in the State. Further to foster culture of innovation amongst youths, my Government has also been assisting youth under Odisha Youth Innovation Fund (OYIF). During the current year, 100 youths are proposed to be assisted.

81. Odisha has made tremendous growth over the past decade in terms of industrial growth and establishing an unparalleled environment enabling industrial investment. The State is committed to simplify the processes and expedite project approvals. We have embarked on a mission to leverage technology to complement the governance framework. The approvals and clearances for establishment and operations of industries shall be through an on-line portal with minimum human interface. Our State has already been a pioneer in implementing the “Ease of Doing Business” framework through a robust single window clearance mechanism.

82. The Industrial Policy Resolution-2015 shall pursue a multi-pronged approach for industrial promotion by providing infrastructure support, institutional support and pre and post-production incentives. A Land Bank has been created to make land readily available to investors for establishment of industries.

83. In the ‘Make-in-India’ campaign held recently in Mumbai, my Government was able to motivate domestic and foreign investment intents worth Rupees 70,000 crores most of which were in the non-mineral sector. Similarly, in the Investor’s Meet at Bengaluru, investment intents of more than Rupees 90,000 crores have been proposed for the State.

84. The biggest ever investment expo in the State, ‘Make-in-Odisha’, organised by my Government recently at State Capital, Bhubaneswar brought promises of Rupees 2.03 lakh crores investment and creation of 1.4 lakh job opportunities for the youths in the State in 10 sectors. While the traditional investment sectors promised an investment of about Rupees 97,000 crores in mines and mineral sectors, labour intensive sectors like IT and electronics, manufacturing, apparels, biotechnology, tourism, petrochemicals, chemicals and plastics and food processing saw promises of investment to the tune of Rupees 10,000 crores. More than 80 companies have shown their keen interest to invest in the State. My Government will organise the conclave every two years to achieve the Vision 2025 goal of getting investments worth Rupees 2.5 lakh crores and generation of three million employment opportunities.

85. Public Sector Enterprises play a vital role in the economic development of the State. In the past, various initiatives have been taken by my Government for the growth of Public Sector Enterprises in the State with the assistance and technical support of professional bodies. Steps are being taken by my Government to improve the managerial effectiveness and operational efficiency by providing Capacity Building training programme for the Directors and other Senior Officers of State PSUs.

86. My Government has been encouraging and supporting innovative programmes to popularize science and usage of advanced technology in the State. Biotechnology Policy 2016 provides financial support to conduct seminars, workshops, symposia and conferences in the field of Biotechnology, carrying out Research and Development projects, Infrastructure development for Biotech Park / Marine Biotechnology Park, Skill and Entrepreneurship Development Programme and other activities relating to Biotechnology.

87. Renewable Energy Policy 2016 has been approved by my Government. OREDA has taken up Solar Energy Based Dual Pump Pipe Water Supply scheme in collaboration with the RWS&S under NRDWP in the villages of IAP areas of the State. During 2017-18, 200 small solar pumps for safe drinking water in schools, hostels and community places will be set up along with 150 drinking water projects through SPV based dual pumps.

88. Dedicated Web based Services in public domain for Land Bank and industry census (GOiPLUS) has been developed by ORSAC which has received international recognition. Power distribution network management for OPTCL, Banking facilities network for RBI, DGPS based survey, mapping and geo-referencing of mines and forest boundary has been undertaken. Through Young Astronomers Talent Search (YATS), every year 20 Budding Astronomers (Students) are awarded by my Government.

89. IT Department has been renamed as Electronics and Information Technology Department to give added emphasis to electronics System Design and Manufacturing in the State along with e-Governance. A Green Field Electronics Manufacturing Cluster (EMC) is being established at Info Valley to create a favourable ESDM Eco System in Odisha. My Government has signed MoU to set up four new Software Technology Parks at Angul, Jajpur, Sambalpur and Jeypore to ensure even growth of IT industries in places apart from Bhubaneswar.

90. The Software export growth in the State has crossed Rupees 3,000 crores to put Odisha at a very prominent place in the IT map of the Country. The E & IT Department has won the Prestigious CSI-Nihilent Award under State Category as a prospering State in the field of IT.

91. My Government has brought out the Odisha Official Language Rule, 2016 by making necessary amendments in the Odisha Official Language Act-1954. For effective monitoring of all Public Services, my Government has implemented web-based Central Monitoring System and action is being taken to integrate the delivery of online Public Services through Common Service Centres.

92. To encourage healthy competition for better service delivery among different departments and to reward the innovative practices of officers, various awards have been declared through “Chief Minister’s Award for Excellence and Innovation in Governance and Public Service Delivery”.

93. I am glad that the overall law and order situation in the State during the year 2016 remained peaceful. The overall intensity of Left Wing Extremist (LWE) activities came down in the State during 2016, though the situation remains challenging in parts of the districts of Malkangiri, Koraput and Kalahandi which is gradually improving. A large number of pro-LWE militias and sympathizers have publicly announced withdrawal of their support to the LWE activities in Malkangiri district which is very encouraging.

