

## Sheet for Annexure-III, Point No-7

### C- i) Brief objectives of the project.

- i) To understand the concept of the '*Rural development*'.
- ii) To study the contribution of the 'Gramsabha' in the rural development concept.
- iii) To study the composition and function of the Gram-Sabha.
- iv) To study the contribution of Gramsabha in Latur Tahsil in the rural development.
- v) To study the functions and the tempo of the Gramsabha.

Principal Investigator

Dr. Ajay Patil

Annexure- III,

Pertaining Point No. 7-VI

**Summary of Work completed**

**Final Report of Minor Research Project**

**'THE CONCEPT OF GRAMSABHA AND FACTS: WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LATUR TAHSIL'**

**A summary of work done for the period**

**from June 2013 to June 2015**

This Project divided into seven chapters

## **Chapter – I**

### **Introduction**

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments have conferred the right on every registered voter to directly participate in Governance. The Gramsabha and Ward Sabhas are the institutionalized foundations for decentralized participatory democracy. The Gramsabha and Ward Sabha have to play a key role in rendering the Gram Panchayat transparent and directly an accountable to the people. The Grama Sabha is a means to solve people's problems and felt needs and to decide how to use the available resources optimally in ways desired by them, to benefit the poorest in the village through direct democratic and participatory planning.

The role of Gramsabha is vital in bringing good governance in the local self governments. The ground reality reveals that the way the Gramsabhas are conducted is not accordance with expectations. There appear to be several reasons for this situation. The main reasons seems to be the lack of awareness amongst the elected representatives of PRIs, Ritualistic conduct of the Gramsabha, information about the Gramsabha meeting not reaching the people well in advance, sparse attendance at the Gramsabha, and a lack of cleared understanding amongst the people about the importance and the functions of Gramsabha. The Planning Commission of India issued guidelines for preparation of decentralized district plans in a bottom-up approach during the 11th Five year plan in the month of August 2006. The guidelines clearly indicated that the village development plans should be prepared by people in a participatory mode through Gramsabhas. The Union Ministry of Panchayatiraj, in its efforts to strengthen the institution of Gramsabha and improve awareness among the citizens, requested the states to observe the year 2009-10 as the year of the Gramsabha and to

organise awareness campaigns from October 2nd of 2009 to December 2nd of 2010.

Article 243 (A) of the Constitution of India inserted by 73rd Constitutional amendment act describes the composition of Gramsabha and According to this Article, Gramsabha is the body consisting of all persons registered in the electoral rolls of a Gram Panchayat. The Article 243D also states that a Gramsabha possesses all the powers endowed on it by various Acts and Rules issued by the State Government. Thus the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts have provided an opportunity for the persons registered as voters in the village to directly participate in the decision making process. Gramsabhas/Ward Sabhas are the foundations to the decentralized democratic system and play a crucial role in ensuring a transparent and accountable administration by Gram panchayat. It can be said that the Gramsabha acts as a watch dog in the interest of village communities by monitoring the functioning of gram Panchayat. While the elected representatives like MPs in LokSabha, RajyaSabha MLAs in State Assemblies take policy level decisions on behalf of the people , the registered voters in the village take part in the decision relating to the development of the village in the Gramsabha with the help of Gram Panchayat and officials concerned.

People below the age of 18 years are not the members of Gramsabha. Persons, those who are above 18 years and living in the village but not enrolled in the Gram Panchayat Voters list are also not the members of the Gramsabha.

According to Sec 6(5) of the APPR ACT, 1994, the Panchayat Secretary should organize the Gramsabha. Gram Panchayat Sarpanch has to convene a Gramsabha meeting when either 10% members of Gramsabha or 50 persons of Gramsabha (whichever is more) submits their requisition for holding a Gramsabha. However, those members have to inform the purpose for the meeting. A written

request for the meeting must be handed over to the Sarpanch during office hours 5 days before the date of meeting. If the Sarpanch fails to hold the meeting on the requested date, the members who requested the meeting can themselves organize the Gramsabha meeting.

