

## **A critical study of Panchayati Raj in the context of rural development**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Overall development of Village 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. Rural Development includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through the Panchayati Raj. It also includes measures to improve the rural infrastructure, improve income of rural households and delivery systems pertaining to education, health and 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. Panchayati Raj has launched various development schemes such as Sampoorna Swachhta Abhiyan, Gram Vikas Yojna, Farmer Market & Livestock Market, and 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. The Panchayats are expected to play an important role in rural development in India, particularly after independence. Plan documents of both the central and state governments and various committees have emphasized the importance of these bodies in the polity. Five-year plans, specially the second five-year plan, laid special emphasis on the role of Panchayats in rural developments.

**Key Words :** Panchayati raj, Industry, Health

### **INTRODUCTION**

The rural local government in India is called the *panchayat*, which literally means an assembly of five persons. These five elderly, nominated persons, over the course of time, were vested with sacred authority and with judicial and executive powers. These village communities were the centers of administration and the custodians of social harmony. Evidence suggests that self-governing village communities have always existed in India. Panchayati Raj is identified as democratic decentralization in India. Decentralization of power to the panchayats is seen as a means of empowering people and involving them in decision making process. Local governments being closer to the people can be more responsive to local needs and can make better use of resources. The democratic system in a country can be ensured only if there is mass participation in the governance. Therefore, the system of democratic decentralization

popularly known as Panchayati Raj is considered as an instrument to ensure democracy and socio-economic transformation. India has been a welfare state ever since her Independence and the primary objective of all governmental endeavors has been the welfare of its millions. Elimination of poverty, ignorance, diseases and inequality of opportunities and providing a better and higher quality of life were the basic premises upon which all the plans and blue-prints of development were built. According to Ministry of Rural Development (Govt. of India) Rural Development implies both the economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. In order to provide the rural people with better prospects for economic development, increased participation of people in the rural development programmes, decentralization of planning, better enforcement of land reforms and greater access to credit are envisaged. Initially, main thrust for development was laid on agriculture, industry, communication, education, health and allied sectors but later on it was realized that accelerated development can be provided only if governmental efforts are adequately supplemented by direct and indirect involvement of people at the grassroot level.

Keeping in view the needs and aspirations of the local people, Panchayati Raj has been involved in the programme implementation and these institutions constitute the core of decentralized development of planning and its implementations. The Ministry is also vigorously pursuing with the State Governments for expeditious devolution of requisite administrative and financial powers to Panchayati Raj. Uttar Pradesh, with a population of 16.62 crore as per 2001 Census, is the most populous State of the country. UP covers 2,40,928 sq.kms and accounts for 7.3 percent of total area of the country which makes it the fifth largest State in the country. In the words of Ruskin Bond, 'I had been to other countries in Europe, Asia and the Middle East – but none of them had provided even half as much variety, or so much to see and experience and remember, as this one State in northern India. You can travel from one end of Australia to the other, but everywhere on that vast continent you will find that people dress in the same way, eat the same kind of food, and listen to the same music. This colourless uniformity is apparent in many other countries of the world, both East and West. But Uttar Pradesh is a world in itself. Keeping in view the population and size of the State, it is clear that Uttar Pradesh dominates the Hindi heartland and there cannot be a strong and prosperous India unless Uttar Pradesh and its residents tread on the path of development. Uttar Pradesh has 71 districts 820 development Blocks, 107452 villages, 51976 Gram Panchayats and 8135 Nyay Panchayats.

#### **A glimpse of rural development :**

Development of rural areas has been at the core of planning process in the country and also in the State. Rural Development is a broad, inclusive term which takes in its consideration socioeconomic and political development of the rural areas. It includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through the Panchayati Raj as well as measures to improve the rural infrastructure, improve income of rural households and delivery systems 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 department for the two international organizations. The Centre on Integrated Rural Development of Asia and the Pacific and the Afro-Asian Rural Development Organization.