94. In order to increase the mobile telephone connectivity in the Left Wing Extremist (LWE) affected areas, 248 towers have been operationalised. Ex-gratia assistance to the families of civilian victims has been enhanced from Rupees 1 lakh to Rupees 3 lakhs in Security Related Expenditure (SRE) districts

and Rupees 1 lakh to Rupees 4 lakhs in non-SRE districts to enhance the rehabilitation components. Provision of allotment of homestead land to the police personnel killed in naxal violence has been extended to Central Armed Police Force Personnel.

95. To augment the police capacity, 250 new posts in different ranks have been created and 792 candidates in the rank of Sub-Inspector of Police, Sergeant of Police, Deputy Subedar of Police have been appointed, 32 posts of Legal Advisor have been created to aid and advice the Superintendent of Police in crime cases. 1,370 Constables have been appointed in Odisha Industrial Security Force to provide security support to industrial and institutional establishments.

96. To investigate Cyber crimes effectively, steps have been taken to establish Cyber Forensic Unit in the State Forensic Science Laboratory. A dedicated campaign titled as “Operation Muskan” was launched by the State Police in two phases during 2016 to rescue the missing children in and outside the State. 2,271 boys and 339 girls have been rescued in the campaign.

97. 335 Fire Stations have been sanctioned covering all the blocks of the State. At present 301 Fire Stations are functioning including 3 new Fire Stations at 3 Medical Colleges in the State.

98. My Government has always given utmost priority to ensure the maintenance and preservation of Lord Jagannath Temple at Puri. The repair and conservation work of Jagamohan of Shri Jagannath Temple has been taken up by the Archaeological Survey of India since 27th January, 2016, and it is expected to be completed very soon. The Department has implemented various schemes for the welfare of the Sebayats in the areas of health, housing and education of their children.

99. For quick and speedy disposal of litigation, my Government notified the establishment of 29 Courts of different categories during 2016. Besides, 70 posts of Judicial Officers have been created in different cadres. My Government has appointed 21 Civil Judges in Odisha Judicial Service during the year 2016 and has taken steps for recruitment of another 153 Civil Judges in the Odisha Judicial Service.

100. To provide free legal assistance to the general public living in the villages, my Government has established “Madhubabu Aain Sahayata Sibira” in each Grama Panchayat of the State and engagement of advocates in the legal aid cells has been started.

101. My Government has notified the ‘Odisha Minor Mineral Concession Rules, 2016’ which provide for grant of Minor mineral concession through a transparent procedure of auction. Steel and Mines Department has implemented Integrated Mines and Minerals Management System (i3MS) Project as a part of Government of India’s e-Governance Process to bring transparency in mineral administration. Besides e-permit, e-pass, e-file and e-payment, a mobile application named National Mineral Statistics (NMS) has also been operated to capture the production, despatch and sale value of the minerals on real time basis. In order to ensure end-to-end tracking of mineral carrying vehicles, installation of

Global Positioning System (GPS) devices in all the mineral carrying vehicles is being implemented during the current financial year.

102. Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) Ltd. has undertaken various Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities in field of Education, Health, Poverty Elimination, Environmental and Relief during 2016-17. OMC Ltd. has incorporated the 100% owned subsidiary company, Odisha Mineral Exploration Corporation Ltd. with the objective of taking up exploration activities in the State.

103. With financial support from OMC under the initiative of the Centre for Social Responsibility and Leadership (CSRL), two batches each comprising of 30 students from the financially underprivileged background from Odisha were selected for the coaching programme to crack the country's most competitive and coveted examination JEE 2016. From 2017 onwards, this initiative is renamed as "OMC Super-100" to offer coaching to 100 such students.

104. One of the most important responsibilities that my Government has shouldered is the proper management of land allotment to homesteadless and landless families in rural areas of the State. It is heartening to know that homestead land to 84,065 homesteadless families has been distributed by my Government.

105. My Government is proposing to bring out the Odisha Agricultural Land Leasing Act, 2016, which will be extremely helpful for dealing with issues related to the farmers and land owners. My Government is attaching utmost priority to Land Acquisition of various kinds of projects such as Irrigation, Drainage, Rail Link, National Highway and Extension of Air Strips in different districts of the State along with timely disbursement of compensation to the project affected families.

106. To check illicit liquor and generate revenue for the State, my Government has evolved a policy through which manufacturing, distillation and trading in liquor are streamlined under strict vigil of the State which has helped in generating considerable revenue without compromising social values.

107. Odisha Excise Act, 2008 has in the meantime received Presidential assent and the rules are being framed. The new Act will go a long way in streamlining Excise Administration and enforcement. The Act intends to provide a comprehensive law relating to alcohol and other intoxicants in the State by making adequate provisions for punishment of the offenders and to make provisions for matters incidental thereto by replacing the Bihar and Odisha Excise Act, 1915.

108. My Government has taken steps to bring more and more forest areas under Joint Forest Management fold for providing livelihood support and active participation of forest fringed villagers through initiatives like "Ama Jungle Yojana". 7,000 Vana Surakshya Samitis of 30 forest divisions in 14 districts of the State are to be covered under this initiative over a period of 6 years starting from 2016-17 to 2021-22.

