Self-Governance: A ray of hope

Historically self-governance at village level was not unknown to communities in the Indian subcontinent. Historians have recorded that even a thousand or so years ago, in the Chola Kingdom there was enviable democratic decentralization wherein the village was vested with the power to govern itself through elected village councils. One finds such examples over a wide geographical area throughout the pre-colonial period. However, the system of governance underwent a sea change during the colonial period. The transition swerved rapidly towards centralization of power and authority which rendered the traditional local self-governance system redundant.

After the emergence of the national movement, especially after Gandhi’s appearance, the idea of local self-governance at the village level gained prominence. In 1946, Gandhi said “Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world.”

Unfortunately after independence, the leadership wanted the Indian state to retain its centralized character thus undermining local self-governance. Though the panchayat was mentioned in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Indian Constitution, it lacked spirit and vigour. In the 1950s, the introduction of planning and its implementation through programmes necessitated some form of a decentralized system to deliver development under the umbrella of Community Development Programme. The Panchayati system again gained attention, but panchayats did not emerge as autonomous effective entities largely due to lack of political commitment and the entrenched dependency syndrome.

Of late, the political leadership has been prevailed upon to accord constitutional mandate to the local self-governance system in the form of Panchayati Raj. Under the new Act it is compulsory for the states to hold elections to panchayats; its provisions provide an opportunity to the weaker sections including women to participate in panchayat institutions at all levels.

Mere constitutional legitimacy can neither make this system effective nor can it nurture
new leadership from among the weaker sections. We find more inhibiting factors trying to sabotage this system than facilitative factors promoting and strengthening it. In order to translate this constitutional provision into reality, broad-based intensive mobilization at the grassroot is essential. The people in general and the elected members in particular have to be conscientized.

It should be kept in mind that Indian society is pluralistic, characterized by the multiplicity of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. This socio-cultural pluralism in society also displays a variety of local self-governance systems, prominent among them are the traditional tribal community-based institutions. These institutions by and large have been able to retain their social relevance and effectiveness. Hence, replacement of such traditional systems by Panchayati Raj may amount to centralization in a new form. The theme articles in this issue of the bulletin focuses on this aspect. PRIA along with its Network of Collaborating Regional Support organisations (NCRSOS) has been actively engaged in translating the ‘new’ constitutional mandate into reality in multiple ways. The pre-election campaign is meant to educate the electorate, enabling members of weaker sections including women to participate in this process. “Learning from Field” in this issue of the bulletin focuses on pre-election campaign in Himachal Pradesh.

— Dr. Nalin R. Jena

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A campaign towards empowerment: An overview

NAMITA MALIK*

Himachal is a state blessed with natural beauty. One has to cross hills and valleys to reach the interior. The geographical terrain, though beautiful, does make life difficult for a common man. In spite of good basic facilities like education (63.86 percent literacy rate), access to potable water (rural, 75.51 percent; urban, 91.93 percent), electricity (100 percent), some regions of the state face problems like lack of adequate drinking water, inadequate agricultural facilities, deforestation, unemployment leading to migration, etc.

Amidst such circumstances, earlier panchayats (the ones before the implementation of the new Panchayati Raj Act) were surviving with weak financial status. Most of the Pradhans and Chairpersons were of high economic status and good political connections. They were not functioning effectively. The weaker section had no representation, hence their needs and problems were mostly overlooked.

These panchayats were dissolved on 10th of November’95 and fresh elections took place in three phases on the 18th, 20th & 22nd Dec’95. These elections took place in accordance to the Himachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act 1994 which had replaced the state’s Panchayati Raj Act 1968. Under the new Act, women and the weaker sections have been brought at the center of power and a powerful three-tier (district, block and village level) Panchayati Raj system has been established. An opportunity has been provided to promote local self-governance i.e. people’s participation in decision-making on the issues of their socio-economic development. They have been given power to plan for improvement in the status of their panchayat’s education, health, water facilities, etc. leading to a holistic development of their panchayats.

PRIA’s perspective

Recognising the need to develop and make the Panchayati Raj system effective and successful, PRIA undertook a pre-election intervention in Himachal Pradesh. It was aimed at making the public at large and the women and weaker sections in particular, aware of the new Panchayat Raj Act. The emphasis was on making villagers aware of their vital role in planning and decision-making for the development of their area. An aware public is likely to elect a deserving candidate and get the best possible work out of him/her. Awareness building was also crucial for the first-time entrants in the rural political arena, which largely included women and scheduled caste/scheduled tribe contestants.

This campaign was carried out in Kangra, Chamba and Mandi districts of Himachal. As PRIA believes in the philosophy of participation i.e. participation of people in planning, decision-making and implementation of all development initiatives, we initiated our intervention with the involvement and mobilization of retired school teachers, voluntary workers, social workers, mahila mandal members, NGO workers, media people, government officials, etc. We attempted to involve individuals and institutions at each level of our intervention.

Strategy of the pre-election campaign

Being a Delhi based educational support organisation, PRIA decided to work in collaboration with New HOPE (Himalyan Organisation for People’s Education) a local grassroot organisation who has better understanding of the needs and problems of the villagers.

A broad framework of our intervention was developed in an orientation workshop organised by PRIA and New HOPE at Palampur. The workshop oriented selected mahila mandal members and some of the PRIA and New HOPE staff on the role of the NGOs/people’s organization’s in Panchayati *

* The author is working in PRIA.
Raj. Information was provided on the Panchayati Raj Act (with special emphasis on women's participation), roles and responsibilities of mahila mandals (in relation to PRI), and required qualities of a deserving contestant for panchayat elections. The use of video films on PRIs was found ineffective leading to the realization of the usefulness of 'Kala Jatha' in the local language to reach out to the rural masses.

Based on our experience at the Palampur workshop, emphasis was made on selecting appropriate methods and tools of communication for the pre-election campaign. The advantages and the limitations of various communication mediums like verbal, audio-visual, written, etc., were analysed and a combination of all was adopted to ensure full impact. Care was taken to make them suitable for local conditions. With this pre-condition, the following methods were adopted for the dissemination of information on Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI):

- Preparation and dissemination of written educational material in the form of pamphlets & posters.
- Meetings composed of talks & discussions.
- Print media (motivating local people to write articles on PRI).
- Cultural programmes consisting of songs, dances, street plays, etc. (Kala Jatha)
- Radio programmes
- Video films

Area specific approach

Depending on the availability and effectiveness of local sources, different strategies were adopted for different districts. In Chamba district the contact person was the CDPO, hence it was decided to work through ICDS functionaries (Anganwadi workers). Street plays popularly known as ‘Kala Jatha’ were organised in Mandi & Kangra. However, in all three districts, local people were involved in disseminating information through pamphlets and posters.

With the help of local resource persons, a ‘Kala Jatha’ consisting of songs and nukad natalaks was organised in Mandi & Kangra districts. The play performed by the Jan Jagriti Jatha at Kangra dealt with information on PR Act & significance of 73rd Amendment, role of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, issues related to voter awareness and role of mahila mandals.

Himachali songs based on women, society & Panchayati Raj also formed a part of ‘Jan Jagriti Jatha’. Thirty three programmes covering an area of 11 blocks (out of the 13 blocks in Kangra) were staged. Various government officials at block level, panchayat members, mahila mandals, schools, etc. were personally contacted. In order to have wider reach, priority was given to performances on roads, ‘chaurahas’ & market areas. After each programme, pamphlets providing information on Panchayati Raj Act, election procedures and women’s role in Panchayati Raj Institutions were distributed to the audience.

As Kala Jatha took shape, other available resources were also tapped in Kangra. Through the rural radio programme, ‘Trigat Ki Awaaz’, information about PRIA’s PRI intervention strategy in H.P. was broadcast from the Dharamshala FM channel. Efforts were made to motivate local free lancees to write and disseminate information regarding PRI.

In Mandi district, two local NGOs provided their active support in the awareness generation campaign. In a two-days workshop (16-17th Nov’95) towards the preparation and finalisation of the content of Kala Jatha, a group of dedicated voluntary workers were mobilized. Messages of Panchayati Raj were conveyed to the rural folk through the medium of ‘Kala Jatha’ which was named ‘Jagran Kala Jatha’. The jatha consisted of a nukad natak, qawali and a mandyal song. This Jatha was staged in 26 panchayats of the Bhil valley in Mandi Sadar block. Out of these 26 panchayats, 21 were reserved for SC & women (17 being exclusive for SC men and women). So our target audience were mainly SC voters and contestants for panchayat elections.
Through mahila mandal pradhans and members, prior information of 'Kala Jatha' was conveyed. They were given posters to paste at the strategic places like panchayat ghar, tea shops, other shops, health centers, etc. School children were also used to reach out to the masses. They were told beforehand to inform and invite their parents of the scheduled Kala Jatha. Pamphlets on Panchayati Raj and election procedures were also distributed among the students, which could be further read by their family members.