The Ministry consists of the following three Departments:

- Department of Rural Development

- Department of Land Resources
- Department of Drinking Water Supply

Development implements 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. The Department provides the support services and other quality inputs such as assistance for strengthening of DRDA Administration, Panchayati Raj Institutions, training & research, human resource development, development of voluntary action etc. for the proper implementation of the programmes. The major programmes of the Department of Rural Development are Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, (PMGSY), Rural Housing (RH) Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY).

#### **All-round village development :**

A village unit as conceived by me is as strong as the strongest. My imaginary village consists of 1,000 souls. Such a unit can give a good account of itself, if it is well organized on a basis of self-sufficiency. The villagers should develop such a high degree of skill that articles prepared by them should command a ready market outside. When our villages are fully developed there will be no dearth in them of men with a high degree of skill and artistic talent. There will be village poets, village artists, village architects, linguists and research workers. In short, there will be nothing in life worth having which will not be had in the villages. Today the villages are dung heaps. Tomorrow they will be like tiny gardens of Eden where highly intelligent folk whom no one can deceive or exploit dwell.

The reconstruction of the villages along these lines should begin right now. The reconstruction of the villages should not be organized on a temporary but permanent basis. Graft, art, health and education should all be integrated into one scheme. Nai Talim is a beautiful blend of all the four and covers the whole education of the individual from the time of conception to the moment of death. Therefore, I would not divide village uplift work into water-tight compartments from the very beginning but undertake an activity which will combine all four. Instead of regarding craft and industry as different from education I will regard the former as the medium for the latter. Nai Talim therefore ought to be integrated into the scheme. If rural reconstruction were not to include rural sanitation, our villages would remain the muck-heaps that they are today. Village sanitation is a vital part of village life and is as difficult as it is important. It needs a heroic effort to eradicate age-long insanitation. The village worker who is ignorant of the science of village sanitation, who is not a successful scavenger, cannot fit himself for village service. It seems to be generally admitted that without the new or basic education the education of millions of children in India is well-nigh impossible. The village worker has, therefore, to master it and become a basic education teacher himself.

Adult education will follow in the wake of basic education as a matter of course. Where this new education has taken root, the children themselves become their parents' teachers. Be that as it may, the village worker has to undertake adult education also. Woman is described as man's better half. As long as she has not the same rights in law as man, as long as the birth of a girl does not receive the same welcome as that of a boy, so long we should know that India is suffering from partial paralysis. Suppression of woman is a denial of Ahimsa. Every village worker will, therefore, regard every woman as his mother, sister or daughter as the case may be, and look upon her with respect. Only such a worker will command the confidence of the village people. It is impossible for an unhealthy people to win Swaraj. Therefore we should not

longer be guilty of the neglect of the health of our people. Every village worker must have a knowledge of the general principles of health. Without a common language no nation can come into being. Instead of worrying himself with the controversy about Hindi-Hindustani and Urdu, the village worker will acquire a knowledge of the Rashtrabhasha which should be such as can be understood by both Hindus and Muslims. Our infatuation for English has made us unfaithful to provincial languages. If only as penance for this unfaithfulness the village worker should cultivate in the villagers a love of their own speech. He will have equal regard for all the other languages of India, and will learn the language of the part where he maybe workings and thus be able to inspire the villagers there with a regard for their own speech.

The whole of this programme will, however, be a structure on sand if it is not built on the solid foundation of economic equality. Economic equality must never be supposed to mean possession of an equal amount of worldly goods by everyone. It does mean, however, that everyone will have a proper house to live in, sufficient and balanced food to eat, and sufficient Khadi with which to cover himself. It also means that the cruel inequality that obtains today will be removed by purely non-violent means.

### **Panchayati Raj : A Glimpse :**

Panchayats have been the backbone of the Indian villages since the beginning of recorded history. Gandhiji, the father of the nation, in 1946 had aptly remarked that the Indian Independence must begin at the bottom and every village ought to be a Republic or Panchayat having powers. Gandhiji's dream has been translated into reality with the introduction of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system to ensure people's participation in rural reconstruction. Panchayat. Literally means assembly (*yat*) of five (*panch*) wise and respected elders chosen and accepted by the village community.

