

**FOOD INSECURITY, PANCHAYATI RAJ AND TRIBALS  
IN KASHIPUR BLOCK, RAYAGADA DISTRICT OF  
ORISSA : A CASE STUDY**

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CERTIFICATE

Certified that the dissertation on entitled, **FOOD INSECURITY, PANCHAYATI RAJ AND TRIBALS IN KASHIPUR BLOCK, RAYAGADA DISTRICT OF ORISSA: A CASE STUDY**, submitted by Ms. Kamolini Devi, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is her own work.

We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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*Dedicated*  
*to*  
*Baba and Mama*

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*Kamolini Devi*  
**(Kamolini Devi)**

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# *CHAPTER - 1*

## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Orissa primarily a resource-rich state in the country was in the media headlines in the recent past for increasing number of starvation and hunger deaths in the tribal dominated Kashipur block of Rayagada District.

According to National sample survey organization report the percentage of BPL group in the country has come down to 26% in 2000 from 36% in 1993. However, among the states, Orissa has the dubious distinction of having the highest proportion at 47.5% of its population living under BPL group. Of the total population of Orissa Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste constitutes 22.21% and 16.20% respectively. The constitution of India under "Article 46" requires the state and Union government to promote the educational and economical interests and protect the SCs and STs from social injustice and exploitation.

According to the Economic Survey of Orissa,<sup>1</sup> "despite its vast natural and human resources and substantial progress achieved during the past 48 years of planned development, Orissa continues to be one of the less developed states with 48.56% of its population living below the poverty line as per the estimates of 1993-94".<sup>2</sup> It ranks very low in terms of per capita income and lags behind many other states in socio-economic development. It has been difficult to raise the productivity of the poorer segment of the population. The development efforts of the state have remained largely trapped in the vicious circle of poverty. The low productivity of the primary sector has resulted in significant fluctuations in the growth rate from year to year with a bad crop year,

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<sup>1</sup> Economic Survey of Orissa, 1998-99, Page 20.1, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning and co-ordination department, Government of Orissa.

<sup>2</sup> Economic Survey of Orissa, 1998-99, page 21.2, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning and co-ordination department, Government of Orissa.



pushing the growth rate downwards.<sup>3</sup> The literacy rate of the state stands at 49% below the national average of 52%. While the male literacy rate of 63.1% in the state in 1991 was nearer to the national average of 64.1%, the female literacy rate stood at 34.7% in 1991 which was significantly lower than the national average of 39.3%. The literacy rate of SC and ST population also has been very low at 36.8% and 23.3% respectively as per the 1991 census. More than 80% of the population lives in rural areas, in most adverse circumstances of drought, flood and food insecurity. In particular the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population bears the brunt of uneven economic development exacerbated by natural calamities. It is in this context that Orissa has been described as a 'sad symbol of man's ingratitude to nature typifying the paradox of "poverty amidst plenty's, where plenty of resources co-exist with large number of poor.

Orissa's tribal belt covers an area of 70,647 sq. kms of forest and mountainous tracts representing 45% of the state's area in which out of a population of 2 crores and 20 lakhs, the tribal population constitutes 23.7%. According to the constitution, scheduled Tribes order 1950 as amended by scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes orders (Amendment) Act, 1976 there are 62 Scheduled Tribes in Orissa. Since India's independence positive safeguards are being provided for the tribals, the most prominent being the TDCCO (Tribal Development Co-operative Corporation of Orissa Ltd.), ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project), MADA (Modified Area Development Approach), Tribal sub-plan approach, cluster approach etc. Besides to build up the infrastructure at the local level there are provisions of sub-plans, Panchayat Samits and Gram Panchayats. However, the implementation of the plans and programmes depends on the sincerity and honesty of the officials on the ground. One of the problems which

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<sup>3</sup> Economic survey of Orissa, 1998-99, page 14.1 Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning and coordination department, Government Orissa.

has arisen in implementing the programmes is want of adequate supervising agency to supervise the work at the local level. Again the lack of motivation on the part of tribal leaders due to their tradition-bound life, isolation, exclusiveness, have failed to mobilise their community towards the new institutions and processes, their participation being minimal. The planning from below contributes to the growing awareness of the need for public participation but development programmes are implemented with a top-down approach, and the people are excluded from any planning and conceptualization process. This effectively removes any organic checks and balances that could have helped development programmes reach the targeted population ensuring long term or even short term benefits and thus leaves the whole order open to rampant corruption and misappropriation.

Out of 314 community development blocks in Orissa, 39 are classified as chronically drought prone which includes the Kashipur block in Rayagada District, which was in the news in the recent past on account of starvation deaths and high incidence of malnutrition. It has a predominantly agricultural economy but rural indebtedness persists because of low productivity, non-viable land holdings and private agricultural practices. Moreover, the incessant rains during the monsoon makes the area not only inaccessible, but also deprives the people in the region of a source of income. The hunger death of 20 tribals in Kashipur Block of Orissa reported between July 27 to August 28 2001 brings into the picture the helpless tribals who had to thrive on mango kernels and wild roots to survive being deprived of rice their staple diet. As a vast majority of them are landless and there is little labour intensive work available in the area, the tribals have no money to buy even the subsidized government rice.<sup>4</sup> Many

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<sup>4</sup> "Mango-Kernels for rice scheme" by Rajaram S. Times of India, 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, p.5.

families of the Kashipur block are without work and food. The wrath of the nature coupled with other socio-economic factors devastated the region leading to a severe food crisis.

### **RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Due to the non-participation of the tribal people in local governance and the apathetic attitude of the government officials towards the welfare measures, the problem of food insecurity looms large in Kashipur block of Rayagada District in Orissa. The dismantling of the food security system under the economic reform policies has led to the reduction in the subsidized food supplies through the PDS (Public Distribution System). The coming into operation of TPDS (Targeted Public Distribution System) June 1997, has artificially divided the population into below the poverty line families (BPL) and Above poverty line families (APL). As a result the BPL beneficiaries who are targeted are artificially reduced, unable to lift their entitlements due to low wages and unemployment.

Kashipur block comprises of 20 Gram Panchayats and 412 villages. Out of a total population of 1,02,083 (as per 1991 census), 63, 565 people belong to schedule tribes and 20,165 belong to schedule castes. About 25% people are dependent on agriculture and rest are daily wage workers. Although majority of the people in the block are poor, only 15% of them have ration cards issued under the BPL category. Schemes such as the Prime Ministers "Antyodaya Yojana" and "Annapoorna Yojna" remain only on paper. The PDS is almost non-existent.

Though the government has introduced decentralized administration through the creation of sub-plans, Panchayat Samitis and Gram Panchayats, these institutions have been ineffective in implementing their objectives. Several welfare schemes are being

doled out, but the range and complexity of the welfare schemes leaves the beneficiary community completely bewildered, which makes it easy for the local businessman, politician and the government officials to get away with the major share of the dole leaving the majority of the poor high and dry.

If starvation deaths are happening in a remote corner of the country, the central government cannot escape its ethical responsibility. Democracy and hunger cannot co-exist. If India is to function as a democracy, it must develop ways to fight starvation deaths. Hunger is an anathema to democracy. It is against this backdrop that I am undertaking a research on various dimensions of aforesaid issue-beginning from the root cause of poverty, the mismanagement of PDS and the role of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in fighting the problem of Food insecurity. Thus the proposed study focuses on three issues: Food insecurity, Panchayati Raj and Tribals in Kashipur Block of Rayagada District of Orissa.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The research objectives of the present study are:

1. To probe into the adverse effects of the dismantling of the PDS;
2. How far the revamped PDS (Targeted Public Distribution System) has helped the poor and vulnerable section of the population;
3. The organizational structure of PDS and problems faced by officials while implementing the same;
4. The role of Panchayati Raj institutions in implementing, monitoring and reviewing the development schemes and also that of grain banks in local areas;
5. Whether or not these institutions can provide a long term solution to fight the problem of food insecurity.

Apart from the above objectives, the following questions would also be addressed

1. How can food surpluses be channeled to the sections, which do not have enough resources to buy adequate amount of food grains?
2. To what extent the targeted groups defined by the government under TPDS are in conformity with the actual needy?
3. To what extent the people especially the target groups under TPDS, are aware of their rights and entitlements?
4. To what extent the Panchayati Raj institutions have autonomy in the control and functioning of the grain banks?

On the whole the survey intends to focus on poverty and poverty eradication programmes, probing into the reasons responsible for starvation deaths in the Tribal Block of Kashipur in Rayagada District.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In the context of Food Insecurity, Panchayati Raj and Tribals, so many great scholars and writers have made profound contributions. The necessity behind the analysis of their contributions is to make this piece of study more significant and to highlight some major issues, which are the themes of their respective works.

As the present study revolves around the issue of food insecurity, I would like to focus some light on the work of Madhura Swaminathan. In her book, The public Distribution of Food in India, Leftword Book Ltd., 2000, she mainly deals with the problem of food insecurity pointing to the fact that India represents a classic case of data-rich but action-poor country. There is a mismatch between what we know and what we do. The irrational situation on the food front, when the government of India (along with

state agencies) has accumulated around 65 million tones of rice and wheat as stocks but still hundreds and millions of Indians remain chronically undernourished and food insecure points to the fact. It calls for a strong political action on part of both the central and state governments. In fact much of the action lies with the District collectors and Panchayat leaders to bring together the political will, professional skill (Technical people) and people's action.

Highlighting the decision making and planning for rural development C.H. Hanumantha Rao in Agricultural Policy under three plans, 1969, points out that the plans are mainly the handiworks of 3 categories of persons- the national political leaders, the civil servants and the numerous experts who are not well equipped with the rural knowledge. Whereas the political leadership is imbued with spirit of reforms based on certain ideological premises, the bureaucratic machinery acts with its elitist behaviour unable to identify the specific constraints in formulating strategy of rural development. Thus the participation of rural local organization is a must if the objectives of rural uplift is to be achieved within the framework of overall resource constraints and lack of enthusiasm on part of the state level planning machinery. It calls for a genuine effort to establish collaborative framework between the government, Panchayati Raj institutions, village communities and NGO's to ensure transparent, long term and people centered development.

Sidney Verba, in his work "Democratic Participation" the Annals Vol. 373, September 1967 refers Panchayat as the participatory organization in the village area. The main intention behind the Panchayati Raj system is to involve the people of the local area in the governance and administration of the area through which they feel their need, articulate and aggregate their demands, take decisions upon them and make an effort to implement those decisions. Thereby they are involved in the governmental and

administration process of the area. He further says such participation particularly in the context of development, goes beyond periodic participation in the electoral process. It involves more regular participation in a variety of ways and at various levels

According to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, “Panchayat must be looked upon as the nucleus of all development work and democratic experimentation at the village level”. This is the philosophy, which was given concrete shape through the introduction of Panchayati Raj system in India. Panchayats were created at local level in rural areas as democratic institutions amongst the people who would take the responsibility of development in their own hands through their participation. Hence community would no more mean people as mob to be left to themselves, but the people to be woven around a leader on an institutional pattern. The prime responsibility of local government therefore, is the promotion of local initiatives for an Integrated District Development plan and the effective utilization of resources, human and material developed and delegated by the government at the centre.

Mahi Pal, in his work “Panchayats in Fifth Scheduled Areas, 2000, says the Extension Act 1996 is an important legislative framework enacted by the state legislatures through the creation of institution of Gram Sabha to help the tribals. As tribal societies are homogenous and monolithic, a participatory democracy constitutionally provided through Gram Sabha is very appropriate for them to have their control and rights over natural resources, and conserve and preserve their identity and culture in a participatory manner. The underlying spirit of the extension Act is on devolution rather than delegation of powers and authority to Gram Sabhas, making it the fulcrum of the entire scheme of decentralized governance, planning and development in the tribal areas.

But unfortunately the scenario that emerges from various reports does not make a strong case for sustaining this institution in the system. Field based report reveal that

these bodies are not taken seriously by the functionaries of the panchayats and by the people themselves. They are treated more as recommendatory, advisory and suggestive bodies. In most laws, the decisions of the Gram Sabhas are not mandatory on Gram Panchayats. So far as identification of the beneficiaries is concerned though Panchayats are empowered to give approval to the selection made by the Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha, there are instances of interferences of elected representatives including MLAs and MPs in their constituencies. As a result, instead of the poorest of the poor, some undeserving well-to-do families get identified to benefit from anti-poverty programmes/developmental schemes of the government. Although Gram Sabhas are expected to carry out important functions like mobilising voluntary labour, contribution in cash or kind for the community welfare programmes, considerations of the accounts of Gram Panchayat, report of administration, audit reports, implementation of development programmes, they have hardly carried out these functions. Thus the Gram Sabhas regarded as the 'soul' of Panchayati Raj has failed to provide a political forum for the people to ensure transparency and accountability in the system. Even though Gram Panchayats are expected to convene more than two meetings a year, it is not observed in most cases. Officials like the District Panchayat officer, subdivisional Panchayat officer, Block development officer, Gram Panchayat Extension officer, Sarpanch and Ward members do not take note of the convening of meetings of the Gram Sabhas regularly and at appropriate times. Furthermore, the review report on the functioning of Gram Sabhas as desired by the state Panchayati Raj department to be submitted by the District Collector every March and July is not satisfactory or encouraging.

S. Narayan and B. Kumar in their work "obstacles to Tribal Development" 1983, hold that tribals in India are neglected, isolated, exploited and live at various stages of economic, technical and cultural development. Their development is



determined by the implementation of the programmes and policies considering socio-political issues of the state rather than the socio-economic conditions of the tribals, geographical location of the tribal areas which includes the intensive development of agriculture, the extension of the irrigation, rural electrification, revival of village industries accompanied by land reforms and a re-vitalized co-operative movement to change the face of the rural economy. Adding to the same M.S. Haq, in his work "Community Development through Extension", chugh publications, says the problem of the tribals can be tackled effectively by the active involvement of the tribals, educating and motivating them for their betterment and leading them to clearly conceived and refined objectives.

The Orissa Tribal Development Project (OPDP) needs special attention in this regard. It was launched in 1988-89 with the joint assistance of International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) government of India and state government for all around development of the tribals of Kashipur block. A sum of Rs. 59.41 crore was spent for the overall development of tribals but the result has been found to be negative. It was mainly the handiwork of state and central government officials, formulated from above which reflects the official thinking on tribal development and its implementation was largely done through the bureaucracy. Thus the project lacked the participatory approach the involvement of tribals being minimum in planning, conceptualization, execution, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The effectiveness and efficiency of Panchayati Raj as a system of decentralized governance has been a central focus of Sujata Narwal in her work "The State of Panchayats; A participatory perspective" in which she suggests, if the Panchayati Raj institutions take up the social audit of PDS it will make PDS more target oriented and prevent diversion of rationed goods to the open market. Supplied under it, one would be

able to know whether the ration reached the shops and ultimately to the consumers in the villages.

Jos Mooij in her book *Food policy and the Indian state: The Public Distribution system in South India* : OUP, 1999 refers PDS as a nutritional commodity, economic commodity and also a political commodity ( as source of power). Administrative problems with PDS have shown that in many states there is large scale diversion of grain, wastage, low quality and unreliable provisioning. A substantial amount of PDS food grains is black marketed by ration dealers, warehouse managers, transporters of food grain, even profits are shared with superior officers or politicians. Shikha Jha (1992), Mundle and Govinda Rao (1991) on the basis of NSS data concluded that food subsidy disproportionately favours the richer deciles of the population which reveals an important link between food policy and food politics. The system of distribution is organized in such a way that it favours the 'haves' rather than the 'have-nots'. Even Dantwala (1976), Dreze and Sen (1990) have been concerned about an urban bias and argued that PDS has predominantly served the interest of the urban population and neglected the rural poor population.

S. Mahendra Dev and M.H. Suryanarayana in their work "Is PDs urban biased and pro-rich, 1991" have pointed out that there is a bias in favour of urban areas in the distribution of food grains which implies that not only does the PDS not meet the requirements of the poor, it operates against their interest by raising the open market prices. The casual labourers on daily wages, migrant workers and those without proper residential addresses, either do not use, or are not covered by the PDS and end up paying higher prices for their purchase in the open market.

Jos Mooij in her work 'Public distribution as a safety net: who is saved? 1994, says successful distribution of grains is linked to public awareness. A comparison of the

distribution system of Karnataka and Kerala shows that public awareness-cum-local organization is responsible for the success of PDS in these states. In Kerala, complaints by the card holders are taken note of seriously by the officials, because there is always the threat that local organizations will pursue the matter and approach higher authorities.

According to Vyas (1994), Gulati and Hashim (1994) the food corporation of India as it is organized now, is not able to perform its functions effectively. It is a centralized, bureaucratic, high-cost apparatus which adds to the costs of procurement and distribution of food grains and other agricultural commodities. The operational efficiency of the FCI is questioned on the ground of its lack of accountability. It has yielded to pressure from farm lobbies. The rich farmers and traders have cornered most of the benefits pressurizing the FCI to procure grains beyond its procurement targets and carrying capacity, thus leaving the small farmers at their mercy, who lack access to FCI and being steeped in poverty resort to distress selling. This has caused inefficiency in operation of FCI, its economic cost rising on account of increasing procurement as well as distribution incidental.