### **Participant of Gramsabha:**

The following categories of people can participate in Gramsabha, Registered voters in the Gram panchayat

- Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Secretary, Ward Members, and Co-opted members of Gram Panchayat.
- Mandal Parishad Development Officer, Mandal Tahsildar, Village Development and Panchayati Raj Development Officer, District Panchayat Officer, Divisional Panchayat Officer, and all the village and mandal level officials working in the developmental and Welfare Departments .
- MPTC Members, MPP, ZPTC, Local MLA, MLC, Local MP (Rajya Sabha and Loksabha)
- All voluntary Organisations and Civic Right Committees within the purview of Gram Panchayat.
- Commissioner of Panchayat Raj, District Collector, District Panchayat Officer, and District level Officers can also attend , subject to their convenience.

However, the voting rights remain with only the members of Gramsabha. The purpose, time and place of Gramsabha meeting must be intimated through a notice giving at least two days prior information. It follows that the Gramsabha can be conducted only after a proper notice of purpose, place and time of Gramsabha is issued. Government Order GO no. 367 has suggested three methods for issue of notice of Gramsabha. They are 1. Making public announcement, 2. Displaying

public notice at three main places in the village, 3. Displaying the notice in the Notice Board of Gram panchayat office building. Either one of these methods should be strictly adhered to by the Gram panchayat sarpanch. Gram Panchayat shall take all possible steps to ensure greater participation of villagers in Gramsabha depending upon the circumstances prevailing in the village.

## **Chapter – II**

### **Research Design and Review of Research Literature**

Second chapter explained research design and review of literature, significance of the study, objectives, and hypotheses. These points covered in research design are as follow as.

#### **Interdisciplinary Relevance:**

The concept of Gramsabha was ancient in India. The core responsibilities of Gram Panchayat are taken by Gramsabha on its shoulders to overcome the economical problem of India. In the rural development programme co-ordination, transparency in the administration selection of beneficiaries, emergence, of new leadership, removal of poverty, National Integrity, unemployment in the rural region, malnutrition etc. things occurs. To overcome these problems and to strengthen the democracy and Mahatma Gandhi's concept of Gram swarajya bringing into reality, it is necessary having Gramsabha into Panchayat Raj.

#### **Objectives:**

The main objective behind the selection of the subject the concept of Gramsabha and the facts are following.

- To understand the concept of the 'Rural development'.
- To study the contribution of the Gramsabha in the rural development.

- To study the composition and functions of Gramsabha.
- To study the contribution of Gramsabha in Latur Tahsils in the rural development.
- To Study the functions and the role of the Gramsabha.

**Hypothesis:**

- The role of Gramsabha in the rural development is very crucial.
- The role of Gram Panchayat's members is uninterested.
- The less participation of women in the Gramsabha.
- Gramsabha the controls the Sarpanch and the Gramsevak.

**Data Collection:**

- The study is depending on primary data as well as secondary data.
- All data and information relating various aspects of indebtedness and other factors are collected by the principal investigator-alone. The information is collected from Latur Collector Office and Latur Tahsil.
- Primary data is collected through survey.
- Researcher has adopted observation, analytical, descriptive and comparative methodology for this paper and reliance has been placed on books, journals, and online database.

## Chapter – III

### Conceptual Framework of Gramsabha

The Gramsabha (GS) is the cornerstone of the entire scheme of democratic decentralisation in India initiated through the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution. Hence, the success or failure of the Panchayati Raj system largely depends on how powerful and effective the GS is at the decentralised level to fulfil the desires and inspirations of the people. Recognizing the critical role of the GS in village economy Gandhiji had said that true democracy could not be worked by some persons sitting at the top. It had to be worked from below by the people of every village.

Later on, endorsing the view of Gandhiji, Jay Prakash Narain had said: "To me Gramsabha signified village democracy. Let us not have only representative government from the village upto Delhi. In one place, at least let there be direct government, direct democracy. The relationship between Panchayat and Gramsabha should be that of Cabinet and Assembly". It is due to the importance of this institution at local level that the Year 1999-2000 has been declared as 'Year of Gramsabha' by the Government of India.