Panchayat or Panchayati Raj is a system of governance in which gram panchayats are the basic units of administration. It has 3 levels: village, block and district. The term panchayat raj is relatively new, having originated during the British administration. Raj literally means governance or government. Mahatma Gandhi advocated *Panchayati Raj*, a decentralized form of Government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system. His term for such a vision was Gram Swaraj (Village Self-governance). It was adopted by state governments during the 1950s and 60s as laws were passed to establish Panchayats in various states.

In the history of Panchayati Raj in India, on 24 April 1993, the Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 came into force to provide constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions. This Act was extended to Panchayats in the tribal areas of eight States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan from 24 December 1996. Now Panchayati Raj System exists in all the states except Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram. Also all the UTs except Delhi.

The Act aims to provide 3-tier system of Panchayati Raj for all States having population of over 2 million, to hold Panchayat elections regularly every 5 years, to provide reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Women, to appoint State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards the financial powers of the Panchayats and to constitute District Planning Committee to prepare draft development plan for the district. Panchayats are India's ancient autonomous democratic institutions. Whose description is found in the ancient Indian text 'Rigveda' in the form of 'Sabhas' and 'Samities'. At various points of time these

autonomous bodies of governance have proven their importance inspite of the political disturbances within the country.

### **The three-tier Panchayati Raj System :**

#### **Gram Panchayat :**

According to the Act, a gram panchayat is constituted for a population between 3000 and 5000. The area covered by a gram panchayat included group of villages. There will be one member for every 400 persons. The adyaksha and upadyaksha (president and vicepresident) are elected from among the elected members.

There are three Standing Committees in the grampanchayat, namely:

- Production Committee
- Social Justice Committee
- Amenities Committee

A secretary is appointed by the government as the administrative head of the gram panchayat. The main function of the gram panchayat is to promote economic and social welfare, education and health in the gram panchayat.

#### **Taluk Panchayat :**

For each taluk, there shall be a taluk panchayat consisting of local representatives from the state legislature and parliament apart from one fifth of the gram panchayat presidents in the taluk are chosen by lots every year (in rotation). Members are directly elected from the separate territorial constituencies at the rate of one member for every 10000 population. The elected members of taluk panchayat must choose two members from amongst themselves to the post of president and vice president. The taluk panchayat has the following

#### **Standing committees:**

- General Standing Committees
- Finance, Audit and Planning Committee
- Social Justice Committee

Group an officer of the state civil services is the administrative head of the taluk panchayat. Taluk panchayats are empowered to supervise the activities of gram panchayats in their jurisdiction.

#### **Zilla Panchayat :**

Each district will have zilla panchayat consisting of members of parliament and the legislature from within the district, the presidents of taluk panchayats in the district and elected members in accordance with the scale of one member for 40,000 of the population. The elected members shall choose two members from amongst them to the post of president and vice president. The zilla panchayats will have the following Standing Committees:

- General Standing Committee
- Finance, Audit and Planning Committee
- Social Justice Committee
- Education and Health Committee
- Agriculture and Industries Committee

A chief executive officer, not below the rank of Deputy Commissioner is to be the

administrative head of the zilla panchayat. The Act reduced the powers of zilla panchayat substantially. It may be noted that the Janata Dal government, through an ordinance made the presidents of zilla and taluk panchayats executive heads and gave them executive powers.

**Gram Sabha :**

The gram sabha is a statutory body of gram panchayat today. It is obligatory on the part of the gram panchayat to convene grama sabha meeting at least once in six months. All the adults who are in the voters list of the village are the members of the gram sabha.