Thus to ensure people economic access to food, without relying on the FCI, Bhagwati and Srinivasan (1993) have suggested the system of food stamps, where by identified poor would be given food stamps, entitling them to get good from the market against coupons. This would diversify the FCI of its distribution function and coercive procurement. There is a suggestion for gradually dismantling the FCI and procurement. Decentralized through the creation of food grain banks in each block/village of the district from which people can get subsidized food grains against food coupons, which can be numbered serially to avoid faults. The community can be authorized to manage the food banks. If culturally acceptable, the relatively cheap coarse grains like bajra, ragi and nutritional grains like millets and pulses meeting the nutritional needs of the people

can be explored. This will not only enlarge the food basket but also prevent such locally adopted grains from being extinct. Again to enforce efficiency in grain banks operation people can be given an option to obtain food grains against food coupons from the open market, if the rates in the grain banks are higher, quality poor or services are deficient.

Amartya Sen in his work “poverty and Famines’: OUP, 1981, has made an analysis of why and how people starve and die in poverty, even when food is available at the macro level. if there are adequate food stocks in the economy at the aggregate level to meet the demand, we do have the means to ensure food security. Our ability to do so is reinforced if in addition to adequate stocks, we also have at the distribution end market mechanism supplemented by efficient Public Distribution system to carry the stock to the consumption centre urban and rural. But while these are necessary condition for ensuring food security, they are by no means sufficient to clear the hunger of the poor. Studies in India have shown that access of the poorer households to food depends on three vital conditions.

- A) Purchasing power in their hands,
- B) Local production or proximate production of food grains for more assured access than offered by market mechanism or PDS, and
- C) Available stock accessible food grains being of the variety/types preferred by the poorer households in their respective regions.

There is an obvious inter-connection between the three conditions. If local production of food grains is expanded or maximized, it will expand work and income i.e., purchasing power for the poorer, underemployed and unemployed persons and there is greater likelihood of the pattern being more in accordance with the local consumption preferences. According to Amartya Sen it is not the lack of food but lack of food entitlements and food rights which causes starvation deaths. Again he says starvation is

the characteristic of some people not having enough food to eat and it is not the characteristic of there being not enough food to eat; an extreme and protracted shortage of food resulting in widespread and persistence hunger, caused due to one's inability to establish entitlement to enough food.

Now Review of Literature is imperative to study all probable literatures so that a researcher becomes well-conversant with the relevant researches and information in the field. The views given by different scholars with regard to Tribals, Food Insecurity, Panchayati Raj has helped me to get a synoptic and integrated view of the problem of food mismanagement and the role to be played by the Panchayati Raj institution to combat the same.

### **METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION**

The methodology of the research is primarily analytical. The research is based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary constitute both micro level data and macro level data. The micro level data is collected through interview schedule and informal talks. The macro level primary data is collected from the reports of the welfare agencies (both government as well as non-government), official records such as District Statistical Handbook, District Gazetteer and materials on tribals from the Tribal-cum-Harijan Research and Training Institute, Bhubaneswar, Orissa. The secondary data is drawn from various books, journals and published articles.

The study is based upon the household survey method by means of interview schedule. 20 households in all have been selected by random sampling method. Personal interview method has been adopted by interviewing the heads of households for collecting the required information. The sample households are situated in the villages Pansguda, Bilamal, Pitajodi, Badmaribhatta, Tikri belonging to the Kashipur Block of Rayagada District.

# *CHAPTER -2*

## Chapter- 2

### **Local Self Government In Kashipur Block: Exploration Of Local Institutions And Their Contexts**

During the post – independence period, several provincial governments took steps to organize village Panchayats following the concept of ‘Gram Swaraj’ by Mahatma Gandhi. These village Panchayats were recognized as units of Local – self government to carry out certain functions to meet the requirements of the people at the grassroot level. In this context Orissa was one of the few states in the Indian republic to pass the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1948 to establish Local – Self government to ensure people’s democracy at the village level. Consequent upon the provision of Directive Principles of State Policy (Article 40) in the Indian Constitution and following the acceptance of Balwant Rai Committee Report in 1958, Panchayati Raj was introduced in Orissa to Implement Community Development Programme designed for the basic purpose for socio-economic uplift of rural communities through people’s participation in the process of self – governance. Thus the Gram Panchayats functioned in the state of Orissa since 1950. Under the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1948. Similarly, under the Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti Act 1948, the Panchayat Samiti was introduced at the block level with an elected non-official as Chairman and the Block Development Officer (BDO) as the Chief Executive Officer of the Samiti. Also the Zilla Parishad was introduced at the district level with an elected chairman to carry out approval of budget of Panchayat Samitis and distribution of funds allotted by the state and central governments.

There have been series of amendments to Orissa Panchayat Acts starting with Orissa Gram Panchayat Act (1948), Orissa Gram Panchayat Act (1964) and Orissa Gram Panchayat Act (1985). Further consequent upon the implementation of 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment in the Constitution (1992), the PRIS are given a Constitutional Status. The Orissa Gram Panchayat Act (1964) has been amended permitting extensive power to 'Gram Sabha' according to G.P. Rule 5 (3) with regard to approval of schemes, selection of beneficiaries, discussion on G.P. budget, tax proposals, convention of 'Gram Sabha' etc. Similarly the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1985 has been amended in all respects in conformity with 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment in order to suit to the needs of the people. The power and rules given to the Gram Sabhas as per the Orissa Gram Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1997 are also significant, because prior to this the state did not have any specified regulation ensuring defined power to the institutes called Gram Sasan or village administration at the moment.

Before going into the concepts of Gram Sasan, Gram Sabha, it is imperative to have a knowledge about the word 'Grama'.

### **Constitution of Grama**

- (1) The State Government may for the purpose of an Act by declaration notified in the Gazette constitute any village or group or contiguous villages as a Grama and assign to such Grama, a name which shall be one of the villages comprised within the Grama.



<sup>1</sup>Explanation – village intervened only by forest areas, hills, streams, rivers and such other natural barriers and lands not forming part of any village may be treated as contiguous villages.

- (2) Wherever the state government deem it fit to do they may cancel any notification in respect of a Grama under sub section (1) or may alter the area comprised in a grama by reducing or adding to the number of villages comprised within such Grama and by declaration notified in the Gazettee constitute such altered area or areas as a Grama or Gramas, as the case may be, for the purpose of the said sub-section.
- (3) No Grama shall , so far as may be reasonably practicable, be constituted with a population of less than two thousands and more than <sup>2</sup>Ten thousands but in no event shall a village be divided and a part thereof included within a Grama.

### **Constitution and incorporation of Grama Sasan**

- (1) For every Grama there shall be a Grama Sasan which shall be composed of all persons registered by virtue of the representation of the people Act, 1950.
- (2) The Grama Sasan shall be a body corporate by the name of the Grama to which it relates, having perpetual succession and common seal, with power, subject to the provision of this Act and the rules made there under, to acquire, hold and dispose off property and to contract and by the said name sue and be sued.

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<sup>1</sup> Added by Orissa Act 18 of 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Substituted by Orissa Act 9 of 1975.

- (3) The office and headquarters of the Gram Sasan shall be situated within the limits of the Grama and unless otherwise ordered by the State Government in the village bearing the name of Grama.

Under the Orissa Gram Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1997 the Gram Sasan or village administration commands the following power to discharge its duty. These are :

- a) It approves plans, projects and programmes for social and economic development before these are actually taken up for implementation by the Gram Panchayat.
- b) It identifies and selects persons as beneficiaries under the Poverty alleviation and similar other programmes like IRDP, JRY, DWCRA, TRYSEM, IAY, MWS etc.
- c) Every GP is required to obtain from the Gram Sasan a certification of utilisation of funds by the Panchayat for the plans, programmes and project as mentioned earlier.
- d) It considers and approves the arrival budget of the GP including the supplementary or revised budget. It also considers levy of all taxes, rates, rents and fees and enhancement of rates thereof.
- e) Organising community service and drawing up an implementation of agriculture production plans also come under the purview of Gram Sabha powers. Besides, any such matters as may be referred to it by the GP for its decisions are also regulated.

- f) In the scheduled area, the Gram Sasan is competent enough to safe-guard and preserve the tradition and custom of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and customary mode of dispute resolution consistent with the relevant laws in force and in harmony with the basic tenets of the consolidation and human rights.
- g) The GP under the control and supervision of the Gram Sasan exercises within its local limit, the enforcement of prohibition of the sale and consumption of any intoxicant, restriction or regulation on the ownership of the minor forest produce, prevention of alienation of land and restoration of any unlawfully alienated land of an ST and control over money-lending to them including management of village markets.

### **The Constitution of Gram Sabha and its Functions**

'Gram Sabha' is the main organ of the Panchayat Raj system. Its primary purpose is to involve people in decision making, their participation in development programmes and to ensure restoration of power where it belongs, the vibrant institutions of participatory self – governance. It was envisaged that by doing this, power could be transferred to the people where institution responsibilities and functions are well demarcated. Further, by empowering people at the grass root level, people could put their legitimate influence or planning at the village level for ensuring local democracy and equal distribution of power.

Gram Sabha as defined statutorily in the State Legislation is the electoral college representing the electorates of all the villages within the territory of a given Gram Panchayat. For greater decentralisation of power, the state legislature has further constituted Palli Sabhas by weaving small hamlets and bastis in a given revenue mouja into one. So to say, Palli Sabha happens to be the small unit of Gram Sabha with independent functions. Gram Sabhas generally sit twice a year, in February and June for their annual and half – yearly meet respectively. The February session of the ‘Gram Sabha’ decides the work Plan/agenda to be executed next year with all its contents discussed and the budget of the current fiscal for the Panchayat passed. The progress of the activity (resolved in the Gram Sabha meeting) are assessed in June meeting. The Sarpanch concerned takes the responsibility of scheduling time, place and date of each Sabha. He as well as DM concerned reserves the right to convene more than two Sabhas a year if necessary. The Secretary of the concerned GP is authorized to serve the notice within 15 days time earlier for which a copy of the same is sent to the BDO. The items for discussion in the ‘Gram Sabha’ are mentioned in the notice itself and if necessary, other items may be included by the Sarpanch. The notices are displayed at different places in the village.

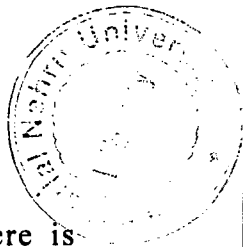
The ‘Gram Sabha’ meeting needs a minimum of ten percent of the electorate to remain present for ‘Quorum’. In case there is no quorum, the Sabha is deferred to another day with a notice of three days. However, an adjourned Sabha may proceed without a quorum. According to the provision the Sarpanch presides over the meeting of ‘Gram Sabha’ and his nominee presides over in his absence. The proceedings are recorded by the Secretary

G.P on which signature of the President of the meeting is recorded. Members are free to see the proceedings. The discussions in the Gram Sabha meetings are held according to the agenda and decisions are taken on the basis of the opinion of the majority. No member however can vote without remaining present in the meeting. If, for any decision at any time the opinion of the members is equally divided, the vote of the president determines the decision. It seems, the whole process of decision – making in the ‘Gram Sabha’ characterizes people’s democracy at the grassroots level where each member enjoys his right to vote besides active participation in the discussions of Gram Sabha forums.

### Palli Sabha

In the state of Orissa for every village within the Grama, there is constituted by the State government a Palli Sabha. All adult persons available in the voters list of given wards, hamlet or basti of a given revenue mouja are the members of the Palli Sabha concerned. Each Palli Sabha consists of persons registered by virtue of the representation of peoples Act, 1950. The Palli Sabha generally sits once every year i.e, in February with a notice mentioning time, place and date of the sessions issued six months before. There is also a provision for holding the meetings of Palli Sabha at other times in the manner prescribed. The authority to convene the Sabha lies with the Gram Panchayat who in consultation with the members of the Palli Sabha schedules the meeting at a convenient place. A special session of the Palli sabha can be convened if the Gram Panchayat or at least one - fifth of the members of the Palli Sabha so decides. The ward member (Naeb

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Sarpanch) of the Palli Sabha elected to the Gram Panchayat presides over the meeting. In case of more than one representative, rotation is effected. The sessions of such sabhas carries no quorum and proposals received are passed by simple majority. All other function are same as that of Gram Sabha. The person representing the Palli Sabha area in the Gram Panchayat or if there be more than one such persons, one from the list of all such persons in order of preference to be determined by the Gram Panchayat, shall preside over the meeting of the Palli Sabha and in the absence of all such persons at the meeting at the appointed time, those present at the meeting may elect from among themselves to preside over the meeting. The members present at any meeting of the Palli Sabha form the quorum for such meeting and the proceedings of the meeting of the Palli Sabha are recorded and authenticated by its President.

Provided that if any member of the Palli Sabha files a complaint either in writing or in person the next meeting of the Gram Panchayat, challenging that the proceedings have not been correctly recorded by the President, the Gram Panchayat may in its discretion, summon another meeting of the Palli Sabha, to consider the same issue or issues, to be held in the presence of a member of the Panchayat not connected with the Palli Sabha, duly authorized by Panchayat in this behalf, and recorded proceedings of this meeting, if counter signed by the said member of the Panchayat shall be taken to be final.

The Palli Sabha approves the following two subjects as desired by the Gram Panchayat :

- a) The developmental activities essential for the next year,
- b) The budgetary statement proposed by the Gram Panchayat for the next year.

As per the survey carried out in Kashipur Block of Rayagada District the sense of developmental administration does not fit into the case as the varying phraseologies as “Public cooperation”, “Public involvement” “Community organization”, “Public mobilisation” is marked by its absence. The lack of public participation has made the government apathetic to the needs of the people. It has become immune to their difficulties and problems. The rural development programme in the Kashipur block is far from satisfactory as can be deduced from the survey of five villages Pansguda, Bilamal, Tikri, Badmaribhatta and Pitajodi, due to lack of people’s participation in development programme. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee pointed out in 1958 that a will to development must coexist with the resources of development, then a mere availability of resources unaccompanied by the will of the under developed to develop which is sure to remain lopsided and the danger of the resources being snatched by those, who least deserve them is imminent. The ‘Democratic Decentralisation’ through the introduction of Panchayati Raj System says that people are not merely to be consulted but effective power is to be entrusted to them. In the words of Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the first President of India, pointed out, “Panchayats must be looked upon as the nucleus of all developmental work and democratic experimentation at the village level.”<sup>3</sup> The purpose of the

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Quoted in Workshop on development through Panchayati Raj (National Institute of Rural Development India), P.24.

introduction of the Panchayati Raj is that people and their representatives at the local level can participate more intimately and with greater initiative in development of their local potential to meet local needs as determined by them. Participation thus is an act aimed at influencing the government. <sup>4</sup>It depends upon the psychological attitude backed by the environment and policies of government. So long as it depends upon the psychological attitude of the individual, it is determined to a large extent by his socio-economic characteristics.

### **Socio-Economic Characteristics And Participation**

It is not proper to expect uniform type and magnitude of participation from all the citizens, therefore it is correct to relate the participation response with socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. In this study 3 Panchayats Kashipur, Tikri, Gorakhpur under the block of Kashipur are taken as sample panchayats for study and 20 villages apart from the political leaders elected to the Panchayati Raj institutions are taken as sample respondents on a random basis.

From the data collected through the interviews schedule, it is found that all the respondents are life time dwellers of the village and they are not migrants. So they are born in the village, live in the village and they have seen the village from their childhood.

The literacy level of the villagers is responsible for bringing the socio-economic development of the village. It is assumed that if the villagers are well educated, they can be aware of the governmental policies

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<sup>4</sup> See Sidney verba, "Democratic Participation" The Annals Vol. 373, September 1967.



of development, they will involve themselves in the implementation of the programme and can share the benefits of the programme. They can participate in development administration by putting forth their needs and demands as well as by pointing out defects of governmental machinery in the block.

In the present sample study of 20 respondents it is found that the villagers are unaware of the rural development policies of the government. Of the 20 villagers taken together 75% of them are still illiterate, 25% are educated upto primary and under-matriculate level respectively. Thus the people of the Panchayats under study are not well educated and universal primary education policy of the government has not yet been fully implemented.

Occupation of the respondents is one of the important variable to determine the participation level of the respondents. As India is an agrarian country it is expected that most of the rural citizens would have been the agriculturists and they would have enthusiastically participated in Block administration, so far as Block administration deals with problems of agriculture. But the sample study shows that majority of the villager respondents are labourers engaged in non-agriculture sector (Katha bikri, Kuli bhuti) very few having land holdings of their own about an acre or so. Relating to this question was asked to the respondents whether they had changed their traditional occupation. To this 91% of the respondents said "no" for Dangar Cultivation is their tradition bound occupation but it is seasonal so most part of the year they are engaged in labour work (either employed as labourer in Food for work programme or employed as tenants

in landlords land). Hence they become less interested in development programmes of government related to agriculture.