109. I am happy that through Green Odisha Mission (Sabuja Odisha Mission) from the year 2013-14 subsuming all afforestation schemes, 44.52 crore seedlings have been planted. My Government is

considering for according approval to its further extension from 2017-18 to 2021-22 with a total outlay of Rupees 456.85 crores. My Government is supporting the initiatives of tribal people in protecting and maintaining their Sacred Groves which are hot spots of biodiversity. Conservation measures have already been taken up for over 1,370 sacred groves.

110. I am glad that the Jagannath Bana Prakalpa (JBP) scheme is being implemented to plant the species for augmenting the supply of timber required for the Chariots during Rath Yatra at Puri. I would like to highlight that voluntary relocation of villages like Kabatghai, Jamunagarh and Kiajhari of Similipal is a milestone for my Government. The land acquired from the villagers will be developed as pasture land for herbivores. Meanwhile all measures have been taken to provide access to necessary infrastructural facilities for the people of relocated villages.

111. Eco-tourism facility at 30 locations is being developed for encouraging tourists towards nature education. 8,00,000 pluckers and binders mostly belonging to weaker sections of society and largely women have been covered under Aam Admi Bima Yojana. 15,913 Seasonal Staff were covered during 2016 under Biju Patnaik Group Insurance that provides insurance for life as well as disability. All the enrolled pluckers have received their dues in their respective bank accounts. Rupees 130 crores have been paid as bonus @ 100% to the Kendu Leaf Pluckers for the crop year 2016.

112. I am happy to announce that “Biju Gaon Gadi Yojana” that aims to provide transport service to remote and unconnected Gram Panchayats has made substantial inroads. 578 vehicles are plying under the scheme and we have been able to provide connectivity for the first time to 463 unconnected Gram Panchayats during the current year.

113. My Government is committed to improve railway density and provide railway connectivity to all 30 districts of the State. With commissioning of Rajsunakhala station in the Khordha Road- Bolangir Project, connectivity to Nayagarh District has been achieved and Nayagarh Town is targeted to be linked by March, 2017. Work has been started from Bolangir end towards Subarnpur.

114. My Government has signed two MoUs with Ministry of Railways for two new projects Jeypore-Malkangiri of 130 Kilometers length and Nabarangpur-Jeypore of 38 Kilometers length to bring rail connectivity to Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts for the first time. A Joint Venture Company is now under formation between Ministry of Railways and Government of Odisha for further development of Railway infrastructure in the State, for which agreement has been signed with Ministry of Railways.

115. My Government has adopted a holistic and integrated approach for the development of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste population of the State. Focused priorities have been accorded for social, economic, educational, health and livelihood development.

116. I am happy that my Government is introducing an 8 year perspective integrated plan called Odisha PVTG Empowerment and Livelihood Improvement Programme (OPELIP) at an estimated

cost of Rupees 795.41 crores which will provide improved livelihood, food and nutrition security for 32,091 PVTG people living in 542 villages within the Micro Project area and its 477 adjoining villages.

117. Odisha Tribal Empowerment and Livelihood Programme Plus (OTELP PLUS) is in operation in 35 blocks of 10 tribal districts providing benefits to 36,446 BPL, 3,023 landless and 12,450 vulnerable destitute households.

118. My State is running two mega Urban Hostel Complexes “Akanksha” in the State Capital at Pokhariput and Kalinga Vihar, for 900 ST/ SC boys and girls of post-matric level. The hostels have free residential facilities with provision of all required amenities. Alongwith free food, hostels have reading room, recreation room, activity room and other facilities.

119. Nearly 20 lakh ST/SC students are receiving Pre-Matric and Post-Matric Scholarship of around Rupees 1,200 crores, which is transferred directly to the accounts of the concerned students electronically through PRERANA portal.

120. I am very happy over the result of the Annual HSC Examination of the schools run by ST and SC Department which is at an all time high of 95.61%. In order to provide quality education to the ST / SC students, my Government has decided to establish 10 more new Kalinga Model Residential Schools in TSP areas.

121. Our State occupies a unique position in the Indian tourism scenario. My Government has brought out the new Tourism Policy, 2016 that aims at strengthening tourism potentials of Odisha, attracting investors, increasing private sector participation, augmenting tourism infrastructure and improving marketing and promotion of tourism activities.

122. My Government is focusing on Eco-Tourism and promotes Buddhist Tourism Destinations for international tourists. Steps are being taken to make Odisha a preferred Tourist destination and place it prominently on the National and International Tourist Map. My Government has successfully organized “Baristha Nagarika Tirtha Yatra Yojana” during 2016-17 under which thousands of senior citizens from all over the State had a spiritual and divine experience by visiting prominent places of religious tourism of the country.