Article 243(B) of the Constitution defines the GS as a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of the Panchayat at the village level. With regard to its powers and authority, Article 243 (A) of the Constitution says that the GS may exercise such powers and perform such functions of the village level as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide. It is in the light of this that State legislatures have endowed certain powers to this corporate body relating to the development of the village.

A study of the State Panchayat Acts reveals that the GS is to perform numerous functions like discussing the report on socio-economic development

programmes implemented by the Gram Panchayat (GP) in the previous financial year, examine the annual statement of the accounts and audit report as well as annual report of administration of the GP in the last financial year; (c) examine the budget of the GP for the next financial year, identification of the beneficiaries of various anti-poverty and rural development programmes; scrutinize on-going and completed schemes and works of the GP, undertake programmes of adult education and family welfare in the village mobilisation of voluntary labour and contributions in kind or cash or both for community welfare programmes and promotion and unity and harmony among all sections of society in the village.

This list of functions indicates that the GS has the power only to discuss, debate, examine and scrutinize. There is no binding on the part of the Gram Panchayat to implement its directions and decisions of the GS. If the institution of the GS has to be made functional as it ought to be, it must be endowed with the power to implement schemes. However, provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1996, Extension Act for short, has not only extended development, planning and audit functions to the GS but also endowed it with the management and control of natural resources and the adjudication of justice in accordance with traditions and customs.

But this is applicable in areas dominated by the Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat and Rajasthan where it has not been made functional so far as elections to the Panchayats are yet to be held there in conformity with the Extension Act. It would have been better if the provisions of the extension Act were extended to the non-scheduled areas. But none of the States has taken any initiative in this regard except Madhya Pradesh and, that too, as late as in 1999. The State has extended most of the powers meant for the relevant Act for the Vth Scheduled Areas to all the GSs of the State. The field experiences across the country do not however give

a bright picture about the functioning of the GSs except a few examples here and there.

The GSs have functioned better in the southern States than in States elsewhere in the country. This is so because GSs in the southern States are endowed with meaningful functions. These States have another advantage in that they have better socio-economic conditions, higher literacy, effective land reforms, relatively better position of vulnerable sections including women and impact of social reform movements in this part of the country. The example of Kerala is worth mentioning. Discussions were held at local level comprising groups of 25-30 people and working groups were constituted at the local level comprising the GS members on various issues of local importance. Thousands of persons were identified as facilitators for these groups.

But in most of the States the people are apathetic towards this body. It has been noticed that meetings of the GS end in a mere formality. Decisions which were supposed to be taken by the GS were taken by the local elite, thereby rendering this body redundant. Meetings were conducted without any consideration of quorum. The absence of women and weaker sections of rural society was another feature of the GS. Hence, the entire exercise could not deliver the expected results. The reason for poor attendance is due to the fact that provisions relating to the GS contain nothing of substance which could attract the masses towards it. The people, particularly the poor, did not want to lose their daily wages for the sake of attending the GS meetings. If meetings of the GS were held to identify beneficiaries for various anti-poverty and related programmes, there was a good attendance. In fact, no one attends the meetings of the GS unless the benefits are apparent to them.

Apart from giving the GSs only a ritualistic role, the problem is compounded by having the meetings of the Sabha at a time of the day when the women and

weaker sections are busy at home or in earning their wages. This renders the GS meetings meaningless. The role of the GS in bringing transparency in its own functioning, in ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits, in creating community assets is important. Where these are needed and bring about social cohesion which is the most important factor in the success of the GPs.

In order to make the GS a powerful, vibrant and pulsating institution we must make it as a fulcrum of the entire scheme of democratic decentralisation. The institution of the GS is very important as it gives an opportunity to each and every voter of the GP at the local level to take part in decision-making of decentralised governance, planning and development.

## **Chapter – IV**

### **Concept of Rural Development**

Rural development is the process of improving the [quality of life](#) and economic [well-being](#) of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Rural development has traditionally centered on the [exploitation](#) of land-intensive [natural resources](#) such as [agriculture](#) and [forestry](#). However, changes in global [production networks](#) and increased [urbanization](#) have changed the character of rural areas. Increasingly [tourism](#), niche manufacturers, and [recreation](#) have replaced resource extraction and agriculture as dominant economic drivers. The need for rural communities to approach development from a wider perspective has created more focus on a broad range of development goals rather than merely creating incentive for agricultural or resource based businesses. Education, entrepreneurship, physical infrastructure, and [social infrastructure](#) all play an

important role in developing rural regions. Rural development is also characterized by its emphasis on locally produced economic development strategies. In contrast to urban regions, which have many similarities, rural areas are highly distinctive from one another. For this reason there are a large variety of rural development approaches used globally.