In an agrarian society like India land is the primary productive asset and is the tangible expression of economic conditions of the people. The landless, insecure tenants and those owing marginal plots too small to support a family constitute the poorest of the poor and to this category a large number of villager respondents fall. Thus, it is inferred that land distribution in the respective Panchayats is still not even and because of this there is economic disparity among the villagers which has its impact on the extent of participation.

The economic level of the respondents shows that only 5% of the rural respondents are earning 1800 rupees annually which is indicative of the deplorable economic condition of the rural people. Moreover, the economic condition of the villagers is affected by the number of family members and number of adult earning members in the family. It is seen that in the Panchayats under study, there is no question of nucleus family and joint-family system is still in existence. From the study undertaken it is found that the size of the family is large, whereas 25% of the family have 5 members, 65% of the family have more than 5 members. In many families only one adult-male person is the earning member upon whom the whole family depends for subsistence. Moreover most of the respondents do not believe in future savings and whatever they get, they have to manage their livelihood with that.

The findings with regard to the personal socio-economic characteristics of the rural people in the 3 Panchayats under study in the Kashipur Block reveals that by and large they have less education, less landed property, more family members, less saving and less employment opportunity. Their occupational mobility is restricted and they stick to their traditional occupation, even though they are not self-sufficient.

### **Exploring Citizens Awareness**

The association of people with some governmental activity or programme is referred to as Public participation. People associate themselves with the administration and governmental programmes through expression of opinions. Participation through expression of opinions by the public on the action of the government is a prerogative of the people. This type of participation must be based upon knowledge without which it becomes meddlesome. Such participation could be convergent, i.e. action by the public may follow the same lines as that of the administration and strengthen it, or it may become divergent, i.e. the action by the public may take the form of reaction to the activities of administration, attempting to guide it in direction other than those contemplated by the administrators or simply express divergent opinions on the rendering of public services.

It support or criticism is well-informed, it will neither be meddlesome nor harassing to the administrator. For this however, a pre-requisite is the availability of accessibility to correct and sufficient amount of information to the eager and competent public. Hence, the participation of the citizens depend upon the level of awareness and magnitude of their

interests in administration and government programmes. The awareness of the facilities of the programmes not only generates an interest in them but also makes them to avail of benefits to a large extent, and thereby the individual participates. So a study of awareness of the individual is necessary for the study of participation. From the field study it is found that majority of the sample respondents are unaware of the rural development programmes implemented through blocks. While the question “How do you come to know about the programmes” was asked to the 20 villager respondents, most of them were of the opinion that political leaders are responsible for their awareness. The following table shows the distribution of respondents over the question of the source of awareness.

**Table – 2.1**

**Shows the distribution of Respondents over the question of source of Awareness of Development Programmes**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Source of Awareness</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
1	Newspaper	0	0
2.	Television	0	0
3.	Radio	2	10
4.	Neighbours	3	15
5.	Villagehead	3	15
6.	Ward Members	7	35
7.	Sarpanch	5	25
8.	Gram Sevaks	0	0
9.	Extension Officers	0	0
10	Project Officers	0	0
11.	B.D.O.	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source :** Field Survey

From the Table No. 2.1 it is found that political leaders like Ward members and Sarpanchs play the useful role of communicator to the villagers. The villagers are still not exposed to mass media like newspapers, radio or television. Thus accessibility of the respondents to mass media is limited and official machinery is not in a position to meet the information demands to the extent desired in order to generate the required feeling among them that there are varieties of measures implemented by the government for their advantage through block administration.

### **Citizens Participation**

The participatory organization in the village area, is the Panchayats. Through Panchayati Raj, the local people feel their need, articulate and aggregate their demands, take decisions upon them and make an effort to implement those decisions. Thereby, they are involved in the governmental and administrative process of the area. Hence the participation of the people comes through their political participation in Panchayati Raj system. In this context, the first question, "Have you ever exercised your franchise right in Panchayat elections ?" was asked to sample villager respondents and according to the response pattern majority of them did not vote in the election. As a follow-up to this response I wanted to know the reason why the respondents did not participate in Panchayat elections. Most of them who did not vote in the Panchayat elections have been found to be females, illiterate, belonging to the age group of 21-30. Majority of them pointed out, that they are not interested in Political participation and even if they become interested, other members of the family do not allow them to participate in

the elections. Thus it is well evident that still women are dependent upon men and their political actions are guided by the male members of the family.

If the citizens associate themselves with policy processes, they have continuing participation and effective control of the Politico-economic system and administrative apparatus. In this context, one form of public participation is through Panchayats and the other is through the formation of Advisory Committees. In this context, the question to the respondents was, "Do you have a village committee?" All the respondents of the 3 Panchayats said 'no' to it. They opined that they have clubs and associations, which are more or less cultural in nature. So through village committees their participation is nil.

Rural Development must involve the people at the grassroot level who are well equipped with the rural knowledge. But at present the "Top-down approach has failed to bring about a people centered development and people are excluded from any planning and conceptualization process. In this context, the question "Do you give any suggestion to the officials in planning of the developmental programmes?" was asked to the respondents, it is found that in planning the respondents villagers do not participate, because of low level of education and low level of income of the respondents.

As giving suggestion is one form of participation in implementation of the programme, so also making complains to the administrators is another form of citizens participation. Unless the people point out the gaps and

lacunas in administration, the administrators cannot be conscious of their defects and they will never try to improve themselves. So making reasonable complains make the administration good, strong and efficient. But it is found that the respondents do not make any complains to the government officers with regard to the implementation of the programmes. If at all they make any complain to the government officials, they never do it personally but they do it through the elected leaders. Only when the citizens participate in government and administration, the political leaders become effective links joining the people and government.

The citizens are the beneficiaries for whom the programmes are directed. Several programmes have been launched by the government aiming at the economic improvement of the people and alleviating the rural poverty and these programmes are implemented through block.. So another form of citizen participation is the benefits which they are really getting. Hence the question, "Are you a beneficiary of rural development programmes?" was asked to the sample respondents and it is found that they are not the actual beneficiaries of the rural development programmes because of their illiteracy and ignorance. Several welfare schemes are being doled out, but the range and complexity of the welfare schemes : take home rations, cooked food for infants, mid – day meal for the school children, the Annapurna Yojna of which people have only heard, who is BPL, who gets a card and how ..... leaves the beneficiary community completely bewildered, which makes it easy for the local businessman, politician and the government officials to get away with the major share of the dole.

Block administration becomes efficient if people show initiative and involvement that leads to making and stating the public needs before the government and that leads government to respond to those needs. However, participation depends upon the personal socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and the five villages in Kashipur block covered by the study shows the low socio-economic status of the rural people due to which they are unaware of the rural development programmes and failed to participate in development programmes directly by coming in contact with the government officials, by giving suggestions to them in planning and implementation of the programme.

**Bureaucracy, elected representatives and citizens – A study of their relationship in Block Administration**

In the realm of Public policy – making, the inseparability of politics and administrative elements have now been clearly established. As Carl Friedrich observes, “Public Policy, is a continuous process, the formation of which is inseparable from its execution. Politics and administration play continuous role in both formation and execution, though there is probably more administration in the execution of it. <sup>5</sup>In so far as particular individuals or groups are gaining or losing power or control in a given area, there is politics, in so far as officials act a propose action in the name of public interest, there is administration.

The aim of Block administration as stated in the Community Development Programmes is the development of the people, of the area and

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<sup>5</sup> C. J. Friedrich “Public Policy and the Nature of Administrative Responsibility” in F. E. Rourke (ed.) Bureaucratic Power in National Politics, Boston, 1972, P. 318.



of the nation as a whole. The matrix of block organization is composed of both administrative wing and the representative wing. Administrative wing is built by the administrative officials and the representative wing is built by elected officials to the Gram Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis. Jawaharlal Nehru was aware of the necessity of involvement of both officials and non-officials so far as rural development is concerned. So he pointed out "..... Officials and non-officials have both their part to play in this work.. Both are essential officials bring the experience of training and disciplined service and the non-officials represent and bring that popular urge and enthusiasm, which give life to a movement. Both think and act in a dynamic way and develop initiative. The official has to develop the qualities of the popular leader and the people's representatives have to develop the discipline and training of the official. So they approximate to each other and both should be guided by the ideal of disciplined service in a common cause.<sup>6</sup>

Keeping in view this objective, both the administrative wing of the Block organization composed of government officials and the representative wing composed of elected officials who are termed as non-officials are organized for the planning and implementation of welfare programmes for the people of the block. The importance of involving local people and their representatives in development work has been emphasized by Mr. Nehru, "It is not good enough to work for the people; the only way is to work with the people and go ahead and give them a sense of working

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<sup>6</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, Nehru Papers, December 25, 1949.

for themselves.”<sup>7</sup> So also Rumki Basu viewed the citizen as the ultimate source of administrative and political power, not only because it is axiomatic in a democracy but also because he is a rational consumer of public goals and services.

Moreover, Public Participation requires continuous contacts and communications with governmental agencies for solving individual and community problems. To facilitate such citizen-participation the “distance” between the public personnel (the government officials and the elected representatives) and the masses has to be reduced. Therefore, it is necessary to note the relationship among the administrative officials, political leaders and rural citizens upon which much of the success of Block administration depends.

For the above mentioned study, the setting is the five villages Pansguda, Bilamal, Tikri, Badmaribhatta, Pitajodi under 3 Gram Panchayats namely Kashipur, Tikri and Gorakhpur in Kashipur Block of Rayagada District of Orissa. For the purpose of collecting materials I have depended upon the interview schedule of administrative officials who have some sort of administrative involvement in Kashipur block, the elected representatives to the Panchayat Samitis of Kashipur block and the rural citizens of the five villages of the same Block. On the basis of responses collected from the interview schedule, the study of the relationship between officials, non-officials and people is made.

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<sup>7</sup>See Rumki Basu, “Public Administration, Concepts and Theories” Administration and People, PP.464-471.

**Table – 2.2**

**Shows the distribution of bureaucratic official respondents over  
the question of consultation**

N = 5				
Non-official	Frequency of Consultation			
Persons Consulted	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Village Political Leaders	5 (100%)	4 (80%)	2 (40%)	2 (40%)
District Political Leaders	01 (20%)	3 (60%)	3 (60%)	7 (140%)
State Political Leaders	02 (40%)	3 (60%)	4 (80%)	6 (120%)
Group Leaders Of different Social And economic group	3 (60%)	4 (80%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)

**Source :** Field Survey

From the table No. 2.2 it is very much clear that most of the Block officials respondents consult the village Political Leaders very often or sometimes. But so far as district Political Leaders and State political Leaders are in question, most of the official respondents do not consult them so often. The block officials think that because of the introduction of Panchayati Raj system, village Political leaders know the need of their area, so they consult them. They also consult the group leaders of different social and economic groups as these leaders are very close to the common villagers. District and State Political Leaders are not always available and even if they are available they do not know the particular problem of the village. Dubhashi observes, "a contingency may well arise, where the Political party in power at the Taluk Board or Panchayat Samiti might cause a real strain on the position of the Block development officer."<sup>8</sup>

In order to prove the above response, follow-up question was asked to the official respondents; "How often do the Political Leaders come to you for consultation?" The official respondents opined that the village Political Leaders and group Leaders of different Social and economic groups come, meet and consult them frequently while the district and State Political level leaders rarely come to them.

When the same question "How often do you consult the bureaucratic official of Block-level administration?" was put to the sample rural elected Panchayat representative respondents, most of the respondents opined that they though not frequently, but sometimes consult the block bureaucratic

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<sup>8</sup> P. R. Dubhashi, Rural Development Administration in India, Bombay Popular, 1970, P. 235

officials with regard to the problems of development of rural areas. When the same question was put to the village respondents, majority of them opined that they preferred to meet the Political elites, members of voluntary organization and members of the Panchayat Samitis then to meet the government officials.

In order to know the relationship between the bureaucratic officials and elected representatives to Panchayats in block administration, the next question of concern is "When Political Leaders contact a Block-official, how do they usually approach him ?" This question was asked to both bureaucratic official and elected non-official respondents.

As per the response pattern the bureaucratic official respondents opined that the elected non-officials usually approach them through personal meeting and the elected non-official respondents also responded the same. Both the categories of respondents opined that rarely the elected non-officials approached the bureaucratic officials through a delegation or through telephones or through sending messengers. But while the elected non-official respondents said that though letters also they approach the executive officials, majority of the official respondents did not agree with the view. Hence it is very clear that personal meeting of the elected non-officials with the bureaucratic officials is the usual method of approaching the government officials so far as Block administration is concerned. Personal contact is not only the usual method of approach but also the effective method of approach and this has been stated with positive response from both the bureaucratic officials and elected non-officials.

Over the same point when the question of the method of approach to the government officials was asked to the citizens, majority of them opined that they did not meet the government officials directly, but they wanted to contact and inform the government officials of their grievances through their Panchayat Samiti members and Political Leaders.

The Power-orientation of the administration has also fostered an administrative culture wherein a citizen is perceived as a 'subject' and not as a 'Sovereign'. So whenever the citizen comes in contact with the administrative system, he is made to feel small by being made to wait or to go around in circles, in the name of rules and regulations and he finds that he cannot ask the administration to do anything as a matter of his right but can only ask for favours.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, what is the real relationship between the bureaucratic officials, elected non-officials and citizen constitutes one of the basic points of our enquiry in the present study.

In Block administration, the relationship between government officials, elected non-officials and citizens is made through the various problems brought to the government officials by the elected non-officials and rural citizens. In order to know what type of the problems are generally brought to the government officials, a question on the nature and frequency of the problems was asked to the two categories of respondents. The Table 23 presents the answer pattern.

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<sup>9</sup> F. D. Malaviya "Administrative culture; Some Negative aspects." In the Indian Journal of Public Administration, July-Sept; 1990, Vol. XXXVI, No. 3, P. 578.

**Table 2.3**

**Shows the distribution of respondents over the nature and frequency of problems brought to the government officials**

Respondent	Nature Of Problems	Frequency			
		Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Rarely (%)	Never (%)
Elected non-officials N=5					
	(a) Development programmes of the government	6 (120%)	4 (80%)	8 (160%)	7 (140%)
	(b) Law and order problems	6 (120%)	8 (160%)	6 (120%)	7 (140%)
	(c) Sanction and approval of loan	9 (180%)	4 (80%)	3 (60%)	2 (50%)
	(d) Administrative delay	7 (140%)	4 (80%)	5 (100%)	5 (100%)
	(E) local group conflicts	8 (160%)	6 (120%)	9 (180%)	7 (140%)

**Source :** Field Survey

The Table 2.3 indicates that the elected non-officials bring the problems to the notice of the government officials. About the nature of the problem it is the common response of the two categories of respondents that whenever the government officials took notice of any problems brought about by the elected non-officials or by the rural citizens, the problem generally relates to the sanction and approval of loan. It is a very rare occasion when the elected non-officials and rural citizens bring any problems relating to the village development to the notice of the government officials. On the problem of administrative delays the elected non-officials

occasion when the elected non-officials and rural citizens bring any problems relating to the village development to the notice of the government officials. On the problem of administrative delays the elected non-officials complain but citizens rarely complain so. So far as the problem of law and order and group conflicts are concerned, the two group of respondents agree that the government officials rarely become aware of such problems. Neither the non-officials nor the citizens bring often such problems to the notice of the government officials.

Now coming to the question of mutual trust and confidence between the government officials, rural political leaders and villagers, for mutual trust and confidence creates a sense of involvement and commitment in the programme and precipitate the implementation work. Unless the rural political leaders who are the members of the Panchayat Samitis and rural citizens cultivate the confidence in the government officials, they will develop distrusting the programme itself, for which the programme cannot be implemented with full success and problems occur in block administration. On the other hand, if the government officials do not have confidence in the rural political leaders and the citizens, they do not involve themselves in development and administration with sincerity. So far as achieving success in block administration and development programme in rural areas, mutual trust and confidence of government officials, rural political leaders and citizens upon each other are vital points. In this context, the first question asked to the bureaucratic officials respondents was "When the bureaucratic officials are unable to meet the requests of the political leaders, how do the Political Leaders react upon it?"



As per the response majority of government official respondents opined that they have developed trust and confidence on rural political leaders, as even if they are not in a position to comply with the requests made by the political leaders the latter understand the officials difficulties and not press the issue. They also agree that in such cases of non-compliance of requests the Political Leaders never withdraw the cooperation nor organize any agitation against the government officials. They opined that the political leaders may threaten to have the government officials transferred but they agree that these are rare cases.