123. My Government is constantly striving for comprehensive and systematic development of the State’s unique cultural legacy. Odisha is the first State to provide livelihood support to artists through artist federations. Livelihood support to Traditional Artists of the State, promotion and protection of Traditional Art and dissemination of Government Welfare Schemes at the community level through traditional artists is being extended by Zilla Kala Sanskruti Sangha (ZKSS) and Block Kala Sanskruti Sangha (BKSS) initiative of my Government. I am happy that my Government has decided to form Odia Bhasa Virtual Academy for development, promotion and popularising Odia Language and Literature.

124. My Government has undertaken meaningful interventions for comprehensive development of the Handloom sector. During 2016-17, my Government has provided Rupees 700 lakhs for construction

of 1,000 worksheds for weavers. More than Rupees 152 lakhs are being spent on skill up-gradation of 600 weavers.

125. A Block Printing unit has been set up at Gopalpur of Jajpur District to produce diversified range of high quality and exquisite printed hand-woven tassar-silk products. For holistic development of the handloom sector, 6 new block level clusters with investment of Rupees 1,069 lakhs have been sanctioned.

126. SERIFED is being suitably restructured and strengthened by my Government with marketing support and share capital assistance to increase its working capital to support tribal silk farmers. 15,376 Tassar farmers have been provided utility items under Chief Minister's Special Package, and 16,990 Sericulture farmers have been covered under "Aam Admi Bima Yojana" during 2016-17.

127. 4,210 artisans have been trained and 900 artisans are provided with marketing assistance. It has been proposed to train 4,576 artisans and provide marketing assistance to 2,200 artisans during 2017-18.

128. To improve road connectivity in a time bound manner and considering connectivity as means to socio-economic growth of the State, my Government has allotted significant amount of resources for this sector. Last year 417 road projects of 1,638 Kms were taken up with Rupees 375 crores allotted for completion of these projects. With an allocation of more than Rupees 187 crores, the construction of Gurupriya Bridge is likely to be completed by September 2017, which will connect the separated regions with main land of Malkangiri district benefiting the tribal people of the region.

129. My Government has prepared a road infrastructure development action plan with an investment of Rupees 1,411 crores under the Odisha State Road Project. Civil works have been started in Bhawanipatna-Khariar road corridor, Anandpur-Bhadrak-Chandbali road corridor, Berhampur-Taptapani road corridor and Jagatpur-Chandbali road corridor. Under Biju KBK Yojana 3 bridges and improvement of 20 Kms of road would be completed during 2016-17. Under the Vijayawada-Ranchi corridor passing through Odisha, 775 Kms of road length is being executed by State R&B with a cost of Rupees 1,520 crores.

130. The thrust of my Government is to provide proper road connectivity, infrastructure, safe drinking water and sanitation facility to holistically develop the rural areas of the State. All weather connectivity has been provided to habitations through the construction of 481 bridges under 'Biju Setu Yojana' with an expenditure of Rupees 780 crores. 120 Bailey bridges have been constructed in the remotest tribal pockets of the State, out of which 10 bridges are in Malkangiri district. During 2016-17, about 5,000 Kms of rural roads have been completed. By the end of 2017-18, my Government plans to complete 150 bridges, 6,000 Kms of rural roads, 19 Model Schools and 314 Government buildings.

131. My Government aims to provide access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene to all and end open defecation by 2019. During 2016-17, more than Rupees 2,378 crores were provided in the budget for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation.

132. 4,41,635 Spot Sources (Tube wells and Sanitary wells) and 10,420 Piped Water Supply Schemes have been installed in the State to provide safe drinking water in Rural Odisha. During the current financial year, 129 Piped Water Supply Schemes and 8,159 Spot Sources have been identified. It is heartening to note that 139 Gram Panchayats of my State have been declared Open Defecation Free and I am hopeful that more Panchayats would become open defecation free soon.

133. My Government attaches utmost importance to the promotion of sporting activities and development of sports infrastructure in the State. In its effort to encourage sportspersons to excel in national and international level, my Government has come out with a definite policy for direct recruitment of meritorious sportspersons in Odisha Police and in the State owned PSUs. 60 Sportspersons have already been recruited in Odisha Police. Shri K. Ravi Kumar, Weightlifter of international repute who had won Gold Medal in Commonwealth Games 2010 has been directly appointed in the rank of Deputy Superintendent of Police in June 2016.

134. Similarly cash award to successful sportspersons has been substantially augmented. Highest Cash prize of Rupees 1 crore has been announced for winning gold medal in Olympic Games (individual event) and Rupees 50 lakhs for Team Event. During the last two years, 441 sportspersons have received cash award worth Rupees 2.53 crores ranging from Rupees 15,000 to Rupees 20 lakhs depending on the level of participation and achievement. 203 sportspersons and 2 coaches have been awarded with cash awards amounting to Rupees 75.51 lakhs during 2016-17.

135. Participation of 4 women hockey players and two women athletes in the Rio Olympics is historic and is indicative of my Government's proactive policy initiative in the promotion of sports and sporting infrastructure.

136. To promote sports and sports infrastructure "Mini-Stadiums" are being constructed in Blocks and Urban Local Bodies. Construction of Swimming Pool Complex, Multi-purpose Indoor Halls at district headquarters and Integrated Sports Complex at major Divisional Cities of the State are the other priority areas on which my Government is currently focusing.