Improvisations were made when required. A brief talk (in the local language) at the end of each programme dealt with the main provisions in the Act and aimed at ensuring a better understanding of the same by the people.

In Chamba district an indirect approach was adopted towards the pre-election campaign. ICDS functionaries (Anganwadi workers) were motivated to utilize their established rapport for the dissemination of information on Panchayati Raj. During their routine monthly meetings, awareness was created about the main provisions of Panchayati Raj (with special emphasis on women's participation), role of mahila mandals and anganwadi workers and finally election procedures. Anganwadi workers were very enthusiastic; based on their initiative, two similar meetings on the same lines were organised for mahila mandal members in their respective area.

Other Forums
In our pre-election campaign, attempt was made to utilize each and every opportunity to reach out to the masses. A few such opportunities were:

- Interpersonal Communication workshop organised by PRIA for health workers of the Himachal Pradesh Health Department at Mandi where the main provisions in Panchayati Raj Act were discussed in informal meetings and pamphlets and posters on Panchayati Raj disseminated.

- Similar approach was adopted in an Interpersonal Communication training conducted by PRIA for CDPOs of Himachal Woman and Child Department.

- First International Himalayan Festival, a collaborative effort of Himachal State Tourism and Indo-Tibetan Friendship Society was held at McLeodgunj. The festival was attended by cultural troups from Chamba, Kangra, Kinnaur, Ladakh, Kulu, Shimla and Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA). This opportunity was used to establish contact with Chamba, Kangra and Kinnaur groups. Pamphlets and posters on Panchayati Raj were also disseminated.

Simultaneously, government officials were also informed about the objectives and strategies of PRIA's pre-election campaign. Indirect approach was extended by them, as and where the need arose. Administrative support was extended by them towards the success of all the interventions.

Problems faced
This whole campaign though enjoyable, was definitely not a bed of roses. The team involved in pre-election campaign encountered many difficult situations. Some of the main problems faced by us were:

Geographical terrain made it difficult and slow for the team to commute, intermittent rains and limited transportation upset the schedule of the Kala Jatha, with irregular food and lack of proper staying arrangement proving to be an added hindrance.

Lack of fluency in local language proved a constraint in some meetings and inadequate time availability for planning and preparation of various methods adopted left some loopholes.

Lessons learnt
Amidst all the difficulties, we learnt a lot and emerged out as better workers. Some of the lessons learnt were:

- The relative effectiveness of different methods was learnt. Adoption of cultural programmes in the local language was found to be more effective

(contd on next page)
Wealth from ecological mcn — A new discovery

This following piece is based on a report by
Mr. Umesh Dwivedi.*

*Author is working in Environment Protection Society, Darjeeling

anmara, a weed abundant is the Eastern Himalayas, has been turned into a valuable resources to develop high grade hand made paper and green vegetable dye, by the constant efforts of Umesh Dwivedi of Environment Protection Society, who was later joined by Swapna Sen of Dabro Agro Chemicals Pvt. Ltd.

Banmara (Eupatorium adnophorum) is a weed, which has infested huge areas of forests, agricultural and wastelands in Eastern Himalayas between the altitude of 1000-2000 meters. It belongs to the family Asteraceae and is an erect herb growing up to a height of one meter. The plant suppresses the growth of other plants and has no fuel or fodder value. However, the paste from its leaves and tender stems is sometimes locally used as an antiseptic and antiseeding agent, but has not been commercially exploited so far. Scientists have been able, to some extent, use it for composting.

The export value of products from this promising resource can be used for the economic upliftment of rural folks, employment generation and eco-friendly industrial development in the Eastern Himalayas, particularly in Darjeeling and Sikkim. The tremendous export potential of the products provides opportunities for the NGOs and other organisations involved in the sector of rural development to exploit this potential small scale cottage industry.

Good quality hand made paper is very much in demand in both local and international markets. The green dye extracted from Banmara is also very rare. Moreover, vegetable dyes are in tremendous demand as the synthetic dyes are carcinogenic and cause reaction on human skin. This has been tried on jute fabric; the fabric was found to develop good texture and thermal comfort, which it initially lacked.

The current discovery if used properly can provide income generation opportunities to the poor and marginalised.

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Report of the Training Workshop on Participatory Development (Organised by PRIA and held from November 13 to 18, 1995) is now for SALE. Priced at Rs 30.

A discount rate of Rs 30 for grass root groups.

(contd from previous page)

as compared to the screening of video films on the same issue. Mere use of lecture could only be effective for organised groups, and not for the masses.

- Reading material like pamphlets and posters (with write-ups) had a limited reach, while posters conveying the message through graphics was found to be more appropriate for the masses.

- Our experience of the Himalayan festival made us realize the ineffectiveness of festive occasions for the dissemination of serious information.

- Regular contact with Government officials was found to be helpful in establishing rapport with them.

- Constraints faced due to marriage season, harvesting season and examinations reflected the need of selection of the right time.

Inspite of many shortcomings and constraints, the strategy adopted proved useful in the state. The adoption of different strategies based on the initiative, interest and competences of our local resource persons helped us going and was our key to success. However the whole intervention has left us with a realization that we have just initiated an ongoing process which would require the sustained enthusiasm of the people in Himachal.

Participation & Governance

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South Africa: dawn of democracy

The following presentation is based on an interview with Mr. Dale W. White. The interview was conducted by Namrata Jaitli.*

The people of South Africa have come a long way. Exploitation under the slave trade, colonialism and the system of apartheid for over five centuries, resulted in weakening of the political, cultural and social institutions in South Africa. The union of South Africa, formed in 1910, remained a member of the British Commonwealth till it became a republic on May 31, 1961. Inspire of becoming an independent republic it remained socially and politically handicapped. The oppressive apartheid system created sharp racial demarcations and segregations in all spheres of public and private life.

To meet the challenges of the oppressive regime a number of people’s struggle movements took shape. The civil society which had been subjugated and exploited, organised itself through a number of people’s organisations and alliances. By 1989 the restrictions of apartheid began to be removed and the government announced its willingness to consider the extension of black South African’s political rights. The lifting of the ban on ANC (African National Congress) the release of its leader Nelson Mandela in February 1990 and the repealing of a number of oppressive acts facilitated the end of apartheid and racial restrictions.

The coming of ANC in power in 1994 finally paved way for the much awaited democratic processes to take shape in South Africa.

The people’s struggle against apartheid was a struggle for peace and democracy and the victory of the ANC as the “party of choice” marks a step closer. At this important juncture in South African history the role of the civil society and the NGOs in general becomes important for taking the country and the people towards progress and prosperity.

The following interview with Mr. Dale W. White, the Executive Director of Wilgespruit Fellowship Centre, (WFC) an NGO working in South Africa since 1948, provides an overview of the development initiatives in free South Africa and the role of NGOs in it.

How was the democratic process initiated in South Africa?

The democratic process was initiated through the national and regional elections held on April 27-29, 1994. The voting by political partners was on the basis of proportional representation.

The African National Congress (ANC) as a party won 61% of the votes at the national level, while at the regional levels it won in 7 of the 9 regions. KwaZulu-Natal was won by Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Western Cape by the Nationalist Party. The creation of the nine provinces followed the inauguration of Mr. Nelson Mandela as President. A lot of violence was instigated by the right wing organisations in the run up to elections.

The participation of the people in the electoral process was very high, with 15 million out of the eligible 20 million casting their vote. The NGOs also participated actively in the electoral process. They undertook voter education programmes, contributed to training monitors for election and helped make the election process free and fair.

The elections at the third tier of government in most of the local towns and country sides took place on 1st of November 1995 thus leaving only KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape without the three tiers of democracy in place. In most places ANC won both the local votes and the proportional local votes by nearly 63% majority thus being regarded by the people as the “party of choice”. The democratic process thus has been initiated at all the three levels: national, provincial and local.

South Africa now has an Transitional Constitution which is valid for the first five years (till the elections in 1999). During this period a government of National Unity, elected during the April 1994 election involving as many partners as provided by the proportional vote, will administer the country.

ANC has been facing problems mainly in the two provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, where the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) wants to have a federal state, and the Western Cape, where the Nationalist party holds the majority at the regional level. Although this has not created violence in Western Cape, in KwaZulu-Natal the toll of violence is rising.

What are the key development initiatives taken by the ANC ?

The official policy of the new South African
government has been people-driven from the start, with the main objective of serving people at all levels of society. The new policy is changing the old apartheid style of development, which was top-down in nature emphasizing more on infrastructure development. Although the new government is promoting bottom up development, the government departments of the old government are still in place.

Much of the activity of the new government has been to deliver development as directly to the community as possible. One of the first laws passed by the new government set up the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), a government programme for post apartheid South Africa.

Under the RDP five major priority areas have been undertaken, which are:

i) Housing
ii) Sewage
iii) Better education
iv) Water
v) Electricity
vi) Better health care
vii) Help people start small businesses

Special Presidential lead projects exist to initiate this new process. Currently there are 70 such projects. President Mandela gave the initial impetus to the first two projects - to educate children and to give free health care to all women and children.