So far as confidence on villagers is in question, the bureaucratic official respondents agree that they have confidence over the rural citizens, as citizens, never do any harm to them even if the bureaucratic officials are not in a position to help them. When the same statement was made to the political leaders and villager respondents to know their ways of actions when the government official is not able to comply to their requests. As per the response pattern most of the political leader respondents understand the difficulties of the government officials and remain silent and seek further occasions to make their requests fulfilled by government officials. The villager-respondents opined that even if the government officials are not able to comply with their requests, the villagers remain silent and do not pursue the matter.

Sometimes the government officials face pressure from the Political Leaders and villagers to do something which they do not want to do. In such cases the government officials take a number of different courses of action.

In this connection when the question was asked to the government official respondents what type of action they usually take in such cases, the respondents answered that they usually try to deal with the situation themselves and explain their limitations to the Political Leaders and villagers. A majority of Political Leaders and citizen beneficiaries respondents do not agree with the opinion of the government official respondents. They expressed their view that when the officers do not want to do something, instead of explaining their limitation, they simply remain silent over the matter and the issue remains dead. In this case, the political leaders and the villagers have to run many times to the office for the work to be done.

Whenever any problem arises the villagers go directly to the elected representatives than the government officials. These elected representatives are related to the Panchayat Samiti Organisation and Panchayat Samitis play an effective role in block administration. So in order to know the relationship between the Block non-officials and rural citizens, the question "How often do you consult with the Political Leaders of your area ?" was asked to the rural citizens and as per the response pattern the citizens come to the Political Leaders for discussion and consultation very often. Then the next question "What is the nature of your discussion with block non-officials and how often ?" was put to the rural citizens.

From the answer pattern, it is found that majority of citizen respondents meet and discuss with Political Leaders regarding the problem of sanction and approval of loan. This was the same response to the question

which was asked to the citizen respondents about the nature and frequency of the problem which the citizens bring to the notice of the government officials. So for the citizens, problems like administrative delays, law and order, the development of the area are not so important as the problem of sanction and approval of loan. This shows that so far as citizens are concerned the question of personal benefit supersedes the question of development of the area.

From the above analysis it can be deduced that so far as block administration is concerned the three categories of people are directly or indirectly involved. The analysis is purely based upon the data collected from the sample respondents through the interview schedule. It is observed that in Block administration, the government officers consult the village Political leaders more than the State and district level Political leaders. The village Political Leaders also opined the same. On the question of mode of approach to the government officials, both the government official and elected non-official respondents of the Block agree that they meet personally the bureaucratic official and explain to them their needs and problems. But so far as rural citizens are concerned, they do not meet the government officials frequently but ventilate their grievances through Panchayat Samiti members and Political Leaders. They often meet, discuss and consult the Political Leaders while they decline to do so with government officials. When the question of the nature of the problem brought to the notice of the government officials by the non-officials and citizens arises, the three categories of respondents opined that the problem generally relates to the sanction and approval of loan.

Hence from the above analysis, it is clear that in Block administration, neutrality in the strict Weberian Sense of instrumentality to the Political executive is often not considered adequate to the dynamic role, carved out for development administrators today. The widely held view now is that a bureaucrat in implementing different development programmes in a Block shall consult and discuss with Political leaders and rural citizens will be in fact, more effective as a catalyst of change than a strictly neutral and uncommitted rule-oriented bureaucrat.

### **Grsssroots Level Participation**

#### **An Assessment**

Till the introduction of Panchayati Raj the block level administration comprised of a team of officials headed by the block development officer, nearly half-a-dozen extension officers, a number of village level workers and a few veterinary and other functionaries, having being on the whole ineffective, development administration lacked a live-participatory mechanism..<sup>10</sup> But the introduction of Panchayati Raj system gave rural India a new sense of dignity and participation by combining the ideals of democracy and development. Thus, block level administration involves an intricate interaction between technological, administrative and Political factors. This calls for the active participation of block level officials, non-officials, i.e. the Political Leaders who are elected to the Panchayat Samitis and the people for whom the administration is directed. Thus

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<sup>10</sup> M. Shiviah et. al; Block Level Administration National Institute of Rural Development, Nov. 1979, P. 176.

participation implies activity in decision-making, implementation, benefits and evaluation, for evaluation is a form of public participation by which people participate in administration by evaluating the governmental machinery. In this context, several questions were asked to the three categories of respondents.

The problem of food insecurity looms large in the Kashipur Block of Rayagada District in Orissa. The dismantling of the food security system under the economic reforms policies has led to the reduction in the subsidized food supplies through the PDS (Public Distribution System). With the launching of the TPDS June 1997, the first and foremost task of VLWS (Village Level Workers) is to identify the needy persons to get the benefit of the programmes. But TPDS has artificially divided the population into those Below the Poverty Line families (BPL) and those Above the Poverty Line families (APL). Unless the proper persons are identified, the benefits would not be realised and the programme would be a failure. In this context, the first question asked to the three categories of respondents, the government official, elected representatives and rural citizens was "Are you satisfied with the selection of beneficiary?" Majority of the three categories of respondents replied negatively. Hence much of the failure of the programme is attributed to the identification and selection of the real rural poor. But when the question "why selection is not proper?" comes, there are different opinions of the three categories of respondents and this is stated in the following Table.

**Table – 2.4**  
**Shows the Distribution of Respondents over the Reasons of wrong identification of Beneficiaries**

Sl. No.	Reasons	Respondents		
		Governme officials N=5 %	Elected representati N=5 %	Citizen N=10 %
1.	The Survey Procedure is not Perfect	3 (60%)	4 (80%)	10 (100%)
2.	Pressure from Political bodies	9 (180%)	2 (40%)	8 (80%)
3.	Official Red-tapism	2 (40%)	4 (80%)	9 (90%)
4.	Communal and Caste consideration	3 (60%)	4 (80%)	9 (90%)
5.	Callousness of officials	4 (80%)	6 (120%)	9 (90%)
6.	Influence of Middlemen	8 (160%)	4 (80%)	10 (100%)

**Source :** Field Survey

The above table exhibits that majority of government official respondents ascribe “Pressure from Political bodies” as the reason for wrong selection of beneficiaries. But majority of elected representatives and citizen respondents opined that wrong selection of beneficiary is done because of official red-tapism and callousness of the officers respectively. However, quite a good number of citizens also opined that because of pressure from Political bodies, i.e. the interference of Sarpanchs, M.L.As etc. wrong identification of beneficiary is made. The same opinion was also elicited from a quite a good number of official respondents. From, this it can be analysed that wrong identification of beneficiary

is a fact for which both the government officials and the elected representatives are responsible.

Distribution of loans and subsidies constitutes a part of the functions of Block level administration. In this context, the question “Do you think that Loans are disbursed to the beneficiaries without any delay ?” was asked to the three categories of respondents. According to the response pattern a majority of the official respondents opined that loans are disbursed to the beneficiaries without any delay, a majority of elected representatives and a majority of citizens opined negatively. When the reason for delaying the disbursement of loans was asked, both the non-officials and citizen respondents in majority opinion gave their view that it is mostly because of official red-tapism.

However, the problem lies with the returning of loans taken by the beneficiaries. It is generally said that loans are not returned by the beneficiaries, so it is very difficult to know that to what extent the citizens are really benefited by the loan taken by them, and this is one of the indices for the assessment of successful working of Block level administration. In this context, the question, “Do you think the loans taken by the beneficiaries are properly utilised?” was put to the three categories of respondents. To this particular question, majority of all three categories of respondents opined that loans taken by the beneficiaries are, in most cases, not properly utilised. The reason for not proper utilisation of loans was asked to the respondents. Majority of the officials opined that the beneficiaries are using the loans not for production purposes but for other purposes like consumption purpose or for family ceremonies. Another contention, according to them was also that because of lack of training and technical

knowledge, the beneficiaries are not using the loans properly. The majority of non-officials also opined that the beneficiaries are utilising the loans for other purposes than for production purposes.

When the loans are not properly utilised by the citizens, the corollary question comes whether the loans are returned by the borrower in time. Here majority of the 3 categories of respondents replied negatively. But when the reasons for not returning the loans was asked the three categories of respondents, they differ in their responses. It is found that majority of official respondents opined that because the citizens do not utilise the loan for the purpose for which they are taking it, so they are unable to return it. But majority of citizen respondents and non-officials opined that because of low production and natural calamities over the years the borrowers are not able to return the loans.

Finance is the crux of the problem of Block level administration, as different programmes are implemented at the village level. From the beginning of the Fourth Five Year Plan, when the programmes were transferred to the States under the State Plan Sector, Central assistance to States is being given in the shape of Block grants and Block loans and the states are free to utilise the outlays approved for the Community Development Programme. With the inauguration of Panchayati Raj in a number of States, the Panchayat samitis became the centre of all development activities and they have their finances from four major sources namely, (a) Community Development grants, (b) Departmental grants, (c) Taxes, fees and surcharges and (d) Other sources. In this context, the question, "Do you feel that the finances allotted by the government on Rural Development Programme is adequate?" To this the non-officials gave a moderate response by



stating that the government funds are adequate but the government officials because of red-tapism are not using the funds properly in prescribed times. However, majority of bureaucratic official respondent were of the opinion that separate block funds should be created for the efficient block level administration.

Since the Fourth Plan, the need for decentralisation, in the planning process was realised to correct the regional imbalances in development. At the local level, the block emerged as the most suitable unit for planning and the Fifth Five year plan draft made it clear that a base level on socio-economic survey, scientific resource inventories, and manpower planning would form the basis for planning at the local level.”<sup>11</sup> The Dantwala working group on block level planning in its report submitted in 1978 pointed out that block-level planning should not be viewed as an isolated exercise but as a part of the planning done at the district, region and State level. Not only the government officials should be involved, but also the Panchayati Raj institutions should be associated for the Panchayati Raj institutions will “provide a better climate for people’s participation in the implementation of the plan a condition crucial to its success.”<sup>12</sup> In this context the question, “To what extent are you involved in block-level planning?” was asked to the bureaucratic officials and Political representative respondents. As per the answer pattern the bureaucratic officials are involved in planning, but the elected representatives sometimes participate in chalking out the plans. The elected representatives do not feel interested for giving new plans or making out any new suggestions at the time of planning. When the question “to whom the rural citizens give suggestions for planning?” was asked both the bureaucratic official and

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<sup>11</sup> India, Planning Commission, Draft Fifth Five year plan, 1978-83 (New Delhi, 1978), P.221.

<sup>12</sup> India, Report of the working group on Block Level Planning (Chairman M.L. Dantwala) New Delhi; 1978 P.21.

elected representative respondents replied negatively. When the question “Do you give any suggestion to be included in the Plan?” was asked to the respondents, it was the unanimous reply that they never give such suggestion either to the officials or to the non-officials. So people’s participation in block level planning is very less. Even the Political representatives hesitate to participate at the planning stage.

Mobilisation of resources, human and material is another important function of governmental machinery at Block level. So in this context, the question asked to the respondent was, “In your view, to what extent has the government been able to mobilise its resources for rural development?” To this the bureaucratic officials viewed that mobilisation of resources by the government machinery in the Block is satisfactory but not to the fullest extent. However, majority of elected representatives and majority of citizens gave the negative opinion that in mobilising resources governmental machinery is not successful. Hence, there is greater need of cooperation of elected representatives and citizen participants for better mobilisation of resources and to do away with the callousness and inefficiency of government.

In order to know the reasons for inefficiency of administrative machinery, the views of the respondents were solicited. Majority of administrative official and elected representatives respondents do not agree with the statement that the planners and policy makers are ill-informed about the real problems and set unrealistic target. But majority of citizen respondents agree with the statement. They opined that because the planners and policy makers are not well-acquainted with the real problems of the area, so most of the policies do not succeed.

However, majority administrative official respondents pointed out that the inadequacy of staff and funds is the cause of inefficiency of administration. They also agreed on the statement that there are no incentives for good work. It is true that incentives and motivation lead to efficiency and lack of these results in inefficiency.

Evaluation of Block administration at Kashipur is here made by bureaucratic officials, elected representatives and citizens as well. It is found that even if the developmental programmes are implemented in the villages through Block, the benefits do not reach the real needy people because of wrong identification of beneficiaries. For this wrong identification of beneficiaries, both administrative officials and elected representatives are responsible. It is also found that loans and grants are not distributed properly and in right time. Even if the loans are given, they are not used for productive purposes and therefore the loans are not returned in time. It is also observed that there is the need for special training for both administrative officials and elected representatives who are involved in local administration. So far as finance is concerned, the opinion is that separate Block funds should be created for the efficient Block level administration. It is also viewed that a government official should not be guided by the advice of political leaders only nor the elected representatives should interfere in day-to-day administration at Block level. Government rules and procedures should be observed with an objective to implement development programmes successfully, ensuring the active participation of people in planning and activities. It is not a matter of numbers but of whose voice is heard. If the role of the people is ignored how can one make a realistic assessment of the situation? It is only with complete data that one can make a correct assessment.

# *CHAPTER-3*

## Chapter 3

### **Public Distribution System in Kashipur Block: Aspects of Organisation and Administration**

Are we the hungriest country, perhaps the various World Development Reports could enlighten us,<sup>1</sup> but surveys indicate that more than half the women and children in the country are undernourished. Almost half the women in the age group of 15-49 and three fourths the children are anaemic, almost a fifth of all rural households face the prospects of hunger, and 14% of all households do not get two square meals a day. High production of foodgrains, and huge quantities of buffer stocks in the godowns still does not enable access to food to the needy. The inability to buy still affects millions of our population. The Public Distribution System is supposed to insulate the poor families from the impact of rising prices of essential commodities, and help them maintain minimum nutritional standards but the steep hike in issue price of PDS commodities, the largest ever hike in fact, has made the PDS an instrument of pushing up prices of food commodities, rather than an instrument of helping the poor. The decreasing off take from the PDS due to this steep hike, has more than anything else has resulted in the huge stock pile in the FCI godowns and provides an illusion of self-sufficiency and abundance. Given the poor identification of BPL and APL families in the Country, and not the very secure grounds on which such distinctions have been made, this is a criminal betrayal.

Drought, famine and starvation conditions are being reported from many parts of the country.<sup>2</sup> The Supreme Court in a recent writ on a PIL filed by the PUCL (People's

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<sup>1</sup> Human Development Report, 'Profile of the Indian States in 1990's' NCAER, New Delhi.

<sup>2</sup> Reddy, Rammanohar, C. (2003) : Editorial, 'Right to Food', The Hindu, January 18.

Union for Civil Liberties) has upheld the right to food as a fundamental right. The Supreme Court observed that the central and state governments had the primary responsibility to ensure the foodgrains overflowing in FCI godowns reached starving people and not wasted. The Court's anxiety was that the poor, destitute and weaker sections of the society should not suffer from hunger and die of starvation. Mere schemes without implementation were of no use. Orissa is one of the states where compliance has been sought on this.

This study centres around food security of the tribal communities, which is still an elusive chimera, and I shall conclude with a brief analysis of the same. The study has thrown light on crucial aspects of the socio-economic and socio-political situation of the tribals, which inform the long-term as well as the short-term food security situation of the tribal community.

Taking all the aspects into consideration the food security situation of the tribal community is alarming to say the least. It is the tribal people who with their resilience and their years of learning are able to survive in the harsh and cynical situation in the southern districts of Orissa, which comprise a major tribal belt in the state. The food security situation in the tribal regions can be summed up in a few words:

The Tribal Situation: The tribal situation, needs to be considered taking into account:

**a. The Resource Situation:**

The degraded condition of natural resources, and the paucity of land, combined with the unskilled human resources within the tribal community brings the tribal economy to the brink. The tribal community on their own initiative seek various options but these

give little security or long-term sustainability. The tribal communities have walked a tight rope of subsistence for centuries, and one just takes it for granted that they will continue to do so.

**b. The Political Voice:**

The tribal communities have a weak political voice, made worse by the lack of education, which deprives them of any measures of confidence in countering the hegemony of the upper- class elite who have entrenched themselves in the tribal regions. Despite the provisions for local governance, despite the opportunities they get because of reservations, the participation of tribal communities in decision making is very poor.

**c. Government Intervention:**

Government intervention has had little positive or constructive impact on the food security situation of the tribal community. Some innovative schemes and programmes have been thought of but, with imagination running amok at the time of implementation, the innovations during planning are countered by innovations for misappropriation and exploitation. This is a sad state of affairs as much can be done if there would be a real effort on the part of the government.

**d. Voluntary Organisations:**

The voluntary organisations in the tribal regions are a disparate lot, with no long-term rigour to get something going on the ground. Bound by the Compulsions of funding and survival, they have not been able to develop a clear focus in most cases, and their efforts for tribal development are just visible, but the tangible impact on food security is hardly there. In the case of credit, the SHG voluntary organisations have had a clear impact. But, there seems to be little follow- up so that most of the SHGs created have stagnated. A few

voluntary organisations have stuck their necks out and tried to ensure that the interests are brought centre stage, and much more importantly, that the rights of the tribal community are not violated. However, the backlash on these voluntary organisations have effectively subdued a whole range of other groups who were taking up issues of exploitation and social justice.