It incorporated provisions for consequential arrangements with regard to the position of the new bodies, division of funds and liabilities. In the year 1998 seven new districts were formed. Therefore, the number of zilla panchayats has gone up from 20 to 30. A more significant development has been the issue of an ordinance in February 1999, reducing the number of gram panchayats. Under the ordinance, the population limit of a gram panchayat was raised to 10000 to 16000 as against 5000 to 7000 people. The reason given by the government is that under the earlier pattern the zilla panchayat was too small. They had limited financial resources and manpower and they were not capable of becoming effective instruments of development. Gram sabha has not been successful in ensuring downward mobility. In the recent years any change in government has resulted in changes in Panchayati Raj system. The aim of Panchayati Raj is to empower people at the grassroots level so that they participate in the developmental process. Gram Sabha, the general assembly of the village (consisting of all eligible voters), has been made the soul of the panchayat institutions. It is the Gram Sabha, which based on needs assessment, decides what developmental work is to be undertaken by panchayats. The Gram Sabha members can question and scrutinise the decisions of the panchayats in their meetings and discuss the annual financial statements of accounts and expenditure of Gram Panchayats.

The U.P. Panchayat Raj Act provides that a Gram Sabha be established for a village or a group of villages by a state government notification and be named after the village having the largest population. Soon after the publication of this notification, a list of the Gram Sabhas constituted and established in each tehsil, must be published at the tehsil headquarters and at the office of the District Panchayat Raj Officer. A copy must also be put up at the office of the Panchayat Secretary. These meetings are presided over by the Pradhan who is the elected head of the concerned Gram Panchayat. In case of an extraordinary general meeting, the Pradhan at any time may, or upon a requisition in writing by not less than one-fifth of the total members of Gram Sabha shall, within 30 days from the receipt of such requisition, call such a meeting.

**Gram Panchayat :**

The Gram Panchayat is an elected body constituted by the Gram Sabha members from amongst themselves. It consists of a Pradhan and number of Panches (ranging from nine to fifteen). The number of Panches is dependent on the population taking Gram Sabha to be a multi-member single constituency, namely:

Population	Number of Panches
For population upto 1000	Nine
For population exceeding 1000 but not exceeding 2000	Eleven
For population exceeding 2000 but not exceeding 3000	Thirteen
For population exceeding 3000	Fifteen

For the purpose of election of Gram Panchayat members, every Gram Panchayat area is divided into territorial constituencies. Each territorial constituency is represented by one member in the Gram Panchayat. Every committee consists of a Chairman and six other members elected by the Gram Panchayat members from amongst themselves. It is the Pradhan, Up-Pradhan or any other member of Gram Panchayat who is the Chairman of any committee. Each committee however, must have at least one woman member, one member belonging to the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes and one member belonging to Backward Classes.

#### **Gram Sabha and legal literacy :**

The Gram Sabha has a crucial role to play in spreading legal literacy among the rural masses. It is the most suitable institution as the Gram Sabha is constitutionally mandated and a permanent body. The Gram Sabha needs to be strengthened to take up such a challenging responsibility. There are enough logics why Gram Sabha can effectively spread out legal literacy. It is –

- A constitutionally mandated body.
- A cornerstone of grassroots level democracy.
- Instrumental in planning, implementation and monitoring of development programmes.
- An institution enjoying extensive administrative and financial powers.
- Responsible for raising awareness and ensuring sustainability of knowledge about issues of public interest.

Some States have already capacity building of Gram Sabha on legal issues. The Gram Sabhas are the key implementing bodies for many development programmes as their constitutional status remains unchallenged and supreme. If Gram Sabha becomes alive to the legal issues and develop legal understanding with a constant legal literacy campaign, the participatory democracy will attain maturity with greater sustainability of development initiatives.

#### **Panchayati Raj in the context of rural development :**

Panchayati Raj Department is an important department of Uttar Pradesh related to the rural development. The main objective of this department is to strengthen the Panchayati Raj System in the state according to the 73rd amendment of Indian constitution. So that panchayats can realize the dream of rural administration and rural development with complete coordination and transparency. For this purpose the department has provided a Citizen Charter. For the sake of public convenience and knowledge, this charter has been divided into 7 subjects:-

1. Financial aid to Gram Panchayats.
2. Rural Cleanliness Programmes.
3. Responsibilities of the Panchayats- (Transparency in work, rural administration & development).
4. Responsibilities of public towards Panchayat.
5. Decentralization Programme.
6. Control over the Gram Panchayats
7. Arrangement of Panchayat Help-line.