The Presidential projects try to reach the poorest and the most underdeveloped people in the rural and urban areas. Special provisions have been made for them, like provision of a free meal each day in primary schools, provision of a government subsidy of up to 15000 rands by the Ministry of Housing to individuals who qualify in a group for it and many more such development benefits.

Efforts to create a framework for development which establishes partnership between the government sector, the business sector and the community are being made.

ANC has also taken up important initiatives for capacity building of grass root people, helping them prioritize their needs and participate in the development process. The community must be given the necessary skill for employment: to do the work they can do and to receive money and account for it. Capacity building is one of the key programmes which the NGO community is expected to deliver.

A number of important developments have taken place in the urban areas. The apartheid era had witnessed the creation of racial blocks with certain portions of the city and towns being segregated and made exclusive for the whites, the others being restricted for the asians, colored and blacks. The facilities in each of the areas ranged from the highest level for the white areas to the lowest level for the blacks. The local elections in the urban areas were delayed, part of the strategy of the whites to exclude the blacks from these areas.

The people struggled against this segregation. The organisations of the people at the civic level was very strong in the black townships and the asian townships and quite weak in the white townships.

Creation of racial blocks by the Nationalist government did generate a number of problems, however the good political thinking of the ANC has now overcome these formal barriers. In 1994 the Transitional Metropolitan Council of Johannesburg was created with the agglomeration of 7 cities, 4 out of which were white areas. Johannesburg has since then been sub divided into 4 structures which
include any one of the substructures—white, colored, Asian and black component of private cities. An important achievement of the people is reflected in the Western substructure of Johannesburg having a black as a mayor. The last time a substructure had a black mayor was in 1902.

What scope is provided for people to participate in the development process?

Attempts have been made to provide scope for people to formally choose their partners for development. We find that people are ready and mobilized.

Under the government, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) provisions are made for the richer provinces to support some of the poorer provinces. A number of legislations have also come in support of the community, to help them develop their proposals and submit their priorities and plans. However, the systems are still not completely in place.

Some external donors are still willing to do the start-up schemes at a cost which people getting the subsidy will be able to afford or at least be able to get bank loans based on trustworthy savings.

People who over the years have been excluded deliberately from making decisions urgently need capacity building in order to facilitate their effective participation in development and governance. The methods of appreciative inquiry and methods of future planning are therefore the fundamental building blocks of capacity building. Planning systems which go back to the past and try and inch their way forward lack energy. It is wiser to start from what people would like in the future and to work backwards from the future to the present. The obstacles anticipated need immediate identification.

What is the current scenario of NGOs in South Africa?

Many of the representatives elected to the parliament were leaders and those involved in the NGO sector. In the beginning the government tried to bypass NGOs; however the NGOs worked as intermediaries between the delivery of resources for development and the people. Due to lack of local elections there was no one to develop the capacity of the people or the organisation process. This resulted in the government gradually modifying their views in 1995, making space for the NGOs to participate more in the development process.

The NGO community initially asked to toe the line resist. They opted to establish their own local provincial and national representation. In this process they faced great difficulties. In some places however they were successful—working towards, strengthening different development sectors like health, education, welfare, development and organisation.

The provision of legal space in the Constitution and in the RDP is an achievement for the NGO sector. The RDP however assumes that the government will still pay the cost while the community is called in to do whatever development work they want. The NGOs who want to receive grant have to now calculate and submit the cost of services as part of a tender by the community to the government.

This long process is causing many NGOs to run out of money and time. The government now promises a new strategy wherein capacity development grants will be made available to NGOs who are working with the community. This however is taking time. NGOs still continue with their work, depending greatly on outside donors and waiting for systems to fall into place.

(contd. on page 17)
Conspiracy of silence: Panchayati Raj in tribal and Scheduled areas

Jayaprakash Rao P.*

‘The most important fact of the proposed law is that it will remove the dissonance between tribal tradition of self governance and modern formal institutions which has been at the root of simmering discontent and occasional confrontation. We are confident that this will mark the beginning of a new era in the history of tribal people. After the new institutional frame becomes operational, the people will be able to perceive the state apparatus as an extension of their own system in the service of the community that too, in a crucial phase of modernization firmly rooted in tradition.’

(Sri Dileep Singh Bhuria in his letter to the Prime Minister)

Background

Throughout the 19 century numerous tribal revolts broke out in the country with the extension of the modern administrative system by the British into the tribal areas. The British used force from time to time to contain the unrest among the tribal populations. To deal with the tribal unrest on a long term basis the British evolved special laws for administering the tribal areas as the simple people were culturally and economically different from the neighboring peasant communities. As early as 1874 the British promulgated the Scheduled District Act to administer these tribal areas and delineate the Scheduled Areas. These areas were called by different names i.e. background tracts, agency areas in 1919, 1921.

The Government of India Act of 1935 classified these areas into two categories. The first one i.e. the North Eastern Tribal region was considered very backward and they were wholly excluded from the scope of the normal laws. The Central or Provincial legislature had no power to make laws and the Governor in Council alone had powers to legislate for the administration of these areas. The second category of backward areas were classified as partially excluded areas and the Governor was vested with the power to enforce or refrain from enforcing any provincial enactments. The British government enacted laws during 1915-1920 prohibiting transfer of land from tribal to non-tribals and for regulating money lending in the Scheduled Areas.

These provisions were continued after independence by incorporating them in the constitution, with some modifications. The wholly excluded areas were incorporated into the sixth and the partially excluded areas in the fifth schedule of the Constitution. The North Eastern Tribal region of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram is governed by the Sixth Schedule provisions, and the Fifth Schedule provisions covers the tribal areas of the rest of the country. While scheduling the tribal areas in 1874, the British omitted certain tribal majority areas from scheduling. These areas remained un-scheduled even after independence as the Presidential Order on the Scheduled Areas issued in 1950 did not rectify the omissions in the Scheduled districts orders of 1874.

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rectify this anomaly, the Parliament amended the V Schedule of the constitution in 1976, enabling the President of India to increase the Scheduled Area. The Government of India directed the state governments to send proposals for scheduling such tribal majority villages/areas hitherto unscheduled. However, many state governments did not send the proposals for scheduling the tribal majority villages/tracts and these tribal tracts have remained unscheduled to this day. The net result is, the absence of the Scheduled Area in the States of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Kerala, U.P. and W.B. inspite of many tribals living in compact areas in these states. In the states where there is a scheduled area, large tracts of the tribal areas hitherto unscheduled, still remain outside the boundaries of the scheduled area as the state governments did not send proposals for scheduling such areas.

Constitutional Provisions

The Constitution makes a distinction between the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Area. Articles 330 to 342 deal with special provisions relating to certain classes. Under these Articles of the Constitution certain provisions of positive discrimination have been provided for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo Indians. All those communities/ethnic groups included in the Presidential Order of Scheduled Tribes alone are considered as Scheduled Tribes legally. Articles 330 and 332 have made reservation of seats for Scheduled Tribes for Parliament and the state Legislative Assemblies. Article 335 gives concessions in recruitment into the Government service. Article 339 enables the Central Government to give directions to the states on the administration and welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. Articles 338 has made provision for a National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to monitor all matters on the safeguards provided to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes by the Constitution.

The Scheduled Areas are those areas of tribal concentration that have been declared by the Presidential Order on Scheduled Area under Article 224. The administration of Scheduled Areas is governed by Fifth and Sixth Schedules under Article 244. The Sixth Schedule is applicable to the tribal areas in the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The Sixth Schedule provides for an Autonomous District Council with executive legislative and judicial powers. The Autonomous District Council is an elected body, for which elections have to be held regularly once in five years. The District Council is empowered to make laws with respect to:

1. the allotment, occupation or use, or the setting apart, of land, other than any land which is not a reserved forest for the purpose of agriculture or grazing for residential or other non-agricultural purpose in the interests of the inhabitants of any village or town.
2. the management of any forest not being a reserved forest
3. the use of any canal or water course for the purpose of agriculture
4. the regulation of the practice of jhum or other forms of shifting cultivation
5. the establishment of village or town committees or councils and their powers
6. any other matter relating to village or town administration, including village or town police and public health and sanitation
7. the appointment of succession of Chiefs or Headmen
8. the inheritance of property
9. marriage and property
10. social customs

Any Act made by the Parliament or the State legislatures on the powers conferred on the Autonomous District Councils, cannot be extended to the Autonomous District Council without their prior approval. The Autonomous District Councils are empowered to set up Courts to administer justice in their jurisdiction. The Sixth Schedule provides for three-tiers of government i.e. centre, state and the district, whereas in the rest of the areas in the country there are only two-tiers of government i.e. Centre and the State.