**e. Non-tribal Power Brokers:**

These people continue to have a field day, reaping the maximum benefits out of any major interventions for tribal development. The failure of the IFAD Project in the Kashipur block which was supposed to look after the Human Resources Development part of the programme, presents a clear picture of development nexus in the tribal regions, that ensures that benefits of the programme will not go beyond the Block and Panchayat headquarters.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The methodology of the study is participatory, drawing its information as well as core perceptions from the tribal community while probing the role of different players and stake holders. I have thus sought information, suggestion and advice from government officials, Political leaders, V.O. functionaries and have stayed in Kashipur block listening to the voices of the people. Following the preliminary discussions which lead upto the study, I felt it was more important to take up a micro-study with participatory methods and approaches to get a picture into the situation of the village. The study has been taken up firstly by the:



**a. Identification of the Study area:**

5 villages of Kashipur block have been identified for the study from the southern district of Orissa, based on the recent reports of starvation deaths as also on the backwardness ranking of the Government of Orissa Report, titled! “Report of the Committee on the Constitution of Separate Development Board in Orissa”, gave me a good referral point. A round of preliminary visits and consultations was taken up to identify the villages for micro study. The Local NGO in the block was consulted and also requested for support to help establish rapport. Consultation was also held with local elected representatives. All this helped to finalize the criteria for the selection of the villages

**TABLE-3.1**

**Shows the Selection of Villages.**

SL. No.	DISTRICT	BLOCK	RANK	PANCHAYATS	VILLAGES
1.	Rayagada	Kashipur	1	Gorakhpur	Pitajodi
2.	Rayagada	Kashipur	2	Kashipur	Pansguda
3.	Rayagada	Kashipur	3	Tikri	Bilamal
4.	Rayagada	Kashipur	4	Tikri	Jhodiasahi
5.	Rayagada	Kashipur	5	Gorakhpur	Badmribhatta

**b. Participatory Micro Study at Village Level:**

Micro Studies are important to understand the mechanisms which are at work at the qualitative level of any problem which cannot be captured effectively by a large scale survey. A Micro study provides the scope for intense observation of the factors that are active in a specific context. A large scale study tends to overlook many

aspects which are location specific or situation specific. Since specificities are lost out in aggregation and standardisation. A micro study gives space for all the specificities and may also give better qualitative information since careful handling of the data is possible. The field study was undertaken in Rayagada Districts of Orissa to understand the various aspects of food security and the PDS. The micro study was undertaken with the following objectives in mind:

- i. To estimate the dietary inadequacies of the household surveyed;
- ii. To estimate the extent of dependence on various sources for meeting the requirement on food grains;
- iii. To bring out the extent to which utilisation of PDS is influenced by factors like employment and earning of households;
- iv. To estimate the subsidy accrued to a household by the PDS;
- v. To assess the performance of the TPDS;
- vi. To evaluate the feasibility of alternatives to the PDS.

The Survey was conducted in October-November 2002. In the rural areas, this is the lean season, just before harvest begins. All the households are<sup>3</sup> agricultural Labour households with a marginal amount of land.

### **Profile of the Habitat**

A Socio-economic profile of the habitat to which the households belong would be helpful, in getting more insights into the issues under concern.

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<sup>3</sup> Agriculture Labour is a person who sells his/her Labour power to work on another Person's land and wages\_ in money, kind or a share of crop .....in the broader sense it includes all those for whom the sale of Labour Power (in the agricultural sector is a source of livelihood (Jha, P.K; Agricultural Labour in India, 1997).

The first village Surveyed Pansguda is in Kashipur block. Its Panchayat is Kashipur headed by a lady Sarpanch. It is 80 Km away from the industrial area in Rayagada. It has a population of 150 persons and 30 households, almost all of them dependent on cultivation directly or indirectly. Many households complement their income by seeking employment in Food for work programme. Majority of the households are small and marginal farmers and agricultural labourers. The Fair Price Shop is in Kashipur 2km away fro the village. It is run by the Gram Panchayat of Kashipur and serves the needs of 8,000 people in 15 villages. It has 2500 cards under it of which 1700 are BPL cards. The school inspector (SI) distributes the grain which comes for the mid-day meal scheme. The total number of cards in Pansguda is 25 in number out of which 20 are BPL cards which again is 80% of total number of cards.

Vilage Bilamal is in Tikri Panchayat. The population of the village is 250 persons and around 50 households. Almost all the people are dependent on agriculture. Agricultural incomes are supplemented by forest resources. The village is covered by the ITDP (Integrated Tribal Development Project). The Fair Price shop is in Tikri. The total number of ration cards under it is 1200 out of which 40 are for Bilamal village.

The village Pitajodi is in Gorakhpur Panchayat. It is 70km away from the industrial area in Rayagada. Its has a population of 450 and 120 households. The Fair Price Shop is in Gorakhpur 4km away from the village. It serves the needs of 5,000 people in 15 villages. The total number of BPL cards in Gorakhpur Panchayat is 1,230.

The vilage Badmaribhatta is in Gorakhpur Panchayat. It is 68 km away from the industrial area in Rayadada. It has a population of 1,000 persons and 400 households. The

Fair Price shop is in Gorakhpur, 3 km away from the village. It serves the needs of 5,000 people in 15 villages.

Jhodiasahi is in Tikri Panchayat. It is 56 km away from the industrial area in Rayagada. It has a population of 280 persons and 60 households. The Fair Price Shop is in Tikri. It serves the needs of 7,000 people in 18villages. The total number of BPL cards in Tikri Panchayat is 1,200.

The details of the respective villages are shown in:

**TABLE – 3.2**

**Shows the details of the respective villages.**

Village	Area of village in Hectares and of Town or wards in sq. Kms.	No. of Households	Total Population (including institutional and Houseless population)			Total Population in age Group (0-6)			Scheduled Castes		Scheduled Tribes		Literates		No. of Household of cultivators	No. of Household of Agricultural labourers
			P	M	F	P	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Pansguda	62.73	30	150	90	60	35	20	15	-	-	30	60	35	15	20	10
Bilamal	7.69	50	250	140	110	44	28	16	25	15	115	95	50	30	30	20
Pitajodi	118.98	120	450	240	210	120	65	55	-	-	240	210	40	10	80	40
Badmaribhatta	-----	400	1000	520	480	350	200	150	230	220	290	260	180	70	250	150
Jhodiasahi	-----	60	280	150	130	50	30	20	--	--	150	130	70	30	20	40

**SOURCE DISRICT CENSUS HANDBOOK RAYAGADA 2001**

Table No. 3.3 Provides the distribution of rural households according to ownership of land.

**TABLE NO. 3.3**  
**Shows the Distribution of households (rural) according to ownership of Land.**

N = 20			
<b>MPCI groups</b>	<b>0 acres</b>	<b>0-2 acres</b>	<b>2.5 acres</b>
Upto 100	2	1	0
100-150	1	4	0
150-200	1	1	0
200-250	0	2	0
250-300	0	1	0
300-350	3	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>

MPCI- Monthly Per Capita income groups.

Source: Field Survey

From the Table in can be inferred that 7 households out of 20 households interviewed are without any land i.e. 35%. Again 55% i.e. 11 out of 20 households have marginal land upto 2 acres. A direct relationship between ownership of land and income cannot be established since income from land depends on other factors, the most important being irrigation. Many households depend on agricultural labour for most parts of the year. In Pansguda the wage rate is Rs. 30-35 per male worker (coolie) and Rs. 20-25 per female worker (reja). The employment days per, year are around 165 days. In all the village interviewed the wages are not fixed, the reason which makes the villagers dependent on market.

Table No. 3.4 shows the distribution of households according to the Source of purchase.

**TABLE NO. – 3.4**

**Shows the Distribution of households according to source of purchase.**

<b>N = 20</b>				
MPCI groups	Only PDS	PDS & Market	Only Market	No Purchase
upto 100	0	2	0	0
100-150	0	4	0	1
150-200	0	2	0	0
200-250	0	2	0	1
250-300	0	4	0	0
300-350	0	4	0	0

MPCI: Monthly per capital income groups.

Source: Field Survey

Table number 3.4 gives details about the distribution of households according to source of purchase. None of the rural households depend only on PDS for their purchase. While 90% depend on PDS and market, 10% of the household do not make any purchase at all.

On the basis of economic pursuit Orissa tribes have been divided into 3 categories:

i) Gatherer- hunters, ii) Gatherer shifting cultivators and iii) Gatherer –settled agriculturists. The tribals of Kashipur block belong to the third category. As per the interview schedule of 20 individuals including male and female what is derived is that the general standard of the living of the people is very low. Average landholding is very little and avenues of employment too little. There would be only a dozen persons or so with a

monthly income of Rs. 500/-. Low caste people and the Adivasis are usually unable to have rice for their food. They mostly depend on Mandia which is much cheaper. Most of them are daily wage earners and have to depend on labour. Infact labour work is the mainstay of the villagers. From 3-6 months in a year they are engaged in labour work and rest 6 months engaged in Dangar cultivation or Podu Cultivation the earnings out of which is quite erratic. Being upland and rainfed areas during excessive rainfall the soil gets eroded and it becomes difficult to do the cultivation. Though hard labour is involved, infact generation after generation they are engaged in the task to make the land ready but the outcome is virtually nothing for in an acre of land only 7 to quintal of rice can be cultivated. They are deprived of an alternative for the ground land is in the hands of non-tribals, the landlord and moneylenders who are exploiting the tribals as tillers in their land. From the survey report it is found that most of the rural households do not possess land and those who have it is less than 2.5 acres. Now as far as labour work is concerned a daily-wage earner is getting a low wage which is about Rs. 30/- for a male and Rs. 25/- for a female. Thus the average land holding being very little and earning out of employment being limited a villager is hit hard from all sides. The Survey in respective villages reveals that for 165 days in a year the inhabitants lack proper rood. The protein content in their food is insignificant as they occasionally get protein from jungle or domestic animals and they are unable to supplement their diet with milk or pulses. Their habit of storing dry meat for days reduces the protein content of the meat. Besides they derive very little vitamin from their diet. The male members of the Paroja Community are habitual alcohol drinkers which creates repulsion and irregularity of food habits causing damage to the body system.



The Literacy level of the villagers is responsible for bringing the socio-economic development of the village. It is assumed that if the villagers are well-educated they can be aware of the governmental policies of development, involve themselves in the implementation of the programmes sharing the benefits of the programme. Again they can participate in development administration by putting forth their needs and demands as well as by pointing out the defects of governmental machinery in the block.

In the present sample study of 20 respondents, it is found that even if the rural development policies of the government are being implemented the rural respondents remain unaware for 75% of them are illiterate and 25% of the respondent villagers have been educated upto Primary and Under-matriculate level. Thus people of the villages selected for study in the block are not well educated and Universal Primary education policy of the government has not been fully implemented.

### **Awareness of Citizens**

The association of people with some governmental activity or programme is proclaimed as public participation. People associate themselves with the administration and governmental programmes through expression of opinions on the actions of the government. This type of participation must be based upon knowledge without which it becomes meddlesome. Such participation could be 'convergent' i.e., action by the public may follow the same line as that of the administration and strengthen it, or it may become divergent, i.e, the action by the public may take the form of reaction to the activities of administration attempting to guide it in direction other than those contemplated by the administrators or simply express divergent opinions on the rendering of public services.

If support or criticism is well-informed, it will neither be meddlesome nor harassing to the administrator. For this, however, a pre-requisite is the availability of accessibility to correct and sufficient amount of information to the eager and competent public. Hence, the participation of the people depends upon the level of awareness and magnitude of their interest in administration and government programmes. It is needless to say that awareness of the facilities of the programmes will not only generate an interest in them but also make them to avail benefits to a large extent, and thereby the individual participates. So a study of the awareness of the individual is necessary for the study of participation.

From the field study it is found that majority of the sample respondents 75% of them are unaware of the rural development programmes implemented through the Block. While the question “how can you come to know about the programme” was asked to the 20 villager respondents, most of them were of the opinion that political leaders are responsible for their awareness.

The Political leaders like ward members and Sarpanch play the useful role of communicator to the villagers. Again the Panchayat Samiti organisation play an effective role in Block administration. As it is found that 75% of the villager respondents feel that there is a closer relationship between the political leaders and citizens than the government officials and citizens. Citizens have more trust and confidence upon political leaders. They feel that they will get more help and support from the political leaders. The villagers are still not exposed to mass media like radio, newspapers or television. Thus accessibility of the respondents to mass media is limited and official machinery is not in a position to meet the information demands to the extent desired in order to generate the required feeling that

there are varieties of measures implemented by the government for their advantage through block administration. This is taken advantage by the Sarpanch and the Panchayat secretary. In the name of the Gram Sabha and Poly Sabha in the villages, village workers representatives (VWRs) the Sarpanch or the Mukhia is alluring the benefits. The Food for work programme being one of the rural development programme of the government has not been properly implemented.

Across the villages that I studied the daily wage for agricultural workers does not go beyond Rs. 30/, even though the minimum wage at the time of study was Rs. 42/-. In most instances even employment in government programmes women received Rs. 25/- and men received Rs. 30/-. For upto 6 months in a year, the poorer families depend on wage labour. The sources of Labour vary from agriculture employment to construction works to government employment. Despite the substantial fund being spent in employment generation programmes in the government, it is found that government employment is hardly a dependable source of income/employment for the people. In all instances that I came across, including food for work, the project was contracted to private persons, who almost inevitably cheated the people of at least half their wages. Oftentimes wage is paid in terms of grain, in which case, the labourer do not even have a means of measuring whether they have received their due or not. Complaints to the BDO hardly brought any response. Contractors have become powerful despots in the tribal regions. With subtle backing from the administration, they deal as they want with the terror stricken tribals and cheat them in the payments for the various government works. As they live in the neighbourhood of the tribal people, they also subdue the tribals with threats of sheer physical violence. There is little recourse for the tribal people in such cases, as the money power of these contractors,

is enough to win over any law keeping forces that the region might have. If people do resist, and insist on higher wages than the contractor is ready to give, then, labourers from neighbouring villages are brought in to work. Any aggression on the part of the resisting villagers is efficiently quelled by counter violence.

In an agrarian society like India land is the primary productive asset and is the tangible expression of the economic conditions of the people. The landless, the Insecure tenants and those owing marginal plots too small to support a family constitute the poorest of the poor and the this category a large number of villager respondents fall. Thus it is inferred that land distribution in the Panchayats is still not even and because of this there is economic disparity among the villagers which has its impact on extent of participation.

Along with occupation, the income level of the villager respondent is also considered, as during these days cash money is the determinant of the economic standard of living but the economic level of the respondents shows that only 65% of the rural respondents are earning 1800 rupees annually which shows the deplorable economic condition of the rural people. Moreover, the economic condition of the villagers is affected by the number of family members. It is seen that in the Panchayats under study there is no question of nucleus family and Joint-family system is still in existence. From the survey it is found that the size of the family is large, whereas 25% of the family have 5 members, 65% of the family have more than 5 members.

The findings with regard to the personal socio-economic characteristics of the rural people under study reveal that by and large they have less education, less landed property, more family members, less savings and less employment opportunity.

## INTRODUCTION TO PDS IN KASHIPUR BLOCK

The PDS in Kashipur block is run by three bodies the civil supplies corporation, the department of food and civil supplies and the District Co-operative Bank.

The mid-day meal scheme and the Food for work programme is managed by the District Rural Development Agency. The distribution of food grains is done through Gram Panchayats. There are 20 Gram Panchayats in Kashipur block . The distribution part was taken over by the Gram Panchayat in 1994 to end corruption through private dealers. The TPDS was introduced in May 1997. Accordingly all households are issued APL and BPL cards. The BPL households are entitled to 16 kg food grains (rice) at half the issue price.

Some of the issues which arises regarding price the working of PDS in Kashipur block are:

- i) The system is run by three department's each independent of the other. This leads to ignorance of some important aspects and shifting of responsibility.
- ii) The enumeration for ration cards is done at the Panchayat and municipality level. There is widespread corruption leading to issue of bogus cards which finally leads to shortage in supplies.
- iii) The allotment is based on the population estimates of 1997. This does not include the increase in population and the number of cards after that. This also lead to shortage in supplies.
- iv) The introduction of TPDS has lead to a situation in which the degree of uncertainty is involved in the collection of entitlements. The amount of type 1 error (inclusion of non-poor) is high.

The Uncertainty involved is in the form of non-availability of stocks when money is at hand and the wastage of time it involves in frequent visits to the shops, reduces the actual amount of subsidy. The probability of type 1 error is high since there is a general perception that ownership of a BPL card would make the owner eligible for forthcoming governmental programmes. Since the responsibility of enumeration lies with the local bodies, a corrupt local body misuses the system.

- v) The method of identifying the poor is faulty and leads to type 11 error (exclusion of the poor). The BPL cards are issued to a household on the basis of a survey conducted in 1997 to identify the beneficiaries.

Following were some of the remarks made by the households surveyed regarding the working of PDS.