Citizen Charter is a continuous process which will change periodically according to the feelings, recommendations, experiences and reactions of the public.

**Financial aid to the Gram Panchayats :**

Gram Panchayats are given financial aids on the recommendations of State Finance Commission. The main objectives of the financial aid given to these Panchayats are:

- a) Drinking water supply, cleaning and maintenance facilities.
- b) Maintenance of public lamp posts, roads, drainage system, cleanliness programmes, primary schools and maintenance of other public assets.
- c) Construction of Panchayat Bhawans for meeting halls and for the residence of secretary of Gram Panchayat.
- d) Construction of Gramin Kisan Bazaar and Livestock Markets.
- e) Construction of underground water drainage system for the objective of environmental cleanliness.

**Rural cleanliness programme :**

Sampoorna Swachhta Abhiyan (Complete Cleanliness Mission) is a programme financed by the Indian government with an objective to provide toilets to all rural families by the end of year 2012 and to make the public aware of the cleanliness programmes and to encourage them to learn and follow cleanliness habits. The four main objectives of the mission are:

- a) Usage of toilets by the rural inhabitants and to change the habit of open toilets till 2012.
- b) To construct toilets in government schools and Anganwadi Centres for children in order to develop the habit of using toilets among children from their childhood.
- c) To develop the habit of washing hands before taking meals and after using toilets in rural areas.
- d) To control the diseases arising due to the usage of dirty water by practicing cleanliness in rural areas.

Under this scheme following main programmes are carried on:

- I. Personal Toilets
- II. School Toilets
- III. Anganwadi Toilets
- IV. Community (Women) Toilet Complex
- V. Rural Cleanliness Market Production Centers
- VI. Solid and Liquid Waste Management

**Responsibilities of Panchayats :**

Following are the responsibilities of Panchayats:

- a) Periodic meeting of Gram Sabha in order to communicate the functioning of Panchayats.
- b) Monthly meeting of Gram Panchayat to communicate the related information to the elected members.
- c) Monthly meetings of Samities for the completion of predetermined functions with the coordination of 6 samities.
- d) Increase in the income of Gram Panchayat through the collection of taxes and fees prescribed by the act of legislature.
- e) For transparency in work a notice board on the wall of public premises will be displayed showing all the details of usage of the funds.
- f) Rural cleanliness through environmental cleanliness and stopping usage of open toilets.
- g) Control over Government Ration Depot.

h) To plan and pass different welfare programmes with the coordination of public upto the amount of Rs. 50000.

i) The Gram Pradhan should inspect all the assets of Gram Samaj at least once in a quarter.

**Responsibilities of the citizens :**

***Coordinating the meetings :***

Public should get the information regarding the works and planning of Gram Panchayat and the usage of received funds. Public should elect the deserving candidate for different schemes.

***Checking cleanliness :***

All the families should built and use the toilets. Toilets should be built keeping in view the convenience of ladies and elders. The cleanliness of drains and surroundings should be taken care of.

***Security of Gram Panchayat assets :***

Public should check the illegal cutting of trees, illegal possession of land of Gram Sabha and maintenance of community buildings.

***Increase public coordination :***

Public should share hands in development and construction works, periodic cultural activities should be promoted.

**Decentralization programme :**

Under the programme of decentralization Gram Panchayats are given the following works:

- a) For promoting education Gram Panchayats have to open primary and secondary schools.
- b) All the present and new Hand Pumps are the asset of Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat is responsible for the repair and maintenance of these Handpumps.
- c) Akhadas, Gyms, Sports Ground and Sports related works are being operated by the Gram Panchayat for youth welfare.
- d) Medical, Health, Family welfare, Mother and Child welfare centres are all under the control of Gram Panchayat.
- e) For women and child development different Anganwadi programmes and other welfare programmes are being carried on by the Gram Panchayats.
- f) Agriculture related all the village level programmes will be run by the Gram Panchayats.
- g) For the rural development .Sampurna Gramin Rozgar Yojna is being carried on by Gram Panchayat.
- h) Gram Panchayats have right to distribute all kinds of schoarships.