The tribal areas in the rest of the country are covered under the Fifth Schedule. The Fifth Schedule had made certain provisions for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and it enables a frame for making legislation for the Scheduled Areas. Under this Schedule, the Union Government can give directions to the States on the administration of the Scheduled Areas. The governor is vested with special powers for the administration of the Scheduled Areas.
The Fifth Schedule has made provisions for the Constitution of a Tribes Advisory Council consisting of the elected tribal legislators to advise the governor on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the Scheduled Tribes. He is empowered to exclude any Act of Parliament or of the State Legislature to the Scheduled Area by notification, or extend them with such exceptions and modifications, which he thinks are necessary for peace and good governance. The governor can issue notification repealing or amending any Act of Parliament or of the State Legislature or any existing law which is for the time being applicable if he thinks that these Acts/laws are detrimental for the development of the tribes. The governor may make regulations for the administration of the Scheduled Area with the consent of the Tribes Advisory Council to regulate transfer of land, money lending etc. The powers conferred on the governor under this Schedule have been left flexible with the intention of making different sets of regulations to suit socio-cultural and socio-economic needs of different tribal communities living in different states or in different areas within a state.

The governors could have extended forest, excise, mining, land acquisition laws and criminal and Civil Procedure Codes with necessary modifications to the Scheduled Areas. For instance the governors could have modified the Forest Act enabling tribals living in Scheduled Areas to continue with shifting cultivation and to meet their small timber requirements without any restrictions. Similarly the governors could have prevented the vending of liquor by outside agents or the state agencies in the Scheduled Areas and allowed the tribals to distill liquor to meet their religious requirements. Unfortunately, in none of the states having the Scheduled Area, have the governors used these discretionary powers to modify the Acts, while extending the Acts and laws made by the State legislatures and the Parliament.

Conspiracy of silence

In spite of the special provisions made for the good governance of the Scheduled Areas and the Constitutional guarantees and concessions provided for the scheduled tribes, the administration of these areas by various state governments has not been positive. There has been a large influx of non-tribals into the Scheduled Areas in the last forty five years and in many places the tribals have been reduced to a minority in their own home land, due to the opening of tribal areas. In the name of development, dams were built, industries were set up and mining was taken up on a large scale in the tribal areas resulting in displacement of about twenty percent of the tribals. The record of rehabilitation of these tribals is pathetic. There are instances of multiple displacement on the Andhra-Oriisa borders due to the construction of a series of dams across the Sileru River. The attempts by the displaced tribals to settle in the nearby forests, is being frustrated by the forest departments in both the states by torching their villages. The Constitutions is a mute witness to its violation by the authorities themselves in the name of development and the enforcement of laws.

In the last forty years tribals were driven to revolt in various parts of the country as an ultimate expression of their resistance to the violation of their basic right to live in peace and harmony in their environment. The tribals revolted in Bihar, Assam and other north Indian states demanding either separate statehood or cessation from the country. In some areas these revolts assumed violent form. In the late sixties in Andhra Pradesh the tribals of Sriakulam revolted against the oppression of the money lenders, traders and the landlords under the leadership of the Naxalities. The movement spread to the entire north Andhra tribal areas and in the last few years extended into the tribal tracts of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa. The state responded by crushing these movements with ruthless force wherever possible and tried to improve their condition when there was no other option.

In response to the Naxalities movement and other revolts in the tribal areas, the State began to pay attention to ameliorate the hardships of the tribals, and to contain the simmering unrest among them introduced integrated Tribal Development Agencies and Modified Area Development Agencies (ITDAs, MADA). However even these efforts were half hearted and the development of the tribals and the tribal areas remains unsatisfactory. The last twenty years of integrated tribal development is far from satisfactory and malnutrition, hunger disease; illiteracy are still rampant in the tribal areas. Hunger deaths and epidemics are not unusual in these areas, in spite of integrated tribal development/sub-plan approach of development being pursued since 1974. In the process of development of tribals, in fact the tribals were left out and, only the tribal areas were
developed by laying roads and improving other infrastructure facilities to cart away the resources located in those areas.

Land alienation is ubiquitous throughout the Scheduled Areas of the country, inspite of the existence of land transfer regulations since seventy years, prohibiting the non-tribals from acquiring immovable property in the Scheduled Areas. For instance in Andhra Pradesh 50 percent of the agricultural land in the Scheduled Areas has passed into the hands of non-tribals according to the figures furnished by the State Government. The unofficial estimates put this figure at 80 percent. Even when some efforts were made by the State to restore the agricultural land to the tribals, the non-tribal occupants frustrated the efforts by taking recourse to the complicated legal system which is beyond the comprehension of the simple tribal.

The governors, who are vested with special powers under Fifth Schedule for peace and good governance of the Scheduled Areas never applied their mind in enforcing the Constitutional provisions in the Scheduled Areas. On the contrary the governors extended all the laws passed by the state and central governments without making suitable modifications to suit the socio-cultural and politico-economic ethos of the tribals to the Scheduled Areas. Thus the governors extended the Forest Act, Land Acquisition Act, Excise Act, Wildlife Act, mining laws etc. to the Scheduled Areas and thereby dispossessed the resource base of the tribals on which they depend for their survival. The net result, is continuing unrest in the tribal areas.

73 & 74 CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

Prior to the insertion of Part-IX in the Constitution through the Seventy third and Seventy fourth Constitution Amendments, the state governments were solely responsible for enacting laws on Panchayat Raj and holding elections to those bodies. The Panchayat Raj institutions were ushered in the fifties to realise the spirit of the Article 40 of the Constitution for making democratic institutions vibrant at the village level, intermediate and district levels. After the initial euphoria almost all state governments neglected the Panchayat Raj institutions by not holding elections on one pretext or other as the ruling elite felt threatened by the emergence of a alternate power centers at the district, intermediate and village level.

The Seventy Third Constitutional Amendment deals with Panchayati Raj and the seventy fourth amendment deals with the municipalities. Both these amendments were introduced to enable peoples participation in the preparation and implementation of development plans and to strengthen the democratic institutions at the grassroots level. The Seventy Third Constitutional Amendment makes it a constitutional obligation for the state governments to hold Panchayat Raj elections regularly once in five years. It has made provision for compulsory reservation for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, women and for other backward classes of society. For conducting elections in a free and fair manner it has created an independent State Election Commission and for devolution of funds to the Panchayat Raj bodies has made provisions for the setting up of a Finance Commission at the state level. Identical conditions were introduced for municipalities through the Seventy Fourth Amendment Act. The Seventy Third Amendment Act came into force on the 24 of April 1992.

Parliament while enacting this amendment, excluded the operation of Part-IX of the Constitution to the Scheduled Areas (Article 243-M and 243ZC) in the country, as the administration and development programmes in vogue since independence in the Scheduled Areas were unsatisfactory. While excluding the operation of this part of the Constitution to the Fifth Scheduled Areas, it had also withdrawn the legislative power of the State Legislatures and the special powers conferred on the governors to make regulations to the Scheduled Areas on the Panchayat Raj set up. While enacting this Amendment, Parliament took into consideration the special conditions that exist in the Scheduled Areas and reserved to itself the power to make a separate legislation with necessary modifications for the Scheduled Areas. However, the State Governments enacted Panchayat Raj Acts and extended them to the Scheduled Areas contravening the restrictions imposed on them by the Constitution.

Committee of Parliamentarians

There was a lapse on the part of the Parliament. It did not enact a suitable law for the Scheduled Areas within the stipulated time. The tribal members of the Parliament raised this in the Parliament and discussed it with the Prime Minister. Finally, the Government of India appointed a committee of Parliamentarians and experts with Sri Dileep Singh
Bhuria (M.P) as its chairman on 10, June, 1994 to suggest salient features of law to be extended to the Scheduled Areas (hereafter, Bhuria Committee). It has been asked to suggest steps to harmonize Fifth, Sixth, Eleventh and Twelfth Schedules of the Constitution as they impinge upon the Panchayat Raj Institutions. The other terms of reference of the Committee are that shall formulate the salient feature of the law that may be taken up for enactment by Parliament for extending the provisions of the Part IX of the Constitution to the Scheduled Areas referred to in clause (i) of article 244 of the Constitution subject to such exemptions and modifications as may be necessary under article 243 M(4) (b); and the variations and modifications in other Acts relevant to the Fifth Scheduled Areas in order to strengthen institutions of local Government in Fifth Scheduled Areas.

The Committee submitted its report to the Government of India on 17 January, 1995. It has suggested radical legislation for peace and good governance of the Scheduled Areas after taking into consideration the type of administration and development that had been in vogue since independence in the Scheduled Areas. The committee reviewed the functioning of the Sixth Schedule in the North-Eastern states and suggested remedial measures to the Sixth Schedule and recommended for the extension of those provisions to the Fifth Schedule areas. This committee has recommended the adoption of the three tier system to the scheduled areas but with importance modifications. For example:

1. Scheduling all tribal majority villages that were hitherto unscheduled. For scheduling, the habitat should be the criteria.