- (a) There is no credit system in distribution of PDS goods. So the households found themselves in situations in which when there was money, there was no stock and vice-versa.
- (b) The PDS goods are distributed only on two days a month which is very inconvenient to the workers.
- (c) There is black marketing in sugar and kerosene which leads to shortage of supplies.
- (d) The consumers had no complaint regarding the quality of the foodgrains supplied.

The study is based on data gathered during the field visit in November 2002 to selected vilages in Kashipur Block severely affected during Starvation deaths that took place between July 27 to August 28 2001. The villagers were asked questions designed to elicit information on, among other things, costs of cultivating the main crops, prices at

which farmers sold their produce, Profitability of agriculture, wages for agricultural labour, number of days employment in a year, relationship between landlord and the labour force, between the farmers and the traders and between the farmers and government agencies and officials, the relationship between the poverty groups and government officials and agencies, the state of corruption, its level, modes and magnitude, migration, the implementation of anti-poverty programmes as seen from the viewpoint of the target groups: what according to them, are the defects and what did they consider to be the right way of implementing the programmes, how the Public distribution system functions, what a poor rural household consumes by way of various items of food and what they cost. A basic question posed was. How often in a year do the rural poor go hungry? And under what circumstances?

Eighty percent of the rural labour in Kashipur Block eke out a living toiling on the lands of the landlord; the land owners are the primary masters, though in the 'rural development' context, the lower level bureaucracy also often assumes the role of the 'ruler'. The mismanagement of PDS is cited to be the basic reason by the rural respondents for their miserable state of affairs today. Apart from it the lack of employment adds to their woes as is evident in Table 3.5. The total annual earnings of the labour households, for men and women separately in each of the five villages in Kashipur Block are given in Table 3.5. Those who depend upon wage employment –agricultural labourers, even those with landholdings who have no irrigation facilities remain hungry, sometimes entire households, at other times the female, children and, almost always, the womenfolk in these households.

The number of days entire households or some of its members go hungry depends upon the number of employment available in the village or outside it which is very uncertain. It also depends upon the wage levels.

**TABLE 3.5**

**Number of days of Employment and Average daily wages of Rural Labour households.**

State	Village	No of days of wage employment available in a year for men		Average daily wages in rupees		Total no. of days for which wage employment is available in the village and outside in a year for women
		In the village	Outside the village	Men	Women	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Orissa	Pansguda	90	80	20	20	150
Orissa	Bilamal	60	90	35	25	150
(Being tribals, they work on other people's land as bonded labourer's except for wages employment in Government work.						
Orissa	Pitajodi	60	90	25	20	90
Orissa	Badmaribhatta	90	80	35	15	150
Orissa	Jhodiasahi	30	30	15	15	30
(Sometimes it could be Rs. 20 for some in the neighbouring market place).						

Source: Field Survey.

Depending upon the areas where they live, some of the labour household possesses sheep or goat, cows and chicken. But discussion shows that only a small percentage of the poor really have such assets though at least half the households appear to possess a few



hens, other assets such as cows or sheep are owned by a negligible percentage of the poor. For an overwhelming majority of the labour households, income from other assets is therefore very negligible. If it really has to be computed, then the additional income for a minority of households could not be more than Rs. 150 per household per annum on average.

Ninety percent of the households surveyed are perpetually indebted to middlemen who are merchants-cum-moneylenders demanding usurious rates of interest. Card mortgaging is a widespread phenomena. One women said that her present pledge was the fifth or sixth. The most common reason for mortgaging the card is to cover medical costs, hospitalization or tablets. Other reason mentioned was of domestic nature (i.e. to buy food). It may thus be hypothesized that mortgaging of ration cards happens especially (a) among the very poor who are desperate for cash and have nothing else to use as a loan collateral, and (b) when ration cards have some value where the people in command of cards are sure to get the ration and where the amount of food distributed per card is not negligible.

**TABLE-3.6****Card Mortgaging in Kashipur Block, Rayagada District.**

N = 20

		Number of households	Reason.
1.	No Card at the moment	2	Not Identified Under BPL list
2.	Card presently Mortgaged	0	-
3.	Card not Mortgaged now, but at least once during last 5 years	5	to meet the medical costs, hospitalization or tablets.
4.	Card Mortgaged long ago	2	to buy food and to cover, medical costs.
5.	Cards never mortgaged	11	-

Source : Field Survey.

**Viability of Fair Price Shops**

The Fair Price Shops (retail outlets) no longer exists in the Kashipur block and its function has been undertaken by the Gram Panchayat to end Corruption though private dealers. As per the Survey of 20 households there was an evaluation of their opinions on the origin, viability and functioning of Fair Price Shops as it worked in the past. As per the evaluation viability depends on the turnover, which satisfies the needs of consumers without inconvenience. When the Fair Price Shops functioned the two problems cited by the cardholders were: (a) Renewal of cards and (b) Getting new cards. One person interviewed in Bilamal village said the that cost of getting a ration card was too high. It required not one, but probably more bus trips to the taluk supply office which is about 15 km from the settlement. Apart from the above delay in service, irregular, and inconvenient timings adulteration of commodities, and illegible writing on the ration card were some of the Complaints of the interviewees. The consumers stated that one of the worst features of

the functioning of FPS was diversion of supplies to the black market. The sources of diversion were stated to be: (a) Putting up false notices, saying 'Supplies out of stock', (b) under-weighing, (c) manipulating the stock by adding inferior food grains and dirt and fraudulently showing ration being issued on unutilised Cards.

In the light of the above there was a necessity of creating a responsive administration supported by some form of consumer participation at the grassroots level. The undertaking of task by the Gram Panchayat has to an extent improved the situation in so far as now there is a (a) reduction in the number of administrative stages, (b) convenient timing has been fixed for obtaining, changing or renewing ration cards or getting ration on them, making the PDS available to the food insecure / vulnerable sections by means of issuing PDS cards based on a door-to-door survey in each village and slum by a team of empowered official, local social/political workers (who issue on-the-spot PDS entitlement cards and supplement the PDS with regular income supplementation programme. This kind of an approach limits the operation of both the market forces and the bureaucracy.

The Panchayats and the local level participatory organizations have been assigned the function of reaching food to the poor. Their responsibility is to identify the poor, monitor their conditions and implement programmes to meet their employment and food needs.

For the effective functioning of grassroot democracy, government functionaries play a very crucial role. The Panchayat Secretary also known as Gram Panchayat Evam Vikas Adhikary (GPVA) is an important functionary and facilitates the process of democratic decentralization at the Panchayat level. The Gram Panchayat and the Panchayat Secretary are Considered as the two sides of a coin because without the support and

cooperation of the Panchayat Secretary, it is difficult for the Panchayat to function. The development of the Gram Panchayat is largely dependent on the Panchayat Secretary and their functional relationship. The Panchayat secretary is involved in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of plans and programmes and also provides information and guidelines to the Gram Panchayat besides maintaining various registers and sending resolutions to the Block office. External relationship between the Gram Panchayat and the Block or District administration is mediated through the Panchayat Secretary.

Thus the empirical study undertaken point to following facts:

(a) The retail outlets engaged in the supply of essential consumer goods under the overall supervision of civil supply administration projected an image of “cash-and –carry” type retailers offering the terms of caveat emptor under which need for customer service was reduced to bare minimum.

(b) There has not been any marked improvement in the customer perception of a fair price shop over a period of time. With some exceptions, these shops are viewed as public regulated outlets of essential goods which became active in times of shortages and dormant in times of improved supply.

Overall the FPS failed to establish a more stable relationship with the customers, providing a minimum package of customer service and more comprehensive range of products.

#### **TARGETED PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM IN KASHIPUR BLOCK.**

Targeting of PDS implies that (a certain part of) controlled commodities are meant exclusively for a specifically defined target group excluding richer sections of the

population as has been proposed by Bhagwati and Srinivasan (1993). The rationale behind targeting is that it would be a mechanism by which the costs of the PDS can be contained – as only individuals who are deserving or needy are included –while the effectiveness of the intervention would increase. Now Gopalkrishana Kumar and Stewart (1992) have distinguished seven types of targeting namely:-

1. Income, where access is confined to those below a certain income;
2. Nutritional needs, as identified by diet surveys or anthropometric measures;
3. Commodity subsidizing certain types of food, (e.g. basic or ‘inferior’ commodities);
4. Geography, locationg subsidized food in certain areas;
5. Age, providing subsidies for all those of a certain age or status, (e.g. under fives, school –age children, pregnant and lactating women);
6. Employment, through food-for work schemes;
7. Season, providing free or subsidized food at certain times of the year.

Going by the criteria’s the income-wise targeting has been adopted in the Kashipur Block. According to<sup>4</sup> M. Swamiaathan and M.H. Suryanarayana there is a large scope for misidentifying and mistargeting households when an income-Poverty line is used. The task of identifying the poor and selection of beneficiaries has been entrusted to local bodies like the VLWS (Village Local workers), school inspector and Primary teachers. But this has lead to both E-mistakes (excessive Coverage-those who do not deserve are nevertheless included) as well as F- mistakes (failure to include those who deserve to be included) (Cornia and Stewart, 1993). The incidence of type 11 error (exclusion of the poor) has

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<sup>4</sup> Targeting errors arise fundamentally because of imperfect knowledge about households characteristics ‘Targeting an efficiency in the PDS; case of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, May 5-11, EPW, Vol. XXXVI, No. 18, pp 1524-32.

been great due to negligence of local administration and absence of strong public action. The poor people are relatively powerless and depended on more well-to-do land lords, moneylenders or Patrons. Income –wise targeting requires independent local officials who are committed to their tasks and it requires public action and participation of the poorest people in the process of selecting the beneficiaries. But in the villages under study these preconditions do not exist and are not easily generated. In the survey carried out one of the respondent remarked “what can I do; there is no unity in our village. When I make a complaint there will be repercussions for me, so I keep quiet.” The lack of public awareness, the local balance of power, bureaucracy’s unresponsiveness, lack of officially organised vigilance committees to supervise the dealings, the timings of stock arrival, the quality of goods and possible black-marketing is responsible for the sad state of affairs in the Kashipur Block.

Those rural households who avail the benefits PDS in the respective villages are also at the receiving end. The PDS operating in the region is marked by its mismanagement, bureaucratic tentacles and inaccessibility which are so deeply entrenched in the overall system that it has been rendered useless. I made an effort to have a look at the ration cards of 20 respondents and found that money factor plays an important role. As most of the respondents are daily wage-earners earning a paltry sum of Rs 25/- to Rs 40/- a day depending upon the availability of work, it becomes difficult to pay Rs 76/- for basic minimum 16 kg rice for their sustenance. The other essential items of daily use like wheat sugar etc are not available. Moreover people have to go to the respective Panchayats covering a distance of about 5 km, as the goods are not distributed in the village. This causes a lot of strain both in terms of time and money. Again the biggest hurdle for the

villagers is food is distributed only 2 days a month and if the villagers are deprived of money as most of them are daily wage-earners and their earnings depends on the availability of work, they are unable to lift their entitlement for that month and have to buy the food from the open market at rate double that available under the PDS. The open market rate differs from place to place. In the Bilamal village in Tikri Panchayat rice is available for Rs 8.50 per kg and Mandia Rs 5 per kg, in Pitajodi Gorakhpur Panchayat, rice is available for Rs 8/- kg and Mandia Rs 5 per kg, in Badmaribhatta Tikri Panchayat rice is Rs 10 per kg and mandia Rs 5 per kg, in Jhudiasahi Tikri Panchayat rice is Rs 6.50 per kg and mandia Rs 8 per kg and in Pansguda Kashipur Panchayat being a Block people avail more goods compared to others. In the open market they get rice for Rs 10 per kg, Sugar Rs 18 per kg, mandia Rs 5 per kg and Kerosene Rs 15 per litre.

So this is the plight of the villagers, if they are not getting the goods under the PDS they have to buy it from the open market at a much higher price. Again interviewing the rural households another fact is revealed, PDS card is given to each head of the family. A family may be large or small each family is entitled to one card. In village Pansguda in Kashipur Panchayat Surendra Majhi has 6 members in his family and he is entitled to only one ration card in which he can lift only 16 kg of rice per month and rest of his requirement he has to fulfill from, the open market. His occupation being Labour work and Dangar (Podu cultivation) his monthly income is not stable. So at the end of the month he somehow manages to accumulate a sum of Rs 76/- to buy 16 kg of rice fulfilling his other needs from the open market. Like Surendra Majhi many other respondents in other villagers remarked that PDS cards to be distributed depending upon number of family members. Like of 6 members both husband and wife to be entitled to a ration card.

Another suggestion on their part is that previous prices should be restored. Rice which was available for Rs 2/- has now increased to Rs 4.75/- and Kerosene which was available for Rs 3.75/- per litre has increased to Rs 10/- per litre. If mobile van facility can be provided it can be an added advantage.

In the Kashipur Block of Rayagada District improving food security at the household level is an important issue where a major part of the population suffers from persistent hunger and malnutrition. The PDS is bereft of fulfilling a vital role in providing food Security to the poor. This is mainly attributed to food prices and reduced maneuverability of government action in tackling the same<sup>5</sup>

The PDS in the Block remains Universal for the salaried employees in government, registered shop owners, telephone-owning families are not excluded from the benefits of PDS. Again lack of proper targeting, as ration cards are issued to those households who have proper registered residential addresses and a large number of poor who are homeless and others without proper residential addresses are automatically left out of the food security system. Again the share of PDS purchases in the total purchase are very low. This implies that not only does the PDS fail to meet the requirements of the poor, it is actually operating against their interest by raising, the open market prices. The casual labourers on daily wages and those without proper residential addresses, are either not using, or are not covered by the PDS. They are the worst victims of PDS, doubly disadvantaged who end up paying higher prices for their purchases in the open market. The open market price varies depending upon the quality of rice from Rs 8/- to Rs 10/- per Kg.

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<sup>5</sup> Suresh D. Tendulkar, and L.R. Jain 'Economic Reforms and Poverty', EPW 30 (23), 10June 1995.



Another problem regarding the operation of PDS in the area is the leakage of food grains and other commodities in the form of losses in transport, storage and diversion to the free market. As per my findings, a little more than a third of the food grains and half of the edible oil does not reach the actual users of the PDS.<sup>6</sup>

Successful distribution of grains is also linked to public awareness.<sup>7</sup> Public awareness cum local organization is missing in virtually every village of the Block I covered. Complaints by the cardholders are not taken seriously by the officials and local organizations are also ineffective in pursuing the matter and approaching the higher authorities. The lack of political commitment is further responsible for the sorry state of affairs. Gram Sabhas are not held and Political leaders like ward members and Sarpanchs do not play the role of Communicator to the villagers. Moreover the villagers are still not exposed to mass media like newspapers, radio or television. Thus the official machinery is not in a position to meet the information demands to the extent desired in order to generate the required feeling among them that there are varieties of measures implemented by the government for their advantage through Block administration. Infrastructure is a major problem in the area. The villages are not adequately serviced. Lack of political and administrative reforms has led to an ineffective and inefficient distribution network because of which PDS is unable to reach the poor and the needy. Moreover the prospects of the state in providing the safety nets to the poor on the basis of spending from its own resources seems to be bleak since it is facing a severe fiscal crunch.

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<sup>6</sup> I. Ahluwalia, 'Public Distribution of food in India: Coverage, targeting and leakages; Food Policy 8(1), 1993.

II. Administrative problems with PDS have shown that in many states there is large-scale diversion of grain, wastage, low quality and unreliable provisioning [see, for ex, Mooij.]

<sup>7</sup> Jos E. Mooij, 'Public Distribution as a safety Net: Who is saved? EPW 29 (3), 1994.

The problems revealed by the rural respondents in Pitajodi village in the Gorakhpur Panchayat was that the PDS Commodities arrive late and irregular at the Panchayat. They and poorly informed, and certainly not in advance. This means that when food grains arrive poorest among the poor do not have sufficient cash readily available to purchase them. The PDS authorities transports only the amount he expects to sell within one or two days. In short there is both Physical access problem and also problem of economic access, as the commodities come up at irregular intervals or not at all, and the poorest people do not have cash ready at the moment stocks arrive.<sup>8</sup> Sometimes it so happens that they repeatedly visit the PDS outlet only to be told, “Stocks have not Yet arrived, “supply is inadequate”. One can well understand the plight of the villagers who have to cover a distance of 6 km to reach the Panchayat to collect PDS Commodities for their survival.

#### **AN EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVES**

What are the alternatives that one can consider, and how would they be carried out, once they are translated into policy, the best way would perhaps be to begin with some of the examples of success, and find out their replicability in other areas. Amidst the widespread reports of hunger and migration in the underdeveloped tribal regions of Orissa, one of the districts that rarely found mention was Kondhmals, formerly part of the undivided Phulbani. In Phulbani, the forests have been by and large preserved, and minor forests products including leaves, mahua flowers, mahua seeds, brooms, tamarind to name only a few provide income for the tribals for four to six month in a year Lard Settlement in the past has ensured that each tribal cultivator gets ownership over at least one acre of land.