**Scope and Importance of Rural Development:** Rural development is a dynamic process, which is mainly concerned with the rural areas. These include agricultural growth, putting up of economic and social infrastructure, fair wages as also housing and house sites for the landless, village planning, public health, education and functional literacy, communication etc. Rural development is a national necessity and has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons.

1. About three-fourth of India's population live in rural areas, thus rural development is needed to develop nation as whole.
2. Nearly half of the country's national income is derived from agriculture, which is major occupation of rural India.
3. Around seventy per cent of Indian population gets employment through agriculture.
4. Bulks of raw materials for industries come from agriculture and rural sector.
5. Increase in industrial population can be justified only in rural population's motivation and increasing the purchasing power to buy industrial goods.

**The specific objectives are:**

1. To develop farm, home, public service and village community.
2. To bring improvement in producing of crops and animals living condition.
3. To improve health and education condition etc. improvement of the rural people.
4. To improve villagers with their own efforts.
5. To improve village communication.

**Need and Importance of rural development:** Rural development is a national necessity and has considerable importance in India because of the following reasons.

1. To develop rural area as whole in terms of culture, society, economy, technology and health.
2. To develop living standard of rural mass.
3. To develop rural youths, children and women.
4. To develop and empower human resource of rural area in terms of their psychology, skill, knowledge, attitude and other abilities.
5. To develop infrastructure facility of rural area.

Rural development actions are mainly and mostly to development aim for the [social](#) and [economic development](#) of the rural areas. Rural development programs are usually top-down from the [local](#) or [regional](#) authorities, [regional development agencies](#), [NGOs](#), national governments or international development organizations. But then, local populations can also bring about endogenous initiatives for [development](#). The term is not limited to the issues for [developing countries](#). In fact many of the [developed countries](#) have very active rural development programs. The main aim of the rural government policy is to develop the undeveloped villages. This was designed by Eric Kiplagat.

Rural development aims at finding the ways to improve the rural lives with participation of the rural people themselves so as to meet the required need of the rural area. The outsider may not understand the setting, culture, language and other things prevalent in the local area. As such, general people themselves have to participate in their sustainable rural development.

In [developing countries](#) like [Nepal](#), [India](#), [Bangladesh](#), integrated development approaches are being followed up. In this context, many approaches and ideas have been developed and followed up, for instance, [bottom-up](#) approach, PRA- [Participatory Rural Appraisal](#), RRA- [Rapid Rural Appraisal](#) etc.

There is no universally accepted definition of rural development. The term is used in different way in vastly divergent contexts. It connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life rural people. As a phenomenon, it is the result of various physical technological, economic, socio cultural and institutional factors. As a disciplinary it is multidisciplinary in nature representing an intersection of agricultural, social, behavioural and management of sciences. In short, rural development is a process that aims at improving the structure of living of the people. Increasing the standard of living in the rural areas and Development of rural areas have been at the concern of planning process in the country and also in the state. Rural development is a broad and inclusive term which takes in its consideration socio-economic and political development of the rural areas. It includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through the Panchayat Raj Institution as well as measures to improve the rural infrastructure, Improve income of rural income of rural households and delivery system pertaining to education, health and safety mechanisms. Poverty alleviation is a key component of rural development.

Government of India has taken many initiatives for rural development for this purpose it has setup the ministry of Rural Development. This ministry is a nodal development agency for the two international organizations viz. the centre on integrated rural development of Asia and pacific and the Afro-Asian Rural development organization. The ministry consists of the following three departments.

- (1) Department of Rural Development,
- (2) Department of Land Resource,
- (3) Department of Drinking water supply.