2. The Gram Sabha should be given complete command over natural resources i.e. land, water and forest.

3. The Gram Sabha should have powers for maintenance of peace, adjudication of disputes, supervision of all institutions located within its jurisdiction and control over all matters relating to day-to-day life of the people in the village, and all functionaries will be accountable to it.

4. The approval of the Gram Sabha is necessary for land acquisition for any other purpose other than defense, railway lines, road, school and hospital.

5. The Gram Panchayat, the first formal institution should prepare and implement all development plans subject to the approval of the Gram Sabhas. The Panchayat will be responsible for settling inter-habitation disputes and hear appeals in decisions of Gram Sabhas. The decision of the Gram Panchayat shall be final and should be in consonance with the traditional system where elders from a group of villages collectively settle matters.

6. At the intermediate level the intermediate panchayat will prepare developmental plans and implement them. It shall allocate funds for the panchayats. Education and health would be the first charge of the funds.

7. Reorganize the boundaries of Scheduled Areas for maintaining the integrity and constituting such areas in a district, into Autonomous District Councils (ADC) or Autonomous Sub-district Councils, in case the Scheduled Area is small in a district.

8. The Autonomous District Council/Sub-autonomous District Councils should be constituted broadly on the pattern of the Sixth Schedule. The ADCs/SADCs will have legislative, executive and judicial functions.

9. Strengthening of Tribes Advisory Councils with the Chief Minister as Chairman in the states and establishment of a Central Tribes Council at the national level.

In essence, the committee recommended for resorting power to the people in the Scheduled Areas.

Notification of elections in Andhra Pradesh

The Government of Andhra Pradesh in February 1995, declared elections to the district and intermediate Panchayat Raj institutions throughout the State in February 1995 under the AP Panchayat Raj Act of 1994, including the Scheduled Areas of the state. The elections for the Gram Panchayats were deferred. The Scheduled Area in the state is 30,293 Sq.kms. and it is spread over nine districts of Adilabad, Warangal, Khammam, West Godavari, East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram, Srikakulam and Mahaboobnagar. There are 5,913 villages in this area spread over 108 mandals (intermediate administrative unit between the district and the revenue village). Forty six of these mandals are wholly in the Scheduled Area and the rest of the mandals have partly Scheduled Areas.
The State Government while drawing the administrative boundaries of the mandals did not respect the integrity of the Scheduled Area. The contiguous Scheduled Area was split and distributed over many mandals and thereby, reduced population of the tribals into a minority in those mandals. (Carving of administrative boundaries to disintegrate the contiguous Scheduled Area is a story by itself). The Scheduled Tribe population of the State as per the 1991 census in 42 lakhs and accounts for 6.3 per cent of the total population of the State.

The State Government while making reservations for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women took into account the forty six mandals situated entirely in the Scheduled Area and they were set apart, for reserving to the Scheduled Tribes exclusively. The remaining sixty two mandals were clubbed with the open category for the purpose of reservation to various categories. The State Government followed the principle of drawing lots (picking up of mandals at random through lots) for reserving the posts of Mandal Praja Parishad Presidents and the Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (Z.P.T.Cs). In this process the office of the President of only sixteen out of the sixty two mandals having Scheduled Area got luckily reserved for the Scheduled Tribes. The rest of the mandals were either made general seats or were reserved for other backward sections of the non-tribals. In the case of the forty six mandals situated wholly in Scheduled Areas, the government introduced the criteria of proportionate population that is 50% or more of the Scheduled Tribe population for reserving them for the tribals. By applying this criteria twelve mandals located in wholly Scheduled Areas and having less that 50% tribal population were de-reserved and brought into the open category. The principle of proportionate population was not followed in the case of Koyyuru Mandal in Visakhapatnam district, which is wholly located in the Scheduled Area with 90% tribal population.

For reserving the Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (M.P.T.Cs) to various categories in the mandals located wholly in Scheduled Areas, once again the proportionate population criteria was used and a large number of M.P.T.Cs were de-reserved and thrown open for non-tribals. The policy of reservation for the tribals in the Panchayat Raj bodies in the Scheduled Areas in the elections held recently is quite contrary to the reservation policy followed in the past. In the elections held to the Panchayat Raj bodies in 1987, all the elected posts in the Mandal Praja Parishads wholly located in Scheduled Areas were reserved for Scheduled Tribes, besides reserving the seats for the Scheduled Tribes in the Scheduled Areas/villages that were part of the mandals that were partly in Scheduled Area. The non-tribals of Khammam district challenged the reservation policy of the State Government in the AP High Court in 1987. The Court upheld the State Governments policy of reservation in favour of the tribals in the Scheduled Areas at that time.

Through this process of de-reservation of elected posts in the local bodies elections in this year (1995), the state government tried to legitimise the political leadership of the non-tribals in the Scheduled Areas and throttle the emergence of tribal leadership. The state government, which is entrusted with the task of protecting the interests of the tribals by the constitution was attempting to deprive the tribals on two counts. Firstly, it failed to prevent the influx on non-tribals into the Scheduled Areas and the consequent land alienation, and secondly, it was trying to deprive the electoral positions reserved for the tribals in the name of proportionate representation in the Scheduled Areas. This manipulation by the State administration, made us challenge the applicability of AP Panchayat Raj Act of 1994, to the Scheduled Areas in the Honble Andhra Pradesh Court. The Hon'ble Court while admitting the writ petition, stayed the declaration of results of MPTCs and ZPTCs for the mandals wholly situated in the Scheduled Areas.
Finally on 23 March, 1995, the Hon'ble Court in its judgment declared the application of the AP Panchaya Raj Act of 1994, in the Scheduled Areas as un-constitutional, and set aside the elections held in the Scheduled Area.

The follow up

The tribal students and the employees working in Hyderabad met on 24 and 25 March, 1995 and reviewed the implications of AP High Court judgment. The meeting decided to form an ad-hoc committee to launch an awareness campaign, as the tribal leaders in the districts were unaware of the reasons for which the AP Panchayat Raj Act was challenged and the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee report. The ad-hoc committee decided to hold preliminary meetings of the tribal leaders in the districts to explain the implications of the AP
High Court judgment and the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee. The Committee further decided to organise a state level convention of the tribals on the 30 April to decide a future course of action.

Accordingly, preliminary meetings were held in all the eight north Andhra districts, stretching from Adilabad to Srikakulam in April, and the tribal leaders were informed of the reasons for challenging the elections, the implications of the judgment and the recommendations of the Bhuria committee report. The response of the tribal leaders, in all these districts, to the Bhuria Committee recommendations was extremely positive. The local leaders in the district decided to hold a few more meetings to disseminate the information to a wider section of the community, and convene district level conventions for propagating the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee report. The meetings also decided to form committees at the district and mandal levels to take the message of the committee’s recommendations to the villages and mobilize public opinion for the implementation of the recommendation of the Bhuria Committee in toto.

The State convention was held on 30 April, 1995, at Hyderabad. Delegations from all the districts having Scheduled Areas attended the convention. The size of the delegations was small from the north coastal districts of Srikakulam, Vizianagram, Visakhapatnam and East and West Godavari. The convention felt that a majority of the tribals and their leaders in the districts were still unaware of the court case and the Bhuria Committee recommendations, and decided to hold a series of meetings/conventions at the district and mandal levels to educate the tribals on the implications of the AP High Court judgment. The convention decided to launch an awareness campaign to build a movement in the tribal areas for demanding the implication of the Bhuria Committee recommendations in toto.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh went in appeal to the Supreme Court challenging the High Court judgment. The Supreme Court refused to stay the operation of High Court judgment on 10 April 1995, while admitting the Special Leave Petition, and in the subsequent hearings of the case on 25 April and 3 May. However, in its hearing on 3 May 1995 the Supreme Court in an interim order, permitted the State Election Commissioner to continue with the poll process outside the territorial constituencies not having Scheduled Area. The application of the Panchayat Raj Acts have been challenged in the High Courts of Maharashtra and Gujarat after the AP High Court delivered its judgment. The Bombay bench of the Maharashtra High Court stayed the Panchayat elections in the Scheduled Areas of that state in its judgment delivered recently. The final hearing in the Supreme Court took place recently and the court has reserved the judgment.

The implications of the AP High Court Judgment

The judgment of the Andhra Pradesh High Court has resulted in an situation in which the formal institutions have become unconstitutional and the traditional institutions are unrecognized by the law in the Scheduled Areas. If the Supreme Court upholds the judgment of the AP High Court, the applicability of Panchayat Raj Acts enacted by the state of Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan to their respective Scheduled Areas would become unconstitutional, and the elections that were held to the Panchayat Raj bodies in Madhya Pradesh under MP Panchayat Raj Act would become unconstitutional. To complete the process of constituting the Panchayat Raj bodies in these states, the Parliament will have to make a law for the Scheduled Areas under Part-IX of the Constitution and extend them to the Scheduled Areas. In case the Supreme Court upholds the contention of the state government, the tribals in the Scheduled and tribal areas have to be mobilized to persuade the Government of India to introduce a law in Parliament incorporating the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee.