137. As a part of 'State Youth Policy-2013', an innovative programme of 'Active Citizenship' has already been launched on the eve of 'Gandhi Jayanti-2014'. The programme aims at inculcating civic sense, respect to women, and empathy for Persons with disability, saying 'No' to substance abuse and promoting patriotism among the youths. Every year, the programme covers all the educational institutes of the State, with an audience of more than 6 lakh students.

138. My Government has launched "Biju Patnaik Annual Himalayan Expedition", an annual expedition of youth from the State to major Himalayan peaks commemorating the Centenary Celebration Year of Late Biju Patnaik. The first batch of 15 youths has scaled Mt. Rudugaira in September 2016. The expedition aims at instilling values of discipline, team spirit and leadership among the youth.

139. The State is already in the international sporting map. The city of Bhubaneswar has successfully hosted the prestigious 8 Nation FIH Champions Trophy Men's Hockey Tournament in December 2014 and is going to host the Hockey World League Final in December 2017 and the prestigious Men's Hockey World Cup in December 2018.

140. My Government is implementing a dedicated public grievance and pension grievance redressal mechanism in the State. Apart from that, Grievance applications received from Grievance Boxes / Kiosks installed at various locations of the State are collected and attended to on regular basis for their early disposal. Pending pension cases of the State are regularly monitored and necessary instructions issued to all Pension Sanctioning Authorities for early disposal of pension cases. Pre-Scrutiny Meeting on pending pension cases and Pension Adalats are organized in various districts for expeditious disposal of long pending cases.

141. My Government is preparing "Vision: 2036" Document for the State, which will reflect United Nation's declared Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as needs and aspirations of the people of Odisha by 2036, which coincides with 100th year of formation of Odisha as a separate State.

142. Odisha today is a space of unrestrained development. And the future is to be ensured on sustainable terms with the participation of one and all in the process of development. Odisha has a rich history of struggle and survival and people have amply demonstrated their resilience during those testing times. The path taken in the past has meaningful lessons for us, to draw from. Along with that, incorporating the challenges of today, we must embark on the journey of creating a robust Odisha of tomorrow.

I once again reiterate my Government's commitment to ensure alround development of all the sections of the people and all the regions of the State on non-negotiable basis.

I now leave you to your deliberations and wish you all success.

Bande Utkal Janani.

Panchayati Raj in Odisha : Some Paradigms

Nirmala Kumari Mohapatra

The tradition of rural self-government in India is very old. In vedic-age village was treated as the basic unit of administration, The term “GRAMINI” was used to address a village official. He was treated respectfully. In ‘*Prithvi Sukta*’ there are two terms; ‘*Sabha*’ and ‘*Samiti*’. *Sabha* refers to a assembly of a more number of members whereas *Samiti* speaks of a meeting of few members. From this we can conclude that decisions were taken after discussion in a democratic way. During the period of Mahavir Jain and Goutam Buddha, there were traces of local self-government. The religious orders founded by Buddha and Mahavir observed highly democratic procedures in arriving at decisions. In Kautilya’s *Arthashastra* there are proofs of village-administration. During the time of Emperor Ashok the Panchayats were entrusted to prohibit animal-slaughter where the local custom permitted such practices. Rural and Local self-government system was in practice during Gupta dynasty. The scholar Charles Metcalfe observed that in India then masters were of different culture whereas the people were the same. With the flow of time masters were Hindu or Mughal or Englishmen but villages remained the same.

Lord Ripon’s Resolution of 1882, Govt. of India-Resolution 1918, Gandhi-Irwin Pact, 1930, Govt of India Act 1935 are some of the

measures during British Rule to bring rural self-government in reality. With the wake and advancement of Provincial Autonomy (1937-46) rural people could feel the magic touch of rural-reconstruction. Within a decade after adoption of Constitution, India saw the commencement of Panchayati Raj system on 2nd October 1959, i.e., the day of Gandhi Jayanti. Panchayati Raj is a good admixture of Community Development (C.D) and National Extension Service (NES). It was first adopted in Rajasthan as per the recommendations of Balavant Rai Mehta Committee. This committee was formed to study the working of Community Development Programme and suggest remedies for removal of defects. This committee submitted its report in 1957. The core-voice of the report was –

Democratic Decentralization and three-tier system of rural administration, namely, the Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti in the next, Block level and Zilla Parishadas (ZPs) at the top, district level.