**Control over Gram Panchayat :**

To stop the misuse of funds at Gram Panchayat level, there is a law of investigation against Pradhans, Deputy Pradhans and the members.

- a) The complaint along with affidavit and relevant proofs can be given to the district magistrate.
- b) The investigation of the complaint will be done by the district level officers only.

c) A Chartered Accountant will be appointed for the completion of the accounts of Gram Panchayat.

d) The audit of Gram Panchayats will be done by the Chief Accountant.

e) Gram Sabha can re-stigate the Pradhan by passing a no confidence resolution if there is any grave charge against the Pradhan.

**Panchayat Help-Line :**

a) A Panchayat help-line system has been implemented for the information regarding Panchayati Raj system, legislature or related rules and programmes.

b) All the departmental officers from state to district level will be available on office telephone between 11:00 am to 1:00 pm.

c) At district level, every Panchayat member can say his problem on the telephone of Zila Panchayat Adhikari Office.

d) For the solution of the problems of Gram Panchayats they can also call on the telephone of state commission offices.

**Planned and Other Schemes of the Department (in U.P.) :**

The Panchayati Raj Department is encouraging the aforesaid schemes practically on a wide scale. The analytical study of some of the aforesaid schemes is as follows:

**Central Rural Cleanliness Programme:**

Under this cleanliness programme, sponsored by the central government, financial aid is given to the families living below poverty line for the construction of toilets. The plan came into existence in 1999-2000 in four districts, which is now being run in every district. The campaign is being executed by district cleanliness committee under the control of Zila Panchayats. Main components of this campaign are:-

**I.E.C. Programme:**

The main objective of this programme is to provide information, education and communication to the village inhabitants about the cleanliness programmes run by central government. Under this programme necessary funds are given to the village inhabitants for promoting and encouraging cleanliness in rural areas.

**Personal toilet construction:**

Central government provides funds for this scheme. The distribution of the amount to the individual family is shown in Table 1 :

<b>Table 1 : distribution of the amount to the individual family (Amount in Rs./Per toilet)</b>			
	Year 2004	Year 2006	Year 2008
Centre share	900	1500	1500
State share	300	700	700
Beneficiary share	400	300	400
Gram Panchayat share	390	Nil	2340
Total	1900	2500	4940

**Community toilet complex:**

Community toilets are built and maintained by Gram Panchayats only where there is a market, fair or there is no land available for families to built toilets.

**Schools and Anganwadi cleanliness:**

In order to encourage cleanliness in rural areas, primary schools have been considered as the basic unit. To motivate students for adopting clean habits a sum of Rs. 20,000/- is given for building school toilets and Rs. 5000/- is given to Anganwadis. Sampooran Swachhta Abhiyan This campaign is being executed by the Central government since 1999-2000. A brief progress description is given underneath in Table 2 to 4.

	2007-08	2008-09
Central Government	86355.00	34004.48
State Government	73784.00	29536.08
Previous year balance	-----	8276.44
Total	160139.00	71817.00

Year	Amount (in lacs)	Total toilet constructed	Total constructed for	
			BPL*	APL**
2007-08	119500	8984379	4471029	4513350
2008-09	28441	1539636	626346	913290

	2007-08	2008-09
Community (women) toilet complex	1981	1221
School toilets	161038	59346
Angawandis toilets	43262	14115

**Repair and maintenance of handpumps:**

Since April, 2002, Gram Panchayats have been given the responsibility of maintaining the hand pumps. Keeping in view the priorities of government a campaign was run by the Gram Panchayats and 140407 hand pumps have been repaired out of 1722371 since January, 2009.

**Dr. Ambedkar Gram Vikas Yojna :**

This campaign emphasized the construction of C.C. roads and drains. Under this campaign 1438 Gram Sabhas have been covered during the first stage in year 2007-08 and 2008-09. Under this campaign the amount sanctioned is Rs.1984.08 crore, out of which a sum of Rs.855.84 crore has been spent till 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 and work of 681 Dr. Ambedkar Gram Sabhas has been completed.