The recommendations of the Bhuria Committee being radical and in contradistinction to the concentration of power at the State and Centre levels, we do not know to what extent the Government of India would accept the recommendations of the committee while drafting a law on Panchayat Raj bodies for Scheduled Areas, and to what extent the Parliament may accept the draft law. Hence there is an urgent need to launch an awareness campaign on recommendations of the Bhuria Committee report in the tribal areas throughout the country and build up a movement for pressurizing the Central Government to enact a law giving power to the people/gram sabha in the Scheduled Areas. In tribal areas hitherto unscheduled (particularly in the states of Tamilnadu, Kerala,
Karnataka, West Bengal etc.) the demand should be for extending the new law that is likely to be made for the existing Scheduled Areas and to schedule the tribal majority villages. In all the Tribal Areas throughout the country the peoples mobilization should be on a single point i.e. implement the recommendation of the Bhuria Committee in toto and enact a law giving complete control over natural resources to the gram sabha.

In the light of the developments that have taken place, consequent to the judgment delivered by the High Court of the Andhra Pradesh and the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee on new frame of law to be enacted for the administration of the tribal areas, there is an urgent need to convene meetings of activists, leaders of the tribal community/organisations, NGOs working in tribal areas and the sympathizers of the tribal cause, to discuss the implications of the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee to different tribal areas, both scheduled and unscheduled. There is a pressing need to identify contiguous tribal majority villages areas and redraw their boundaries for demanding their inclusion in the Schedule or for redrawing the boundaries of the Scheduled Areas. We have to evolve strategies for launching awareness campaigns for mobilising and building a movement for the implementation of the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee in toto, or to put in a nutshell **Power to the People.**

(Contd. from page 9)

During the days of Apartheid, the donors used to make the national fund available to NGOs directly. These funds now are channelled through bilateral arrangement with the South African government. The funds from the donors to the NGOs are thus drying up.

**How has your organisation (WFC) promoted people's participation in local self governance and development?**

Since 1948 the WFC has been devoted to church and societal issues. Till 1994 the Centre had been part of the NGO community action against apartheid. It has a long history around the struggle, especially in reviving the labor union in 1968 working amongst people in civic association in local township since 1984, and supporting the development of small scale projects in economic development since 1978. In 1989 the Centre introduced training of political formations-the ANC, Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), Azapoipf and the Nationalist party - reaching the way of negotiation to people at all levels from the cabinet to the local community.

The Centre has a staff of 52 people, most of them in the Gauteng province. The main focus is on the marginalised people. These programmes come under the Centre. Some of the programmes dealt with are shack dwelling community, conflict resolution and micro economic development issues. The organisation has also done considerable work in the area of urban governance.

We feel that people have taken power - now it is a long road and a long walk to peace and posterity.

**Heartiest Congratulations to Gram Vikas for being awarded the prestigious World Hunger Award for the year 1995-96.**

Gram Vikas is an NGO based in Berhampur district of Orissa. Its work is focused primarily on promoting an alternative model of rural and tribal development, wherein the people are central to all development initiatives.
Books and Documents

PANCHAYATS AND THEIR FINANCE

This book consists of two papers – Panchayat Finance and Issues Relating to Inter-Governmental Transfers and Finance Commissions and Restructuring of Panchayat Finance.

The first papers is classified into four heads i) an integrated approach ii) existing structure of panchayat finance, iii) the functional, financial end planning decentralization, iv) conceptual and operational issues of State Finance Commissions.

The author concludes that finance is necessary, though not the only driving force towards building institutions of self government.

The second paper is divided in two parts – Part I focuses the tasks of State Finance Commissions in Panchayat functions and finances. Part II describes fiscal restructuring of panchayats. The author concludes that fiscal decentralization and accountability of the panchayats can strengthen them as institutions of self governance.

GRASSROOT HORIZONS Connecting Participatory Development Initiatives East and West.

The book is a compilation of the activities of grassroots activists and researchers, building on their varied personal experiences to clarify and strengthen the effectiveness of participatory group action in overcoming impoverishment, oppression and exclusion.

The book is divided into four parts. The book opens in Part I with the personalized reports of the 1989 workshop “People's Initiatives to Overcome Poverty” held at East-West Centre, Hawaii, presenting fifteen profiles and a synthesis of participatory action in India, Philippines, United States, Newfoulund, Thailand and Bangladesh.

The authors, the participants of this workshop, report and critically analyse subsequent participatory organisation, research and learning experiences in which they have been engaged. Three themes define the clustering of the authors' chapters. Issues of identity, awareness and solidarity among local and indigenous population are addressed in Part II.

Part III points to the larger structures – cultural, educational, governmental, corporate-faced by local, widely dispersed groups and reports measures organised and used by local groups to confront and change these structures.

Part IV address issues of equity in global resource distribution and control, grassroots initiatives in environmental protection and core values and connections among groups seeking sustainable just paths of development through participatory mean, building on cooperation among members and related governmental organisation at the Rio conferences on Environment and Development.

On the whole the book is a valuable document on the significance and challenges in support of ethical, perceptual and pragmatic advances to foster and disseminate information about participatory movement locally, nationally and internationally.

EDUCATION, PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT: Studies in Human Development.

Based on grassroots experience and people's self actions, covering studies on important aspects of development like non-government efforts, welfare initiatives for unorganised workers, skill development of women, the aspiration of youth for employment and interventions for
universalising education, this volume marks an important contribution towards human development.

The nine chapters of the book provide an overview of the significance of development in the context of the current social and political conditions. The significance of education, awareness and participation of people in achieving development of human and natural resources are dealt in an effective manner in the second part of the Motivation and Development series.

The author asserts that "education, awareness, organisation and participation of people along with enlightened public action /intervention are important for obtaining human development goals."

An important document for those interested in understanding the functioning, management and performance of social and human development policies and programmes.

As essential document for development workers, researchers, bureaucrats, voluntary organisation workers and all others interested in understanding the bottom-up government process. It provides information to streamline the transfer of power and decision making to the people.

**Manuals**


The manual compiles the names, address and priorities of resource agencies providing financial, technical and professional assistance. It also provides activity index to the addresses mentioned, which at times may be useful time saver.

Apart from being a ready reckoner of resource agencies, this manual will also benefit the development workers and agencies working for the disadvantaged in remote and neglected areas. These groups and institutions often find it difficult to establish and maintain communication and interaction with funding and facilitating agencies, to seek support for their programmes. It will also help small and emerging NGOs to know and tap the right source for the right programmes or activities. A useful manual for NGOs.


A development manual designed to assist development workers to assess, monitor, review and evaluate their work in a systematic way. This manual is an adapted version of the original manual, which was designed for Save the Children staff. It is designed for a large section of development workers to assist in the whole strategic planning process by providing some of the means to make decisions in changing circumstances in a systematic way.

The nine chapters are structured in three sections. Key underlying principles of assessment, monitoring, review and evaluation form the subject matter of section one. It broadly focuses on issues of the why, who and when of these development processes. Practical questions related to planning and implementing the above mentioned development pro-
cesses with an emphasis on their aims, objectives and other indicators are analysed in section two. Section three provides a brief description of the ten tools and techniques with a view of their weaknesses and strengthens along with prerequisites for their successful use. Analyses of the field based case studies provides a practical guide for utilizing these development methods more effectively.

An important development tool for development practitioners and policy makers and all others interested.

**Newsletters**

**SAMPARK**

NGOs Newsletter "SAMPARK" is a biannual publication of the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development. It serves as an important medium to exchange news and views for all those interested in the welfare, care and development of women and children and attempts to develop linkages among the Government Department and the NGOs.

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**ICIMOD Newsletter**

Published by International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, it focused on issues, knowledge reviews and research being undertaken to promote an environmentally sound the mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain population of Hindu Kush Himalays. It focuses on the specific, complex and practical problems of the Hindu Kush region.

*For further information, please contact:*
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
4/80 Jawalakhel, G.P.O. Box - 3226
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**ANUBHAV**

A bi-monthly journal of Anubhav Shikshan Kendra, attempts to raise the voice of the people, highlighting their experiences, and struggles on issues related to life of rural, tribal and urban poor, problems of poverty, survival, alternate educational and development paradigms, environmental activities and human rights.

*For further information, please contact*
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**Book Reviews**


**JENNIFER JALAL**

This book examines the working of the Urban Services in the cities of Baroda, Bhilwara, Sambhalpur, and Siliguri to examine the extent and nature of community participation. It also describes to some extent other community development programmes running simultaneously in these cities.

Each of the four presents an overview of the existing service delivery programmes in the individual cities followed by a detailed discussion of household survey. The last chapter draws together common themes and issues that run throughout the individual studies. It also suggests some recommendations towards more effective utilization of the participatory approach.