In early sixties an extraordinary Chief Minister, Sri Biju Patnaik took bold steps to champion the cause of Panchayati Raj. So it flourished in Odisha as per Meheta Committee’s decision. The State of Odisha enacted the Orissa Zilla Parishad Act 1959 making provision for

establishment of Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishadas (ZPs). In 1961, the name of the Act was changed to Orissa Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad Act. As per provision of this act 314 C.D Blocks of Orissa were converted into Panchayati Raj Blocks each having a Panchayat Samiti consisting of officials and non-officials as members. In the year 1991 Govt. of Odisha passed 3 important Acts, namely Orissa Panchayat Amendment Act (1991), Orissa Panchayat Samiti Act 1991 and Zilla Parishad Act 1991. The celebration of Panchayati Raj Divas on 5th March is a land-mark in Odisha. This is the birthday of Biju Patnaik, the legendary former Chief Minister who revived Panchayati Raj in 1992. Panchayat Election was held after a long gap. For women empowerment one-third seats were reserved including SC and ST groups. Apart from this, the Scheduled Areas Act 2002 was also made with a view to empowering of the tribal people. Another provision was made for women. That is, the post of Vice-Chairman at all 3 levels are for women if the chairman is a male person. This is the fore-sighted decision for women-empowerment from the grass-root level. Now 50% seats are reserved for women in all Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs.). It is felt that after five decades of our independence, the ideology of M.K. Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave is somehow realized.

The cherished memory of Panchayati Raj Institutes (PRIs) goes back to M.K.Gandhi's dream of building the State from below. It covers the development of all from soil to sky. Vinobaji termed this idea as Sarvodaya; means all-round development of all irrespective of caste and creed, making possible the blossoms in the dust. Blossoming in the lowest level would be possible when people in the grassroot would be able to rule themselves. They would be allowed to check

out the plans and schemes meant for them. This is the chief object of Panchayati Raj election. So that proper devolution of financial power to Panchayati Raj would be possible today or tomorrow.

The Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha passed bills incorporating Panchayats and Municipalities into the Constitution on 22-23 Decemeber 1992. Part IX (Panchayats) was gazetted with the Presidents's consent on 24th April, 1993 and Part IX-A (Municipalities) was gazetted the following month. The enactment of Panchayat Raj, therefore, has been made irreversible. Our challenge today is to institutionalize this system of local self-governance to make our country an example of good democracy. Parliament's Standing Committee on Urban and Rural Development tabled in both Houses in November 2002. The 73rd and 74th amendment of our Constitution relating to 3 tier Panchayat Raj system was honoured. The XIth and XIIth Schedules of the Constitution indicate respectively the 29 and 18 subjects, functions relating to which might be devolved to the Panchayat Raj Institutions and Municipalities. The Panchayats can only fulfil their responsibilities as institutions of self-government if devolution is patterned on a nexus between the 3 Fs – Functions, Functionaries and Finances.

Parliament's Standing Committee has repeatedly urged the merger of the DRDA with the Zilla Parishadas so that the elected persons would be able to solve the people who have voted and sent them to do good for the area. There is the need of bureaucracy and technocracy at the local government level with the elected local body. But things are wrong for which PRIs are helpless at most of the places. So Functions, Functionaries and Finances – the 3Fs are to be taken care of for the welfare of the people. The important features of 73rd Amendment are:-

1. Uniform three tier Structure of Panchayats at the village, block (Panchayat Samiti), and district level in all the states except those having a population of more than 20 lakh.
 2. One third (**1/3**) reservation of women.
 3. Reservation for the SCs and STs in proportion to their share of the population.
 4. Five year tenure and fresh election within six months in case of their dissolution.
 5. State Election Commission for fair election.
 6. State Finance Commission for ensuring resources.
 7. The 11th schedule having 29 items which may be devolved by the State Legislation on Panchayats for making and implementing plans of economic development and social justice so that they could become institutions of Self-Govt. Here is a list of 29 subjects, suggested for transfer to Panchayats.
 - 1) Agriculture including Agricultural Extension.
 - 2) Land improvement implementation of Land Reforms, Land Consolidation, and Soil Conservation.
 - 3) Minor Irrigation, Water Management, and Watershed Development.
 - 4) Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry.
 - 5) Fisheries
 - 6) Social Forestry and Farm Forestry
 - 7) Minor Forest Produce
 - 8) Small Scale Industries including Food Processing Industries
 - 9) Khadi, village and cottage industries
 - 10) Rural Housing
 - 11) Drinking water
 - 12) Fuel and Fodder
 - 13) Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication
 - 14) Rural Electrification, including distribution of electricity
 - 15) Non-conventional energy source
 - 16) Poverty alleviation programme
 - 17) Education including Primary, and Secondary Schools
 - 18) Technical Training and Vocational Education
 - 19) Adult and Non-Formal Education
 - 20) Library
 - 21) Cultural Activities
 - 22) Market and Farm
 - 23) Health and Sanitation, including hospitals, PHCs and dispensary
 - 24) Family Welfare
 - 25) Women and Child development
 - 26) Social Welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally challenged.
 - 27) Welfare of the weaker section and in particular of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
 - 28) PDS
 - 29) Maintenance of Community assets
- In Odisha there are 5264 Gram Panchayats, 314 Panchayat Samities and 30 Zilla Parishadas. More than 28 thousand women were

selected to 3 tier system of PRIs. Either Chairperson or Vice-Chairpersons are ladies in Odisha. The post of Naib Sarpanch is reserved for the women-members if the Sarpanch is a male person.

Some good features of Panchayat Election is as such. No person having more than two-children will be eligible to contest in the Panchayat-Raj election. Persons having more than one spouse have been disqualified from contesting election.