The department of Rural development implement schemes for generation of self employment and wage employment, provision of housing and minor irrigation assets to rural poor, social assistance to the destitute and rural roads. Apart from this, the department provides the support service and other quality inputs such as assistance for strengthening of DRDA Administration, Panchyati Raj Institution Training of research, Human resource Development and Development of voluntary action for the proper implementation of the programs. The major programs of department of rural development are *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna*, *Rural Housing Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana*, and *Swarnajanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna*.

Rural Development (RD) is a process, which aims at improving the well being and self realization of people living outside the urbanized areas through collective process. According to Agarwal (1989), rural development is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of rural poor. The United Nations defines Rural Development as: Rural Development is a process of change, by which the efforts of the people themselves are united, those of government authorities to improve their economic, social and cultural conditions of communities in to the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national programme. Rural Development is a process of bringing change among rural community from the traditional way of living to progressive way of living. It is also expressed as a movement for progress.

## Chapter V

### Latur Tahsil – an overview

Latur has an ancient history, which probably dates to the [Rashtrakuta](#) period. It was home to a branch of Rashtrakutas which ruled the Deccan 753-973 AD. The first [Rashtrakuta](#) king Dantidurga was from Lattalur, probably the ancient name for Latur. Anecdotally, Ratnapur is mentioned as a name for Latur. The King [Amoghavarsha](#) of [Avinash](#) developed Latur city, originally the native place of the Rashtrakutas. The Rashtrakutas who succeeded the [Chalukyas](#) of [Badami](#) in 753 AD called themselves the residents of Lattalur. It was, over the centuries, ruled by the [Satavahanas](#), the [Sakas](#), the [Chalukyas](#), the Yadavas of [Deogiri](#), the [Delhi Sultans](#), the [Bahamani](#) rulers of South India, [Adilshahi](#), and the [Mughals](#). In the 17th century, it became part of the independent princely state of Hyderabad. Under Hyderabad the tax system was reformed and many of the exploitive taxing practices were ended.<sup>[3]</sup> In 1905 it was merged with surrounding areas, renamed Latur tehsil, and became part of [Osmanabad district](#), which until 1948 was a part of Hyderabad state under the Nizam. The chief of Nizam's Razakar army [Qasim Rizwi](#) was from Latur. After independence and the merger of Hyderabad with the Indian Union, Osmanabad became part of Bombay Province. In 1960, with the creation of Maharashtra, Osmanabad was one of its districts. On August 15, 1982, a separate Latur district was carved out of Osmanabad district.

Latur district is in the Marathwada region in Maharashtra in India, located between 17°52' North to 18°50' North and 76°18' East to 79°12' East in the Deccan plateau. It has an average elevation of 631 metres (2070 ft) above mean sea level. The district may be divided into two regions the Balaghat plateau and the northeastern region consisting of Ahmadpur and Udgir. The entire district of Latur

is on the [Balaghat](#) plateau, 540 to 638 metres from the mean sea level. It is bound by [Nanded District](#) to the northeast; the state border with [Karnataka](#) to the east and southeast; [Osmanabad District](#) to the south-west; [Beed District](#) to the west; and [Parbhani District](#) to the northwest. On 30 September an [earthquake struck Latur](#). It is the 16 largest city in Maharashtra. It is also the fastest growing city in ASIA.

Administratively the district is divided into five subdivisions namely Latur, Nilanga, Ausa, Ahmadpur and Udgir, and further divided into ten [talukas](#) & ten Panchayat Samitis. These are Latur, Udgir, Ahmadpur, Ausa, Nilanga, Renapur, Chakur, Deoni, Shirur Anantpal and Jalkot. Latur city is the administrative headquarters of the district. There are around 945 villages & 786 Gram Panchayats in the district. Latur Taluka is a [taluka](#) (an administrative subdivision) of [Latur District](#) in [Maharashtra](#), India. In the 2011 census, there were 109 [panchayat villages](#) in Latur Taluka. The main river in the taluka is the [Manjara River](#), together with its tributary the Tawarja, which originates near [Murud](#). [Latur city](#) is the head quarter of the Latur taluka.