The study was based on a primary survey of 1600 households in 68 slums spread over the four cities. The number of sample households is spread equally in the four cities, each city having 400 households. The number of slums however is not equally distributed. The slums (with centrally sponsored...
UBS scheme) were representative of the city in terms of geographical location and social variations. The number of households to be covered in each sample slum was decided according to its share in the total population of the sample slums.

The primary data base was generated from a three-part structured questionnaire regarding various aspects of basic services and poverty alleviation programmes.

The analysis of field survey data relating to the extent of urban poverty, availability of basic services and peoples participation in the slums of four cities and the strategy of planned intervention through the community based poverty alleviation programmes shows that these interventions though successful to some extent, could not make much of a dent in so far as availability of basic facilities concerned.

Lack of financial decentralization of powers, the non-involvement of elected representatives in the project management group (at the town level, which creates conflict, due to which the programmes suffer) and involvement of multiple authorities at the municipal level, have been stated as few of the probable reasons for the low rate of success of the programme.

The tables representing the analysis are well formulated, but lacks in qualitative interpretation of the figures. This is especially so in the light of present rethinking on the methods of social research where stress is being laid more on innovative methods of qualitative interpretation of data, rather than the old techniques of qualitative analysis.

In the chapter dealing with "Evaluation and Conclusion" the authors write that the programmes evaluated were the same, the objectives of the survey were also similar and the questionnaire canvassed was also identical in all the four case studies. It continues saying that there have however been differences in the results especially as far as the aspect of community involvement is concerned.

This later statement just states the obvious which should have been a major part of the hypothesis of the study and is not a surprise outcome as it implies. In fact a comparative analysis should have been a prior requirement of the study, which would have made it more interesting even to a person not directly related to the subject.

The comparison between the four cities regarding the number and nature of slums, the civic amenities available etc. are very interesting but unfortunately the authors have been so caught up with statistics that it is difficult to enjoy the essence of comparison. For instance they write that out of the total of 1600 households 48.5 per cent are migrants and the percentage of migrant households is maximum in Siliguri (74), in Baroda more than half of the surveyed households are migrants. It is minimal in Bhilwara (27). A majority of the migrant households came to the city mainly in search of jobs. Had the last explanation been more elaborate for instance with information regarding the type of jobs, the age group of the workers, percentage of female labour etc. it would have helped to highlight the regional variations.

Presenting data in the analysed form are just as important as the process of planning and conducting a survey; it is equally if not more crucial in understanding a research study. Unfortunately, this book has not given due importance to that aspect.

Another recent study conducted by the Public Affairs Centre (a non-Government organisation based in Banglore) on the three cities Indian cities of Ahmedabad, Pune and Banglore have published their findings in the name of 'Report Card' studies. Though their sample size was almost half of this study, nevertheless what made it interesting was a detailed write-up on the process which proceeds data analysis i.e. the formulation of hypothesis, research question, the questionnaire, the way it was conducted; the problems encountered during the survey added a lot of insight to the study.

Research conducted through the conventional questionnaire method does reveal important facts but if aided with other more non-conventional methods like focus group discussion (as conducted by the Report Card Study Researchers), participatory assessment (of the researcher and the sample group) of the data outcome would have complemented the study in more ways than one. In the end, the authors suggest that the role of NGO’s is crucial in effective monitoring of the programme, motivating people and creating effective demand by working as intermediaries between local body and beneficiaries.

This can be reiterated with instances in a few towns of Assam where the Mahila Samitis have taken the initiative to act as intermediaries and where the results are certainly more heartening than others.
Panchayati Raj Initiatives

RIA in a joint effort with eight Network of Collaborating Regional Support Organisations (NCRSO) is working on issues of Panchayati Raj Institutions in ten states. As a part of this collaborative effort, five major activities will be undertaken by the 8 NCRSOs in the states where the support organisations are working.

The five major activities spread over a period of two years are:

a) Orientation, training & educational support.
b) Preparation & dissemination of educational material.
c) Micro planning.
d) Research & documentation.
e) Advocacy.

In continuation with this initiative a number of trainings have already been conducted by each RSO and educational material on Panchayati Raj related aspects has been prepared and widely disseminated. Details of some of the trainings which have been undertaken in the last four months are given below:


Twenty six participants from five grass root organisations participated in this six day workshop.

The workshop focused on the salient features of the 73rd Amendment Act, the concept, history and structures of Panchayati Raj and formulations of themes, songs, and plays on Panchayati Raj. The key feature of the workshop was the preparation of a play on Panchayati Raj followed by its demonstration in a real village setting.

The workshop provided relevant inputs on conducting theatre training on Panchayati Raj. Future plans consisted of producing audio and video cassettes on Panchayati Raj.


Forty participants from Voluntary Organisations (VO) attended this programme. The main objective of the programme was to increase awareness and understanding of PR system and voter education programme. Each partner VO prepared a three months activity plan on the PR system as follow up.


Thirty four participants from Voluntary Organisations attended this two day training programme. The main objective of this programme was development of street plays, puppet shows, songs, stories and slogans on the New PR system to support the awareness building programmes on PRI.

State level Training of Trainers on Panchayati Raj January 19 to 23, 1996. Organised by SAHAYAT, Kerala

Thirty seven leaders representing twenty seven organisations from elevendistricts of Kerala participated in this programme.

The main aims of the training were:

(i) Enhance knowledge and awareness on Panchayati Raj
(ii) Promote knowledge and skill development on the methods of Participatory Rural appraisal, Micro Planning etc.

The themes of the various sessions covered information on the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act 1994 and on Participatory Rural Appraisal methods. Participatory training methods were used in this training, which was conducted in an ideal rural setting in the West Kallad Panchayat of Sasthamcottua Block, in the district of Kollam.

The course was evaluated by the participants as highly useful for strengthening the PRI system.


The seven days training was organised with the broad objectives -

(i) To develop a common understanding on development perspective and local self governance
(ii) To understand 73rd Constitutional Amendment and Madhya Pradesh State PR Act

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(iii) To understand and build a common approach on the role and skills as a trainer

In order to achieve the said objectives the sessions focused on an analysis of the inter-relation between the state and market and role of voluntary organisations/workers to achieve the ultimate aims of civil society.

Vision and mission of voluntary organisations and initiatives in strengthening Panchayati Raj initiatives, processes and problems of panchayats, insight in to the Madhya Pradesh PR Act, skill development of trainers and organization wise planning and presentation were issues dealt with effectively in the six day proceedings.

It was decided that each organisation will work with a limited number of panchayats ideally between 5-10, in order to work intensively and effectively. The process of support would start with trainings at the panchayat level and later on the skills of village resource mapping and village level planning would be imparted through training and other facilitative methods. Samarthan will monitor and coordinate the overall process of intervention and would provide support where ever necessary.


During August-December 1995, the PRIA team visited field based organisations in Haryana and concerned government departments working on Panchayati Raj issue. The purpose of this visit was to get acquainted with the status of PRI related activities in the state and to discuss with individuals NGOs their perceptions of and activities on this issue.

As a follow up of this visit, PRIA organised a two day meeting with the Heads of Organisations (HOs) of Haryana. Sixteen organisations from eight district of Haryana attended this meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to collectively understand the role of NGOs in strengthening PRI in the state and prepare future plans for action individually and collectively.

All the organizations expressed the need and willingness to work on this issue. The meeting focused on:
(i) the need to work with elected members and Gram Sabha members,
(ii) the need for training of NGO workers to work with groups,
(iii) the need to create awareness about legal provisions through meetings, camps etc., and
(iv) preparation and dissemination of educational materials for awareness on the Panchayati Raj issue.

It was decided that PRIA would facilitate the process for next one and half year period. As a follow up it was decided to organise a State level Training of Trainers (STOT) for Haryana groups during February 14-20, 1996.


Since November 1993, PRIA has been working actively with some organisations and elected panchayat members in the Palampur Tehsil of Kangra dist., to strengthen the capacity of elected members. During September-December'95 PRIA's involvement was broadened and expanded to nearby districts of Mandi, Chamba and to some extent Una and Hamirpur dist. PRIA was actively involved in pre-election voter awareness campaign in Kangra, Chamba and Mandi and involved NGOs, Anganwadi workers, school and college teachers and students in this process.

As follow up, PRIA organised a two day meeting with Heads of Organisations in Kangra to discuss the collective effort towards strengthening of PRI. Eighteen organisations from five districts and one elected panchayat member attended this meeting.

State Training of Trainers, Haryana – February 14 to 20 1996. Organised by PRIA, Haryana

This workshop was held at WAMA (Womens Awareness and Management Academy) in Rai. Twenty eight representatives from eleven organisations participated. The main objectives of the workshop were as follows:-

1) Understanding of local self governance and detailed information about the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act.
2) Importance of training, methods of training and preparation of participants as trainers.
3) Formulation of strategies for effective participation of women in the political arena.
4) Evolving organizational strategies for a future plan of action.
The key emerging strategies were:

**Gram Panchayat:** Regular interaction and dialogue with elected representatives to impart information about the Act, enhance leadership and skills to ensure their participation and effective functioning and to equip women elected representatives to cope with their new roles effectively.