In Odisha elections to the three tiers of Panchayati Raj were held in 1997, 2002, 2007, and 2012 – in conformity with 73rd Amendment Act. At present 100, 862 elected representatives of 30 Zilla Parishadas, 314 Panchayat Samities and 6234 Gram Panchayats are getting opportunity in governance of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Elected Persons (Wardmembers, Naib-Sarpanch, Sarpanch, Panchayat Samiti members, Vice-Chairman and Chairman of the Panchayat Samiti, Zilla Parishad members, Zilla Parishad Vice-Chairman, Zilla Parishada Chairman etc.) with the government employees from VLWs, BDO, Block Engineers, Agriculture Officers, to the Collectors, Top Ranking Officers are aware of their duties, responsibilities through various training programmes, awareness camps, books, periodicals and hand outs.

The syllabus covers such topics as -

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Principles of village development b) Five-year plans c) Out-line of Constitutional Govt. d) Set-up of Panchayati-Raj e) Right to Information Act, 2005 f) Right to Education, 2009 g) Clean India Programme / Sanitation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> h) Ecological Balance / Environmental Development i) Pollution Control j) Small-family norm k) Scientific temper l) Income-generating projects m) Communication and transportation n) Empowering women and reducing violence o) Pensional benefits to the people under BPL group p) Save and educate girl child / Beti-Bachao, Beti-Padhao q) Self-help group etc. |
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The training centres for both elected and appointed authorities varies from place to place. It may be the Block headquarters or district or state head-quarters. The general objective of all the trainings or awareness camps is to activate the PRIs. Some Centres of training in Odisha to make the human-capital capable of Income-generating are given below.

1. OUAT (Odisha University of Agriculture & Technology) Bhubaneswar and its several branches spreading over 30 districts; i.e.
2. Ranital in Bhadrak District
3. Jajanga, Kendrapara Dist.
4. G.Udayagiri, Kandhamal Dist.
5. Baripada, Mayurbhanja Dist.
6. Chipilima, Sambalpur Dist. for milk products
7. Berhampur, Ganjam Dist. for Fisheries

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| 8. | Kausalyaganga, Khurdha Dist. for Fisheries | c) | Rs.165.00 crore has been provided under Gopabandhu Gramin Yojana for development of 11 districts. |
| 9. | Bidyadharpur, Cuttack Dist. for Rice, Fruits & Vegetables | d) | Rs.339.95 crore has been provided under BRGF Programme being implemented in 19 districts. |
| 10. | Sakhi Gopal, Puri Dist. for Cocoanut | e) | Rs.150.00 crore has been provided towards State share of Indira Awas Yojana for providing houses to the BPL families. |
| 11. | Khurdha, Khurdha Dist. for Cocoanut | f) | Rs.100.00 crore also has been provided for the scheme 'MO KUDIA' as against last year's Rs.60.00 crore. |
| 12. | Nayagarh, Nayagarh for pulses | g) | Rs.100.00 crore has been provided in the budget for the World Bank assisted Targeted Rural Initiative for poverty Termination and Infrastructure (TRIPTI) |
| 13. | Bhawanipatna, Kalahandi Dist. (Vegetables & Fruits) | h) | Rs.160.00 crore has been provided towards State matching contribution under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. |
| 14. | Patanagarh of Bolangir | i) | Rs.60.00 crore has been provided for development of Gram Panchayat/ Panchayat Samiti Roads. |
| 15. | 24 DIETs and DRCs for Primary Education awareness | j) | Rs.5.00 crore is allocated under " <i>Aam Admi Bima Yojana</i> " to provide life insurance cover for the landless agricultural labourers. |

Short course of management is awaited from Nation Level Training Institutes like IIM, Calcutta, Bangalore, Ahmedabad etc. for non-student youths. Let the village workers, peasants both men and women should be given with training for their skill development. Khadi and Village Industries Commission of states should come forward with the noble idea of training the unskilled, semi-skilled workers for the purpose.

Budgetary Provision

The Odisha Budget for the year 2012-13 provided Rs. 2563.83 crore both for plan and non-plan projects of Panchayati Raj Department. There is 17% increase in allocation against the last year's Rs.2181.83 crore. The distribution of budget money is as such.

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| a) | Rs.643.18 crore has been provided as grant-in-aid to PRIs on recommendation of the 13 th Finance Commission, |
| b) | Rs.701.92 crore has been provided in the budget towards assistance to PRIs as per the recommendation of the 3 rd State Finance Commission. |

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| k) | Rs.113.00 crore is provided for repair of Grama Panchayat Roads. |
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One example of budget-provision to PRIs is given for reference.