**Construction and maintenance of farmer market and livestock market:**

Under this scheme those farmer markets and livestock markets have been selected which

are organized on the land of Panchayat. The details of funds are shown in Table 5 :

<b>Table : 5 : Details of funds</b>				
	2004-05	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Amount sanctioned (in lacs)	4275.00	180.00	348.00	148.61
No. of constructed farmer markets	696	25	52	22
No. of constructed livestock market	26	05	04	02

#### **Construction of underground drainage system in rural areas:**

The department started this campaign in 2006-07. Under this campaign the cost of per km. underground drains is 1.654 lakh. The share of Gram Panchayat /Beneficiary is 10%. Table 6 represents the statement showing the usage of fund.

<b>Table : 6 : Usage of funds</b>		
	2007-08	2008-09
Amount sanctioned (in lacs)	4000.00	3209.64
Amount sanctioned (in lacs)	4000.00	1311.15
Amount spent (in lacs)	2246.81	946.22
Drains constructed	701.00	973000

#### **Suggestions :**

- Strengthening the delivery system for services and development initiatives through Panchayati Raj Institutions,
- Formulation of District and Sub-District plans at all levels of Panchayats to deliver basic minimum needs to the citizens at the grassroots level,
- Strengthening the Planning Machinery at the district and sub-district levels for pursuing such formulation.
- Panchayati Raj drawing board to implementation of schemes including poverty alleviation, elementary education, rural health coverage etc.,
- Development of model guidelines for conferring original jurisdiction on Gram Sabhas as envisaged.
- It is important that independent evaluation of the impact of economic development and social justice programs implemented by Panchayats are undertaken at regular intervals.

#### **Conclusion :**

The Eleventh Five-year Plan, which has identified Inclusive Growth as the overarching objective, seeks to 'substantially empower and use PRIs as the primary means of delivery of essential services that are critical to inclusive growth. For the success of any democracy-decentralized governance is a must and for that the Panchayati Raj is the best example. Panchayati Raj System as a process of democratic decentralization aims at providing a broad base to affording the much needed training ground for future leadership; creating an awareness and initiative in the rural people about community development programs, proper utilization of the available manpower and other rural resources which have mostly remained under-exploited and unutilized manpower and other rural resources of participate in the management of rural affairs, bringing rural consciousness among the officials and impressing upon the utility of coordinated

and inter-related approach to various development programs, and planning an overall balanced development of rural areas and thus, raising the standard of living of the rural people by alleviating poverty and to ensure Inclusive growth. 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. It is evident from the data given that a huge amount of funds is spent on the rural development by the government but this is not properly utilized. There is a huge difference between the funds sanctioned by the government and funds utilized by the Panchayats. This can be shown by the following Table 7:

<b>Table 7 : Statement showing the % of unutilized funds</b>		
Scheme	2007-08	2008-09
Sampoorn Swachhta Abhiyan (SSA)	25.38%	60.40%
Underground Drainage System Scheme (UDSS)	43.83%	27.83%

The above Table 7 reveals that a huge portion of funds remains unutilized which ultimately slows down the growth of rural India. It is clear from the study of above table that 25.38% of funds remained unutilized in SSA scheme in year 2007-08 which rose to 60.40% in year 2008-09. Similarly in UDS scheme 43.83% of funds remained unutilized during the year 2007- 08 which was 27.83% during 2008-09. On the basis of the above analysis we suggest the following measures:

1. Department should collect data which help in estimating the number of toilets needed in rural areas.
2. It should further be estimated as to how much construction is possible in one year.
3. The reviews of the number of constructed toilets and allotted amount shall be done more frequently.
4. PPP model can be adopted for better utilization
5. The development programmes shall be carried out throughout the year in a phased & planned manner.
6. Involvement of local professionals or NGOs can be done to ensure better outputs.

Thus, we can say that due to the negligence of system the rural areas remain under developed. The government in spite of providing huge amount of funds remains unsuccessful in fostering the growth of rural India. There is a need to keep a strict watch over the utilization of funds by Gram Panchayats.

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