**Gram Sabha:** Mobilising Gram Sabha members and motivating them to play an active role in the development of their area.

**Sensitization:** Sensitizing family members, the community as well as the government to provide a supportive and conducive environment to the newly elected representatives specially women and schedule caste representatives.

**Networking and Advocacy:** Networking and coordination among all the groups for the purpose of creating a pressure group for advocacy at the policy level. Simultaneously creating positive linkages between government and Panchayati Raj institutions members.

According to the participants PRIA’s role was very crucial in bringing so many organisations together on the issue of Panchayati Raj.


Forty participants consisting of elected panchayat members and representatives from non-governmental organisations, peoples organisations attended the programme with enthusiasm.

The training was organised around four main objectives:

(i) To understand the concept of self governance and the 73rd Amendment.

(ii) To develop a different strategy towards the development of elected women panchayat representatives.

(iii) To understand the role of a trainer and develop the capacity of the same.

(iv) To formulate future strategy for Panchayati Raj intervention.

Lectures, group discussions, exercises and role play were used to provide information on Panchayati Raj Act (with special emphasis on women’s participation), government schemes, group processes and various training methods. The training concluded with intense future plans on PRI issue.

**Trainings/Workshops**

**Training Workshop on Participatory Development. November 13-18, 1995, Organised by PRIA, New Delhi**

PRIA with its wide experiences in the area of participatory development has launched this programme.

The first training workshop on Participatory Development aimed at:

(i) Creating and strengthening conceptual and theoretical understanding of Participatory Development

(ii) Developing and strengthening skills to translate Participatory Development into practice.

Twenty three participants from eleven organisations (representing multilateral, bilateral and government organisations) attended this residential programme. The programme followed participatory methods, combining dialogical methods, oral presentations and case studies, along with interactions with experienced practitioners and academicians.

The broad thematic context of the programme covered the history of dominant development approaches, concept of participation and participatory development, people’s participation in different sectors of development, participatory training monitoring and evaluation, among other development related aspects.

The workshop was residential and was open to personnel in-charge of project implementation and supervision from government and semi government organisations, bilateral and multilateral development agencies. Fee for the entire programme was Rs.5000.

**The Second Training Workshop on Participatory Development is going to be held from May 13 to 17, 1996. This workshop is on the format of the first workshop, as mentioned above.**

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Thirty four participants from different grass root level agencies based in U.P. actively participated in this training programme.

The main objective behind organizing such a training programme was to prepare a group which would take up voluntary development work in the right spirit and not just as an occupation. The field workers were expected to develop clarity of why they were doing voluntary development work and what they envisaged to accomplish in the future.

Thus focus was to build practical knowledge and skills during the training programme. During the training programme efforts were made to develop understanding and skills on aspects of social change and voluntary development work, social context and problems working with people, understanding group and group process, organisation, self-development and building basic skills of report writing/survey/micro planning etc.

Lectures, small groups/large groups discussions, case studies, role play, games etc. were some of the methods used for imparting training. Video was also used for self development exercises.


The main objectives of this workshop were:

(i) To study the draft on the National Policy for Women
(ii) To identify needs and problems of hill women in comparison to women of the plains
(iii) To put down specific recommendations to incorporate the needs and problems of hill women in the National Policy draft.

The group felt that hill women must be perceived as a separate group of women, having needs and problems different from women in the plains. Therefore the main agenda of the workshop was the strategies to fulfill needs and eradicating these problems which were different.

The 60 participants who attended this workshop were divided into two groups based on the two broad issues underlying the policy i.e. (1) development issues, (2) social issues. The larger group focused on some specific recommenda-

- Land and livelihood: The hill women should get joint property rights and should be given control over natural resources.
- Desertion: The hill women should be compensated for the high incidence of desertion in the hills; a result of the large scale migration of males.
- Social customs: Various social customs practiced in that region which are demeaning to women should be prohibited.
- Prohibitions: Prohibition on production or alcohol and purchase of land by non hill people should be prohibited as this leads to a range of social evils.
- Govt. schemes and programmes: Government schemes that give additional technical skills to carry out the tasks already being undertaken by women should be encouraged and implemented in hill areas.
- Panchayati Raj: Knowledge and information about the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, and the powers and functions conferred to them under it should be imparted to the new elected women representatives, to help them decide and define their development according to their own understanding and life situation.

- Compensation: There is a very high incidence of women either slipping or falling from the hills or being attacked by wild animals while working. As this loss occurs while discharging their duties, the women should get adequate compensation for the same.

A wide range of the public such as historians, lawyers, academia and VOs had gathered for this workshop resulting in a wide range of issues being addressed.

Training programme on “Village Eco-system planning” January 22-27 1996 Organised by HARC, Dakpathar, U.P.

The programme was attended by twenty two participants from six districts of Uttarakhand representing grassroot Voluntary Development Organisations and PRIA. The objectives of the programme were to:-
(i) Understand the concept of village ecosystem, its different components and their interlinkages

(ii) Understand the methods of Participatory Rural Appraisal, by doing a village study, and

(iii) Learn how to analyse information and do participatory planning

The training began with an introduction on the process of development and characteristics of a development workers. The major focus was on the concept of ecosystem, especially the Himalayan ecosystem and its main components, namely human resources, forest, water, agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture etc. The technique of information gathering was also explained in great detail.

Finally, after doing a detailed study of a village, an action plan was developed. The entire programme was participatory in nature, several group exercises and presentations were made, thus making the concepts clear to the participants.

Conventions


To mark the year before the fiftieth anniversary of India's Independence, the Convention aimed to assess the role and contribution of the voluntary sector to nation building.

It focused on two main objectives:

(i) To evaluate the voluntary sector's contribution to independent India and its linkages with other sectors, particularly to politics and the media, and

(ii) To provide an occasion for voluntary activists from around the country to come together to share their vision, discuss common obstacles, and formulate common responses to meet the forthcoming challenges of activism in India.

About 250 delegates from all over the country representing about 5000 organisations participated in this convention. The discussions and dialogues revolved around three main themes of (a) role of voluntary in electoral democracy, (b) creating enabling legal and policy environment for the voluntary sector and (c) norms and ethics for voluntary organisations.

On the issue of deepening electoral democracy it was felt that the VOs (Voluntary Organisations) should take up voter education, monitor the elections and pressurize the political parties to incorporate the concerns of poor in their party agenda.

The Convention felt that the dissolution of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and modification of the Income Tax Act would provide an enabling environment for the voluntary sector to grow and work effectively. The participants agreed on the basic principles of decentralization, democracy, gender equality, secularism, lifestyles congruent with the philosophy, integrity, honesty and transparency and partnership as common foundation of voluntary action.

Announcements

The Ninth Annual Hunger Research Briefing and Exchange. Organised by Brown University, Providence, RI, USA. April 24-26, 1996.

Based on the theme of Alliance Against Hunger Building Partnership for Development, the Ninth Annual Hunger Research briefing and exchange is held in conjunction with the ceremony for the Alan Shawn Feinstein Awards for the prevention and reduction of world hunger.

"It challenges participants to envision new partnerships and to share experiences from successful ones".

Eight sessions focusing on development partnership and highlighting issues like the role of civil society in eradicating hunger and poverty, developing food security indicators and gender-based partnerships form range the subject matter of the three day briefing. Researchers, policy makers and programme managers will discuss partnership issues and draw lessons for the future.

For further details contact
World Hunger Program
P.O. Box-1831 Brown University
Providence RI 02912 USA
The Five Characteristics of Poor People

POWERLESSNESS

ISOLATION

VULNERABILITY

POVERTY

PHYSICAL WEAKNESS

The Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) is an independent, non-profit, non-government organisation registered in 1982 under the Society Registration Act 1860. PRIA is based at New Delhi, India.

Over the past twelve years, PRIA has promoted people-centered development initiatives within the perspective of Participatory Research. Strengthening popular knowledge, demystifying dominant concepts and promoting experiential learning, have been the basis of supporting empowerment of the poor and the oppressed in PRIA's work. Through field studies and documentation, workshops and training programmes, networking and enabling linkages, PRIA has facilitated the strengthening of capacities within grass roots groups, voluntary agencies, NGOs and other formations.

As the cherished mission, PRIA endeavours to promote people-centered, holistic and comprehensive evolution of society characterised by Freedom, Justice, Equity and Sustainability, by

- creating opportunities of sharing, analysing and learning among formations of the Civil Society (in particular, people's organisations and NGOs);
- engaging in independent and critical analysis of societal trends and issues, development policies and programmes; and
- enabling dialogue across diverse perspectives, sectors and institutions.

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