HUMAN CAPITAL:

It includes the total population of the state. It is about 4.5 crore. Several projects are in progress especially for people in below poverty line (BPL) group. No body is allowed to live half-

fed or half-clad. Nutrition and Health Care is another point. It is seriously thought of and in action. Mid-day-meal (MDM) scheme is in full-sway for school children between age-group 6 to 14. It is managed vide the quick efforts of School and Mass Education (SME) Department. Rs. 160.00 crore has been provided towards state share for implementation of MDM scheme food stuff in their respective areas. There is provision of feeding, bread, molasses etc for Anganwadi children; they are in the Early Childhood Care and Education Centres (ECCEC). It is given through CDPOs (Child Development Project Officers) vide Women and Child Development Department. Rs. 540.00 crore has been provided for continuation of this ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme) programme for the year 2012-13. Apart from it, pregnant mothers and girls of 10-14 are given with special care for food.

MAMATAYOJANA has been launched by the Govt. of Odisha since the year 2012-13 for providing nutrition and health care support to the pregnant and lactating women. Under this scheme Rs. 5000/- (Five thousand rupees only) is being paid to each beneficiary for pre-natal and post natal care. Rs. 275.00 Crore has been provided for this scheme of 'Mamata' under State plan for the year 2012-13. Under the scheme of Social Security Pension a good number of senior citizens, differently abled persons, widows are benefitted. An outlay of Rs. 918.19 crore has been provided for the year 2012-13 for Social Security Pension Scheme (SSPS). Let the senior citizens, people with special needs, widows, etc. have a peaceful way to live on.

Biju Gramin Swasthya Sibir Scheme is run in the state to provide medial support to the people in the inaccessible areas. An outlay of Rs. 3.00 Crore has been allotted to provide such Health Camps in tribal belt or in any areas which

are inaccessible. Help of ASHA (Accredited Social Health Activist) is helpful in vaccination and mothers' care etc. Ambulance Service 108 is another plus point.

SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION

Safe drinking water is very much essential for life. In rural belt it was well-felt. People suffer from various diseases for want of safe drinking water. Govt of Odisha looked carefully and Rs. 195.00 crore has been allocated towards State Share of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Scheme for completion of 1000 water supply projects and installation of 15000 spot sources (Tube Wells and Sanitary Wells). This is the success story during the year 2012-13.

An amount of Rs. 25.00 crore has been provided towards State Share of centrally sponsored scheme for Rural Sanitation, during 2012-13. Now it is seen that there are toilets in each village school. Community-toilets are made near rural markets, Temples / Churches / or any other religious places.

Self-Help Groups :

Self-Help groups are taking the charge of income-generating works in rural belt. The works are – Fisheries, Agriculture, dairy, preparing food for children of schools (mid-day-meal programme), appliqué, tailoring, computer application etc. Govt. of Odisha has allocated Rs. 48.48. crore for seed money to support the Self-Help Groups.

Empowering Women :

Increasing Political Voice – Due to reservation of seats in 3-tier Panchayati Raj Election number of women in politics is on increase. The following table indicates the increase in the year 2002 and 2007 against the year 1997.

Table 1
Comparison of Elected members
to PRIs in Elections

Elected members in different positions	No. in 1997	No. in 2002	Figure in 2007	Remarks
Wardmember	28,595	31,414	31,704	Positive
Sarpanch	1,862	2,188	2,188	Positive
Panchayat Samiti Members	1,870	2,188	2,208	Positive
Zilla Parishad Member	294	296	301	Positive
Total	32,621	36,086	36,401	Positive

This table figure shows positive increase of Women in PRIs Election. It shows their increasing attitude in political field.

Opportunity to know the rights of property especially for women: Ignorance is a curse for all. It is more apparent for women flock. Laws/Rules – are in English language. Even literate women scarcely know or understand the rules. So Law, Rules etc should be in mother-tongue / Regional language. Para-Legal training should be arranged for women's knowledge of rules, regulations, laws etc.

Rural Belt and Handicrafts

To earn livelihood people in rural belt do agriculture, rearing of animals like cow-sheep-goat etc with some handicrafts. The last one gives direct money. But now time is changed. In the present globalization and financial liberalized market, owing to the popularization of machine-based low-cost consumer goods, rural handicraft goods are facing a lot of problem. The real worker is in loss. The middleman takes the profit. Here

good governance should put its hands to control the threat.

All India Handicrafts Board was established in 1952 to study the problems and to solve those in favour of real workers. Here are the ways to solve it. Govt agencies, various co-operatives, voluntary organizations, different associations need to put their sincere efforts for better marketing of the handicraft goods. So that better working condition of artists will be possible.

POSITIVE SIGNS

Though birth rate chart indicates less number of girls in comparison to boys, yet some good signs are visible in favour of girls/women. These are :

- 1) Worshipping Girls as Goddess during Nabaratra Puja
- 2) Worshipping senior citizens especially aged women as goddess during Durgapuja
- 3) Leading life with a girl-child as a guarantee.

This is the feature seen in rural Odisha also. Simple-style mass-marriages arranged by Panchayats in the District of Kendrapara shows some reforming activities.

Panchayati Raj activities are to be treated as features of silent revolution. Let us put power and money to the PRIs for smooth conduct of the community development along with the audit. Every plan and its working condition need evaluation. So achievement of PRIs should be evaluated through seer analysis and synthesis. Let the rural belt be self-reliant and self-respectful with modern scientific temper.

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