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<sup>8</sup> Jos Mooij, “Food and Power in Bihar and Jharkhand: PDS and its functioning,” EPW, August 25, 2001, p. 3291.

This perhaps more than anything else has helped preserve the forests, as settled cultivation reduced the dependence on forests.

The other example is of an intervention for grain banks. In the yearly cycle of the tribals, the post-harvest periods are the time of much abundance, and there is a lot of expenditure on non-essential consumer items that undermine the economy of the tribal family. An input to encourage the tribal family to save part of the harvest produce at this time, taken up in more than 1000 villages across the tribal districts of Orissa has helped village communities develop a sustainable system of generating grain stocks which could be used by anybody within the community in the time of need. The decentralised structure of this system has effectively minimised overhead costs, and ushered in a situation, whereby the village community has taken responsibility for ensuring food security to each and every member within the village.

There is a growing feeling that without market intervention, there can be no agricultural development. But, the linkages with the market established are mostly to facilitate the farmer as a buyer. Few efforts have been made to facilitate the farmer to sell his produce, and the state is increasingly trying to withdraw from its role in ensuring MSP (Minimum Support Price) for even the essential agricultural products. It needs to be noted, however, that wherever direct market interventions have been taken up to facilitate selling of produce of farmers farm prices have stabilised, and production incentives have increased. Supporting women's groups for micro-enterprise in a constructive way also helps in improving the economy of the producers in the region as also enabling profits to be channelised back to the producer community.

Land to the tribal and other marginalised sections who are the real cultivators results in an immediate and visible improvement in quality of life. This has been the experience of Agragame as well as other grass root NGOs. It also improves the land value as the marginalised groups have much stake in optimising returns from their land. This is a challenge that the state must need to look into if long term food security is to be envisaged for a country.

The alternatives that we need to look at then could be listed as follows:

- 1) Decentralisation of storage, and procurement of surplus,
- 2) Subsidies in the form of godowns, local transport, and losses in storage, marketing etc, and to maintain prices at the affordable rates,
- 3) Support to women's group in the form of training and subsidies to facilitate decentralised PDS and
- 4) Entitlement and resources to the landless and the marginal and small farmers.

Food security has become a new mantra of development planners. There are formulae and scheme and calculations and all manner of proposals and ideas for food security. But in the tribal regions it is important to understand the real causes behind the food insecurity. There is a substantial difference between what the state has to offer, and what local people might actually need, and more than five decades after independence, food security is still an elusive chimera that dangles far away for the millions in this country, even as food stocks rot in over stocked godowns, and spill over to the outside to be covered by black plastic, resembling mounds of the dead!

# *CHAPTER -4*

## CONCLUSION

### **Food Insecurity And Panchayati Raj Institutions: A Way Forward**

The Right to food is one serious attempt to deal with the obscene phenomenon of overflowing godowns of food co-existing with chronic under-nutrition in the country. Not only in the context of state of Orissa but taking into account the entire country the problem of food insecurity looms large which needs to be tackled at the earliest.<sup>1</sup> In the late 1990s, more than half of Indian women around 52 percent suffered from anaemia, more than 47 percent of children were malnourished and more than a third of new born children suffered from low birth weight, yet the huge public food-stocks which has reached a peak of 65 million tonnes have not been used by the state for a frontal attack on under-nutrition in the country. The state as a political organization has other agendas to pursue, therefore the Right to food apart from being state-led and government driver has to involve the people who could turn it into a mass movement that is able to force state and society to finally tackle the problem of hunger in India. The support of the parliamentary political parties is required for expanding the agenda and increasing the effectiveness of food and employment programmes.

A series of events since 2001 has catalyzed and given momentum to the ‘Right to Food’<sup>2</sup> campaign. In May 2001, the people’s Union for Civil Liberties filed what could turn out to be a landmark public interest petition in the supreme Court, drawing attention to the accumulation of stocks. In April 2002, a nationwide day of events was organized to demand implementation of the mid-day meal scheme. In 2002, individual groups highlighted the occurrence of starvation deaths in Orissa, Rajasthan and

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<sup>1</sup> The Second National Family Health Survey Report (1998-99)

<sup>2</sup> Reddy, Rammanohar, C. (2003): Editorial, The Hindu, January 18.

Jharkhand. These groups have also organised “Public hearings” to put pressure on local governments to respond to starvation deaths, corruption in the public distribution system (PDS) and the failure to implement welfare schemes. This culminated earlier this month in a ‘national’ hearing in Delhi where citizens and representatives from non-governmental organizations in 12 states gathered to hear “voices of hunger” and draw up an agenda to take public action further. The Right to food campaign has been at least partly responsible for getting the centre to lower PDS prices in late 2001 and has been exerting pressure to expand the Antyodaya Anna Yojana, the programme, which supplies subsidized grain to the destitute and which by all accounts has been, even for a government programme, reasonably successful in most parts of the country. In the campaign are a number of citizen groups, many of who are involved in other areas of work, who share a common interest in making the state fulfill its constitutional duties.

Food security has become a new mantra of development planners. There are formulae and schemes and calculations and all manners of proposals and ideas for food security. But in tribal regions it is important to understand the real causes behind the food insecurity. The question of food security or rather of food insecurity should necessarily engage one and all intrinsically, as it is the most fundamental violation of all human rights. over the years, the government has come up with project figures of increasing food production, urging farming communities to shift from subsistence to cash crops but what we find is malnutrition levels are increasing, and the most vulnerable sections of the population, the women and the children are undernourished.<sup>3</sup> The centralized systems of welfare including PDS (Public Distribution System), and other programmes of food and nutrition safety nets that the government has set up have hardly worked as people in the rural and tribal areas, where much of the under development still occurs have little control over the management and running of these

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<sup>3</sup> Currie, Bob (2000): *The Politics Of Hunger In India : A Study Of Democracy, Governance and Kalahandi Poverty*, Basingstoke, Macmillan.

systems. Thus enormous subsidies given to run these systems in terms of government of India finances, international finances and direct food resources are rendered to naught, as misappropriation and poor management result in distress and hunger conditions continuing the same as ever before. The poorest communities in this country, which is what we are concerned about when we talk about food security, can just as well do without these institutions for all the good that they do to these communities through their supports for nutrition and feeding.

<sup>4</sup> In this context, programmes of food for work perhaps could have much potential. But again, the centralized, bureaucratic manner of planning and implementation of the food for work programmes have made them opaque and incomprehensible to the community. The result is that these programmes are perceived as mostly employment generation programmes and there is little sustainable output at the end of these programmes. The opaque manner of implementation of these programmes also results in people being underpaid, and much of the food being siphoned off. The situation is much worse, when the wage component in part or in whole is food, as the margins for approximations are much higher and there is more room for wrong calculations than when the payment is in terms of cash.

The state on its part has been acting with least sensitivity on issues of fundamental concerns like food security, happily going ahead removing subsidies for the most essential commodities in the rural economy. Thus even the little that people could purchase soon goes out of their reach, and in a macabre, twist of circumstance, the rising hunger of people gets reflected as an apparent surplus which necessitates further subsidies for just storage management and engenders debates on increasing food exports, shifts from food production to cash cropping etc. There is thus a need for looking at people's own initiatives and resources for management of hunger and food

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<sup>4</sup> Panda, S.K. Mandal & K.A Siddique (1990): "A Study Of Poverty In Orissa", (Report For Expert Advisory Group On Poverty Studies, GOI, NCAER, New Delhi.



shortage, and examine systems of decentralised management that could help channelise local surplus, and thus reduce the huge losses in transportation. In this respect the NGO (Non-government organization). <sup>5</sup>Aragamee working in Kashipur Block has played a commendable role, having worked with marginalized and underprivileged communities for long, it has been looking into the issue of food security and has made sustainable and long term efforts for ensuring food security in tribal villages of Kashipur Block.

The idea of grain bank (Kutumbh Panthi) has worked well in Siriguda, Haliasah, Durkhal villages in Kashipur. It has helped the members of the villages tide over most crises and the villages are well on their way to self-reliance which is proved by their determination not to go to the local money-lenders for any loans. The cash loans from the women groups and the food loans from grain banks or community grain stores has helped the members of the block to a great extent. The first point that needs to be noted is that once the grain bank is initiated, the management and sustainability of it is left to the villagers. No rigid rules of interests and terms and conditions for borrowing etc. are put into place. This results in each village community responding, to its micro-situation as it thinks best, and in several innovations for increasing the grain storage, as also in coping mechanisms being put into place.

To achieve the long-term objective of making the people self-reliant, capable of managing their own resources and to improve food availability during the stress period, grain bank, a revival of traditional concept served as an entry point. Setting up of grain banks helped in tackling issues related to food security. As a result of increase in the awareness among people and organization of village committees, other issues of concern and development were also taken up. A visible outcome of the project is that people in the project area are more confident today and are able to tackle a lot of issues and problems themselves without any help from an external agency. Village development

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<sup>5</sup> A Rural Development Organization headquartered in Rayagada District Of Orissa.

committees have been formed to sustain the efforts of the intervention. Thus, before actually setting up the grain banks, the villagers were taken into confidence and were involved in its formation and functioning.

The non-government organization Agramee has held its sway in the Kashipur region and has worked well with the idea of grain bank providing a minimum monitoring input at the time of harvest and collection of grain. Agramee has been looking into the issue of food security and has made sustained and long term efforts for ensuring food security. The aims and objectives of Agramee interventions have been outlined as follows:

- To ensure food security during the lean monsoon months.
- To help the tribal community break the money-lenders trap of debt and bondage.
- To develop a system, which could be managed by community participation sustainably over a long time, and
- To lay the foundation for capable community based organizations, which would look into and be able to address the developmental issues in a sustainable and democratic way.

The first contribution came when in the year 1993, it encouraged 16 out of the 30 tribal households in a village raising 10 kgs of paddy. Setting an example to the rest of the families in the village. These 16 families, took full the responsibility for proper management and record keeping of their grain bank of 3.6 qtls and continued to take from it whenever necessity dictated, ensuring a default free repayment with 30% interest. This had the desired impact and in 1995, the rest of the families joined, and the grain bank started growing faster with support and contribution from the entire village.

A further impetus was given by the digging of an irrigation pond in the village, which enabled increased production in the village, and helped check all tendencies for

default. A programme of extensive plantation was taken up in the village, which helped generate income as well as firewood, and was instrumental in checking soil erosion. The members of the village committee for the community grain bank took up the responsibility not only for ensuring continuation of the grain bank but had the leadership ability to look into different developmental works in the village.

The first point that needs to be noted is that once the grain bank had been initiated, the management and sustainability of it was left to the villages with Agramee providing a minimum monitoring input at the time of harvest and collection of grain. The NGO has also taken up the issue of storage. Villages with successful grain banks have evolved their methods. But, several villages started facing increasing problems, as the grain savings grew up, and the grain had to be stored in different households, enormous precautions had to be taken for avoiding pest attacks. There is often a grain loss of 10% to 30% in several cases. Agramee took up an experiment of Ferro-cement grain storage bins in some of the villages like Sirigudae, Haliasah, Lakirisi etc. The loss of grain is reduced if the grain is properly stored in these bins, with measures taken to prevent moisture. But, the quantity of grain stored in these bins is limited, and so one needs to look at larger units.

### **Management of Grain Banks**

As the idea of grain banks was taken up through dialogues and discussions with the people, the strategies for management evolved from the village communities, and each village community developed independent and self-reliant systems of management. Agramee's intervention in terms of registers for record keeping and training for the management committee, helped to establish transparency and continuity systems to ensure returns guaranteed by the active participation of village committee members who play the role of conscience keepers.

The village takes the rest of the decisions about the grain banks in a collective manner. These decisions involve:

- **When the grains will be distributed**

In the initial stages, the quantity of grains stored is often less than the amount required by the individual families for different contingencies. The community then meets to take a collective decision, when the grain stored in the grain bank will be distributed. Each individual family then gets an equal share of grain, except in the case of those who do not want the grain at all. In the later stages, many villages have built up surpluses. At this stage, families take loans from the grain bank as and when they need.

- **Decisions on the interest rates**

Interest rates in the tribal areas are customarily high as established by the moneylenders. Thus, village communities usually decide on interest rates for the grain banks, which are at par with the rates of the local moneylender. This would seem an injustice. But the communities feel that this is a bank that they manage and control, so, if they can pay to the moneylender such exorbitant rates of interest, they can pay the same to themselves and that would help the fund to grow. This does help the bank to grow fast. Thus, after initial three to four years the villages build up a surplus. Then, the interest rates are brought down, as there is a need then to have the grain borrowed, and not stored in the bank which would deteriorate; interest is also waived or brought down when the village has not had a very good harvest. Thus, the management decisions regarding the grain bank are left to the villages, which decide as per their collective need. The different families in the tribal villages, are more or less or par, economically. Thus, the decision-making is in the interest of all.

- **Decisions on defaulters**

Defaulters do exist in the villages. Often, the defaulters are amongst the poorest families in the village who have not been able to have a good harvest. The community decides on every individual case in such instances as to the steps to be taken. Often, it is decided to make a special concession for such families, and allow

them to just return the capital and waive the interest. In other instances, they are allowed to return in the next season, and no additional interest is charged.

- ***Decisions on the use of surplus***

When a village develops a surplus a collective decision needs to be taken as to what is to be done with the surplus as it deteriorates in the storage and become unusable. Decisions in such cases includes lending it out to other villages which have not been able to develop a surplus, converting part of the grain to cash, or storing part of the grain for seeds purpose, as the necessity for seeds at the right time is next only to the necessity for food.

- ***Decisions on grain to be stored***

Tribal communities produce a wide range of millets. The most preferred, however is ragi (finger millet), because of its larger shelf life, taste and intrinsic nutritive value. The preferred grain for the grain banks is thus ragi. However, not all families are able to produce ragi, every year, due to compulsions of land, crop rotation patterns etc. For those who cannot supply ragi, the community works out the market value for other grains in relation to ragi, and the decided quantity is then deposited in the bank.

- ***Decisions on inclusions and exclusions***

Each village also decides by itself about who should be included and who should be excluded. Sometimes if the village is small, with less than 50 families, then, all the different communities share the same grain bank. In other cases, if the village is large and has different communities, the grain banks are maintained separately by each community, as each of them live in a separate hamlet. If the village is large but with only one community then, they have a single grain bank for the entire village, sometimes this can be as big as one bank for 8 families.

## Transparency and Accountability

Systems of transparency and accountability are built in by ensuring that there is a collective decision on the use of grains and selection of the grain bank committees as also the persons in whose house the grains will be stored is done through the participation of the entire village. An effective control is exercised by women membership in the community. Women are much keener than men in ensuring democratic sharing and in checking default.

It is mandatory that every grain bank committee have at least 50 percent women membership. The accounts are maintained in the village. But, there is also collective knowledge on who has taken how much, as grain shared out only after village meetings. Thus everybody knows who has taken how much, and who is defaulting. This common language in itself goes a long way in checking default and misappropriation.

Table 4.1 shows the details of grain banks set up with the help of Agragamee.

**Table 4.1**

### Details of grain banks set up with the help of Agragamee

<i>Name of the project</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Block</i>	<i>No. of grain banks</i>	<i>No. of villages covered</i>
Kashipur	Rayagada	Kashipur	235	412
Dasmantpur	Koraput	Dasmantpur	350	354
Chitrakunda	Malkargiri	Kudumulugama	22	22
Padepadar	Kalahandi	Thuamul Rampur	40	40
Kerpai	Kalahandi	Thuamul Rampur	25	25
Mohaling	Kalahandi	Golamunda	17	17
Adri	Kalahandi	Thuamul Rampur	15	15
DeraKurn Pha	Kandhamma	Phinngra	30	30
Minia	Kandhamal	Phulbani	9	9
Thakur munda	Mayurbhanj	Thakurmunda	29	29
Sukrull	Mayurbhanj	Sukruli	11	11

**Source :** Agragamee a rural development organization headquartered in Rayagada district of Orissa.

## **Women's Participation and Leadership**

It has been observed that grain banks have been successful in those villages, where a strong women leadership has been established. Fifty percent membership in the grain banks are women, selected by the village in an open meeting having a strong voice and presence. In several villages women have started separate savings of their own which has helped them to enter into independent decision making processes, without the domination of the traditional leaders of the village who could dominate over the women. The training for the committee members of the grain banks also helped to draw women out of the village and enter into dialogues and discussions. Thus, women leadership in the grain bank committees helped them to come out of their shells of silence and encouraged their participation in other decision-making processes. Some women who gained recognition for their efforts include Ms. Sumoni of Siriguda village, Ms. Lakai of Haliasahi, Ms. Ujjal of Sindurghati and Ms. Andhari of Mouliguda who emerged to take up the challenges of tribal development and provided an alternate leadership. The capabilities of these women were also recognized by the government which invited their participation in several secretarial meetings and ensured that their voice was heard in the state decision making bodies.