The climate of the city is arid. Average rainfall in the district is 600 to 800 mm. This is usually during the monsoon months from July to October. Moderate temperatures are mainly observed. The rainfall is unpredictable in tune with the Indian monsoon. Summers begin from early March to July. Summers are dry and hot. The temperature ranges from 24 °C to 39.6 °C, though at the peak they may reach 41 °C. November to January is the winter season. Temperatures at the peak drop to single digits but usually they hover around 13.9 °C to 21.8 °C sometimes lowers up to 11 °C. January to March are the months with moderate temperatures.

Latur Taluka is in the western part of Latur District, with [Renapur Taluka](#) to the north, [Chakur Taluka](#) and [Shirur Anantpal Taluka](#) to the east, [Ausa Taluka](#) to

the south, [Osmanabad District](#) to the southwest and west, and [Beed District](#) to the northwest. There are two constituencies for the [Maharashtra Legislative Assembly](#) (*Vidhan Sabha*) in Latur Taluka, [Latur City](#) and [Latur Rural](#). The Latur Rural Constituency also covers other talukas.

City also has great political background. The ex CM of Maharashtra Late Vilasrao Deshmukh belonged to this constituency. City is also famous for Ganjgolai as the central market place of the city. Faiyajuddin prepares the plan for the Ganjgolai Chowk. The main building was constructed in the year 1917. There are 16 roads connecting to this Golai and along these roads separate markets, selling all kind of traditional local ware. The city has beautiful Siddheshwar Temple built by King Tamaradwaj. The Darga of Surat Shahvalli also deserve mention as the beautiful monuments of the city.

## **Chapter VI**

### **The Role of Gramsabha in Rural Development**

Overall development of country is the main objective of Indian government since its independence. Earlier the main thrust for development was laid on Agriculture, Industry, Communication, Education, Health and Allied sectors but soon it was realized that the all round development of the country is possible only through the development of rural India. Keeping this in view Panchayati Raj Institutions have been introduced under the 73rd Amendment Act of the Constitution of India.

Rural Development includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). It also includes measures to improve the rural infrastructure, improve income of rural households

and delivery systems pertaining to education, health & safety mechanisms. Government of India has taken many steps to develop rural India and for this Department of Rural Development has been setup under the control of Ministry of Rural Development. The department through PRIs has launched various development schemes such as Sampurna Swachhta Abhiyan, Gram Vikas Yojna, Farmer Market & Livestock Market, Underground Drainage System Construction Scheme and so on. Through these schemes Government of India seems to accomplish its dream of rural India's development. Although some loopholes may also be seen. Without overcoming these drawbacks Government of India won't be able to foster the growth of rural India.

Importance of Gramsabha for the gap between the demand and actual availability of funds for undertaking development project will always be very wide and in such cases the Gramsabha has to priorities the felt need of the people. The G.S. members can give their approval for the resolutions by raising their hands. Opinion of the majority members should be considered for acceptance of resolution. Gramsabha has socially got three types of rural development functions.

(a) Accountability function consideration of account, Audit- administrative reports, budget of Gram Panchayat and seeking clarification.

(b) Development function selection of beneficiary for government schemes, location of project- including implementation and few other aspects of village development.

(c) Social function- Promoting unity, harmony, securing voluntary labour etc.

Later on endorsing the view of Gandhiji, Jay Prakash Narayan had said 'To me Gramsabha- Signified village democracy. Let us not have only representative

government from the village up to Delhi. In one place, at least let there be direct government, direct democracy. The relationship between Panchayat and Gramsabha should be that of cabinet and Assembly. 'It is due to the importance of this institution at local level that the year 1999-2000 has been declared, as 'year of Gramsabha' by the Governemnt of India.

## **Chapter VII**

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The implementation of rural development programs through the Panchayat Raj institutions has a drastic change in the socio economic conditions of the rural people in the selected areas. The implementation of rural development programs has affected even the social and political affairs of the people of the selected area. In the economic front of the rural development programs have created an improvement in economic position of the selected area, as a result of implementation of rural development programs most of the people gain additional income. From the created assets which has resulted into deprivation in selected areas. After the implementation of rural developments programs, efforts have been made to strengthen village and cottage industries, as a result most of the people have become employed in various agriculture and allied activities like animal husbandry, sheep/goat rearing, handicrafts, small business and other activities. This has brought vigorous change in socio economic setup of the selected Gram Panchayat. The implemented rural programs like SJGSY, housing schemes and power schemes have created various gainful activities for poor in

selected area to be placed above the poverty line. Further more in the newly built houses and provided power connection for houses, it indicates that there is a cumulative process for infrastructure development of rural area. As an exceptionally results some beneficiaries undergone losses of assets even by adopting rural development programs, but it is insignificant on other hand poor people who have not cover under the schemes are leading a measurable life.

The Gramsabha is very important for the Rural Development but members in Gram Panchyat seem to be uninterested. How everyone has to tread cautiously. The working of Gramsabha through out Indian states substantial's that there is galloping gap between theory and practice between, what it could and what it does. Most of the investigative reports reveal that Gramsabha has so far failed to fulfil its role as a deliberative body. As a participatory forum or as a mechanism for upholding accountability Gramsabha may have been a means for ensuring that people's particularly institution and the representative structure act in consistence with their formal representation and plural interest of the consistence concerned. Yet Gramsabha is less practiced it fails to live up to many 'lofty ideals' and as such one should shed the romantic illusion of Gramsabha. The crux is the peoples participation, which is uniformly deficient and wanting thereby giving the democratic part a short shrift finding of research studies disclose disquieting rate of participation in almost village. More substantially, the attendance rate does not improve in those exalted cases where Gramsabha has been endowed with significant and far reaching powers. Moreover, the official rate is not always factual. The most of the states the peoples are apathetic towards this body. It has been noticed that meeting of the Gramsabha and in mere formality. Decisions which were supposed to be taken by

the Gramsabha were taken by the local elite thereby rendering this body redundant meeting was conducted without any consideration of quorum.

The absence of woman and weaker section of rural society was another feature of the Gramsabha. Hence, the entire exercise could not deliver the expected results. The reason for poor attendance is due to the fact that provisions relating to the Gramsabha contain nothing of substance which could attract the masses towards it. The peoples, particularly the poor, did not want to lose their daily wages for the sake of attending the Gramsabha meeting. If meetings of the Gramsabha were held to identify beneficiaries for various anti-poverty and related programmes, there was a good attendance. In fact no one attends the meetings of the Gramsabha unless the benefits are apparent to them. In order to make the Gramsabha a powerful vibrant and pulsating institution we must make it as a fulcrum of the entire scheme of democratic decentralization. The institution of the Gramsabha is very important as it gives an opportunity to each and every voter of the GP at the local level to take part in-decentralized governance, planning and development.

Almost five decades have passed since the establishment of modern PRIs. We are in the twentieth year since the 73th Amendment to the Constitution. The states have been devolving powers albeit in a staggered and non-synchronous manner. Though much remains to be achieved, it is generally recognized that almost all states today have put in place significant changes aimed to achieve decentralized democracy in general and people's participation as sub set of decentralized democracy in particular.

The key question however has as yet not been answered. Have these changes that were aimed at empowering panchayats contributed to India's

objective of achieving inclusive progress? And if so, to what extent? There have been many criticisms related to empowering panchayats; these range from errors of omission and commission to corruption, susceptibility to social biases, strengthening of historical exclusionary power structures, poorly resourced panchayats, absence of quality human capital, etc. At the same time there is a largely free and fair democratic process which is backed by constitutional empowerment as well as (admittedly imperfect) devolution. Democracy and devolution together are a potent combination that has the power to outweigh exclusionary forces, but (a) their impact is felt over a long period and (b) they sometimes do not work well if enabling institutions do not exist. Such institutions are also emerging with varying degrees of success, ranging from the Right to Information Act, Ombudsman to e-Governance initiatives etc. Hence, the critical question for India's long term success as a free democratic country is closely linked to the success of its panchayats in delivering the outcomes for rural development including greater incomes reduction of poverty, access to local public goods services that include sanitation, drinking water, health care, education, safety and security, rural roads etc, gender empowerment and green environments.

Principal investigator

Dr. Ajay Patil