Several villages have taken up this idea, and capitalized on it. The villages like Siriguda in Kashipur Panchayat, Haliasahi in Mandibis panchayat, Durkhal in Chandragiri Panchayat, Mairanch in Maikanch Panchayat, have been able to mobilize borrowing, check default and built up substantial surpluses, which can see them through a year or two of drought. In the village of Dhurkhal, this was facilitated by helping the villagers to construct a small check dam, which ensured perennial irrigation for the fields. The increased production helped the villagers develop substantial buffer stocks in the form of grain banks, which they can manage and sustain on their own. Another

outstanding example is the village of Renga in Gorakhpur Panchayat. This village of more than 250 families, maintains its grain banks separately in the two tribal hamlets. Agramee helped the village acquire 2.8 hectares (7 acres) of community land. The village gives the land for share-cropping on a rotation basis. The cropper from the village, who is usually a landless farmer, takes one share and deposits the other share in the grain bank. This large village has also been able to sustain the grain bank, check default and ensure continued interest in the grain bank amongst all its villagers. Managed by the village committee members, this bank has now a capital of 200 quintals of grain. By now, the idea of grain banks has gained ground in the Kashipur block. The programme capitalized on a traditional practice that the tribal community was familiar with. The intervention helped the tribal villages develop their own systems of overcoming the problem of lean season, which forced them into hunger and death. It encourages the savings of traditional and indigenous grains, which is the staple food of the community and helps them to develop an alternative to the cash economy, which is an instrument of exploitation and thereby establishes a successful system of fighting the traditional and well established exploiters like the moneylenders. The intervention draw strength from the felt need of the community for food, and on just a little initial support and training and mobilizational inputs which helped it to develop effective management practices. There is an ingrained flexibility, which enables the community to meet the contingencies that can arise from time to time and also ensure that the needs of the poorest in the village are met. A transparent system has been established by ensuring the participation of the entire community in all the decision-making processes. This, more than any record keeping, helps to check default and sustain the grain banks in the different villages. Participation of women has helped the grain banks establish successfully as women are most intensely involved in ensuring food security for the children in the family. Grains are also converted for seed purposes when necessary, so



another essential need of the village is met through the grain banks. Thus the grain banks have been established to provide the villages with security during the worst periods of food shortage, and also free them from clutches of the moneylenders.

Apart from the idea of grain bank which has been put into operation in Kashipur Block there is a suggestion for a Tailor Made Management Programme referred to as (TMP).<sup>6</sup> Effective Management is a key to success of all plans and programmes, but mismanagement squanders our resources, creates chaos and endangers our well being. So management is the only Kaleema or mantra to implement the noble projects of the government through a team of talented, motivated and devoted officers. The trained talented team can secure better result in eradicating and controlling poverty. A Tailor Made Management Programme (TMP) is to be spread and the training facilities should be given to the trainers of Orissa. The trainee will also work (i) As coordinator to coordinate the BPL beneficiaries with the officials, (ii) TMP-Train personnel's will create the awareness and motivation among the beneficiaries to act in accordance to the proposed project of poverty eradication programme of the government and (iii) TMP trainees will do the follow up and coordination with financing and funding agencies to provide timely credit as well as to guide and convince for repayment of loans as further financing to the projects depends on recovery of finance.

The TMP Tailor Made Management Programme) has three important areas of training. They are : (A) Awareness programme; (B) Coordination programme; (C) Credit for self-help programme.

It has been found in the Kashipur Block that the failure of the programmes and policies are due to lack of awareness, lack of interest on part of officials, lack of co-ordination between beneficiaries and the authority, local politics, lack of credit facilities

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<sup>6</sup> Dr. M. Altaf Khan Reader, Department Of Commerce And Business Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

and lack of administration. Thus the most important aspect to be considered to eradicate poverty is by making a Tailor made people's participate management programme combining all the three elements.

### **1. Awareness Programme**

The Awareness Programme aims at breeding entrepreneurship qualities among the BPL groups to overcome poverty. This can be launched by imparting training to the local school teacher or NGO's having aptitude and attitude to serve the society. The school infrastructure, can be used for awareness programme, on evenings or on weekly holidays. The objective is to create interest among the BPL groups to fight against poverty, through facilities, knowledge, awareness about nature's gift and the commercial utilization of their knowledge and labour. Above all some dreams should be developed in their heart so that they will work systematically and work for the project's success, so also for their own success. This programme should develop in vernacular and their own people should impart it. Therefore, local school teacher/NGO officials and the school is the best combination for launching the awareness programme in tribal areas.

### **2. Co-ordination Programme**

Recent starvation death in Orissa opened the eyes once again that there is a need for co-ordinating activities. Co-ordination in the essence of management. All programmes whether it is CRF (Calamity Relief Fund), FFW (Food for Work), OTDP (Orissa Tribal Development Project) of <sup>7</sup>Kashipur where 20 death cases were reported inspite of the functioning of the project since last 10 years. The failure of the programme is due to lack of co-ordination between targeted beneficiaries and the machinery. Due to the absence of co-ordination in the block, the food grain component

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<sup>7</sup> 'Margo-Kernels For Rice Scheme' By Rajaram, S. Times Of India 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2001, P.5.

under the food for work programme failed to reach the block. Lack of co-ordination was further proved when it was found that till two weeks of starvation death, the Antyodaya scheme under which the BPL beneficiary can buy 25kg of rice per month at Rs. 3 per kg had not started in the block. Therefore, perfect co-ordination should be developed, and in order to develop the same, the Block level officials must be served with an orientation programme for one or two days where principles and practices of management with values for the programme will be imparted by the experts i.e. TMP trainers. Values and holism are the two sides of the coin for poverty eradication programme. Values should be imparted by the higher officials so that it can reach to bottom levels office assistants who are involved in poverty eradication programmes and projects by the centre and state government's otherwise it cannot achieve the holistic objectives. The co-ordination programme aims at higher and wider consciousness curbing self-interest, vital desires and ego problems. This one or two days programme will create high spirit among the officials to work in a team and to reach the target of poverty eradication programme.

### **3. Credit for self-employment**

In India's existing social and economic institutional arrangements a middleman extracts a significant part of income. Hence a poor Indian works very hard but languishes in poverty because he does not receive the full worth of his/her work. The existing system allows this process where some people are gathering strength everyday out of the other's earnings. A handful of people are becoming richer everyday turning a large number of population into paupers. This can be noticed from a case study of Pansguda village of Kashipur block of Orissa, where a moneylender named Dada Sabat, a Brahmin by caste lending money to the tribals at highest rate of interest. In addition to this, he mortgages the BPL cards. The Tahsildar of Kashipur raided the moneylender Sabat's house and rice earmarked under BPL programme was seized. Rice meant for the poor by the government is not reaching the moneylenders godown. It is not a case in British Raj but in free India and in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when we are living in a global

village. Recent visit of Minister Mr. Shanta Kumar to Kashipur block, where he found rice bags in the house of BPL groups of families. According to the tribals, the rice was supplied to them just two days before the minister's visit.

Therefore, there is an urgent need of supplying credit without interest if possible or with very little interest, which should be linked with profit or surplus to stop hunger and starvation death. Credit a powerful weapon. With appropriate credit facilities, policies and institutional support we can lead our hunger towards a better shape. It is because credit creates entitlement of resources, which can be used for further resource creation. For poor credit is a great blessing.

There is again a suggestion for consumption credit. The idea of consumption credit for foodgrains is not new. In fact it has already been adopted by the organized sector in urban areas. A large number of public and private organizations extend such credit/loan facilities to their workers and secretarial staff, who make bulk purchases in the post harvest period when prices are generally low. What is suggested is merely an extension of this facility to weaker sections in rural areas.

The supply of consumption credit could be through co-operative institutions. This should be linked with the supply of food grains through the distribution system. For recovery purposes, wherever possible, it should be linked with the rural employment schemes.

The positive and negative implications of consumption credit to rural poor can be many and far reaching. Some of these can be easily perceived, while others can be derived only after analyzing the complex interaction of economic forces operating at the aggregate level. Some of the easily perceivable positive implications are given below.

#### **For the Vulnerable Group**

1. Since transfer of grains would take place within the settlement, packaging, storage and transportation costs for the quantities transferred, thus would be

practically nil. Consequently, it would be possible to provide food grains to the vulnerable sectors at a comparatively cheaper rate.

2. The poor would get out of 'weekly purchase' system due to which they suffer losses in a variety of ways.
3. The dependence, especially during 'unemployment' period, on the local moneylenders and other rich farmers would be reduced.
4. They would get better quality of grains than what is available to them through private shops and fair price shops.
5. They would worry less about how they would feed their family 'tomorrow'. They would get out of the vicious 'psychology' of poverty which has so far stunted their personalities, confidence and growth.
6. With less dependence on the local rich moneylenders and due to greater confidence which food in the home gives, they will be in a better bargaining position in the socio-economic life of the settlement.
7. It will be possible to tie up the recovery of credit with the rural employment scheme. Thus it will provide them some certainty about employment and income.

#### **For the Surplus Farmers**

1. Since sales would be in the village the Surplus farmer would save on packaging and transportation. He would also save on the commission paid to dalal, and would not suffer from the invisible losses which he normally suffers while dealing with unscrupulous dealers in mandis.
2. Normally, the poor in the village takes grains on credit from the well-to-do farmers. These are paid back over a period of time in cash or kind. In many instances surplus farmers do not charge any interest on the value of food grains given to the poor, or utmost charge a low rate of interest. Such farmers would

gain in terms of interest if the poor pay cash for grains which they otherwise take from the surplus farmer on credit.

Similarly, the co-operative institutions would gain from the consumption credit for if the consumption credit flows through the co-operative institutions it would provide an additional source of income to them.

### **For the Block Administration**

If consumption credit is linked with rural employment schemes, then it would be possible for the Block administration to achieve better results.

1. Again the implications of consumption credit on the procurement- distribution system would be far reaching. The volume of food grains handled would depend upon the amount of consumption credit extended to the rural poor. The volume would be reduced with the result that there would be lesser pressure on transportation and storage. Consequently, there would be less losses during transportation and storage.
2. Consumption credit would, infact, create a huge number of small storages at the consumer level all over the country. This is significant, especially under the present conditions, when the existing storage capacity in the country is fully utilized.
3. The distribution system would not be required to worry about day-to-day supply of grains in small quantities, at numerous points throughout the year. Supply of bulk quantity a few times in a year would be less cumbersome than planning the supply of small quantities more frequently.

Thus these are some of the positive implications of consumption credit to rural poor. It is hoped that if the idea of consumption credit is put into operation it could provide guidelines for better public distribution systems that would cater to the needs of the rural poor.

## Summary

Orissa is a land of prosperity and peace but it still remains an enigma to the economist and philosophers. It is endowed with all the bounties of nature having a long coast line and rich in minerals. In addition to this it has many beautiful and scenic spots dotted by historical monuments which can be developed as a heritage and eco-friendly tourist spot. The beauty of this state is, it has peaceful, comparatively cheaper and disciplined labour, yet the state is seething in poverty. So there is a need of TMP (Tailor Made Management Programme) mixing 3 important elements such as Awareness programme, co-ordination programme and credit programme systematically. Knowledge is power, let us share it in shape of information through Tailor Made Management Programme for combating poverty of Orissa as well as of India. The words 'No poor, No hunger, No violence' is our Kaleema. To achieve this noble purpose, there is a need for setting up a centre for poverty eradication programme where TMP for poverty eradication programmes will develop. A state level and district level centre is required to conduct overall studies of poverty problems of various states of India. As the poverty problems are quite different from state to state and district to district, therefore some coordination of these should be made at the state as well as district level. These two centers at the state and district level will cater to the different needs like awareness programme, co-ordination programme and credit programme which are to be tailor made to fit to each Block, Tehsil and District.

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# *APPENDICES*



## APPENDIX -1

### SCHEDULE FOR BLOCK LEVEL DATA

1. **Name of the Block** :
2. **Number of Grampanchayats** :
3. **Number of Revenue villages uninhabited** :
4. **Number of households** :
5. **Total population** :
  - (a) SC (b) SC
  - (c) OBC (d) General/Others
6. **Density of the population per sq. km** :
7. **Total geographical area per sq.km.** :
8. **Cultivable land Hectre/acre**
9. **Agriculture** :
  - 9.1 Rainfall
  - 9.2 Sources of irrigation
  - 9.3 Total land irrigated
10. **Educational facility** :
  - 10.1 Primary School
  - 10.2 Middle school
  - 10.3 High school
  - 10.4 Alternative school (A.S)/ Education Guarantee Scheme (E.G.S)
  - 10.5 Aganbadi centre
  - 10.6 College

- 11 Health facility :**
- (a) P.H.C (b) C.H.C.
- (c) Dispensary (d) Family planning Centre
- (e) Ayurvedic dispensary (f) Homeopathy dispensary
- (g) Total no. of beds available
- 12. Infrastructure :**
- 12.1 Number of Commercial Bank
- 12.2 Number of regional rural bank (R.R.B/A.G.B)
- 12.3 Number of post office
- 12.4 Number of village electrified
- 12.5 Distance from the block to the District Headquarter ----- km
- District headquarter
- 13 Public distribution system (PDS) :**
- 13.1 Number villages covered by PDS
- 13.2 Number of retail centre in the block –
- 13.3 Number of BPL families
- 13.4 Number of households covered by PDS
- 13.4.1 Number of Revamped/Targeted PDS households
- 13.5 Amount of rice supplied through PDS-----
- 13.5.1 Under BPL scheme -----kg of rice per month per family at Rs./ ----- per kg is available
- 13.5.2 Under Antyodaya Anna Yojna ----- kg of rice per month per family at Rs/----- per kg is available

13.5.3 Under Annpurna Anna Yojana  
----- kg of rice per month per  
head at Rs./ -----per kg is  
available

13.6 Number of BPL families covered  
under PDS

13.6.1 Number of families covered  
under Annapurna Anna Yojana  
under PDS

13.7 Goods available under PDS

Quantity and price of different items received per family from the PDS									
<i>Rice</i>		<i>Wheat</i>		<i>Sugar</i>		<i>Kerosene</i>		<i>Others</i>	
<i>Qtys</i>	<i>Rs-/kg</i>	<i>Qtys</i>	<i>Rs-/kg</i>	<i>Qtys</i>	<i>Rs-/kg</i>	<i>Qtys</i>	<i>Rs/Ltr</i>	<i>Qtys</i>	<i>Rs-/kg</i>

14. **How frequently the concerned authority is supplying the goods to the retail centers :**

Monthly/Bi-monthly/  
quarterly/irregular)

15. **Problems faced by the implementing authority :**

Name of the person contacted

Designation

Problems (Space given below)

-----  
-----  
-----  
-----  
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## APPENDIX -II

### SCHEDULE FOR VILLAGE LEVEL DATA

1. **Name of the village** :
2. **Name of the Block** :
3. **Name of the District** :
- 3.1 Distance of the village  
from District Headquarter  
\_\_\_\_\_ km
- 4 **Total population** :  
(a) Male (b) Female  
(c) SC (d) ST  
(e) OBC (f) Gen./others
5. **Total number of Households**
- 6 **Total area of village** :  
-----per sq. km.
- 7 **Total cultivate land-----** :  
hecre/acre
8. **Total irrigated land -----** :  
hectare /acre
9. **Total non-irrigated land -----** :  
hecre/acre
10. **Infrastructural facility** :
  - 10.1 Road length from the village to  
the all weather road-----km
  - 10.2 Nature of the internal road  
----- (Pucca/Kotcha/metal)
  - 10.3 Quality of internal road  
----- (good/bad/worse)
  - 10.4 Quality of the external road  
----- (good/bad/worse)
  - 10.5 Nature of the external road -----  
(Pucca/Kutcha/metal)

- 10.6 How many households have electricity connection----- numbers.
- 10.7 What is the source of drinking, water ----- (dugwell/ tubewell/river/stream/ pipewater /pond/others)
- 10.8 Distance from the village to the post office-----km
- 10.9 Distance from the village to
  - 10.9.1 Primary school-----kms
  - 10.9.2 Middle school -----kms
  - 10.9.3 High school -----kms
  - 10.9.4 College -----kms
  - 10.9.5 How many schools are there in the village?  
Primary-----, middle-----, High School-----
- 11. Health facility :**
  - 11.1 How far is the P.H.C./Addl.P.H.C. -----kms.
  - 11.2 How far is the Dispensary -----kms
  - 11.3 How far is the family planning centre-----kms

## APPENDIX -III

### SCHEDULE FOR HOUSEHOLD DATA

1.           **Identification section**                                 :
- 1.1       State
- 1.2       District
- 1.3       Block
- 1.4       Village
2.           **Personnel information**                                 :
- 2.1.      Name of the respondent -----
- 2.2      Sex (Male-1, Female-2) -----
- 2.3      Social status (SC-1, SC-2,  
              OBC-3, Others-4) -----
- 2.4      Religion (Hindu-1, Muslim-2,  
              Christian-3, Others-4) -----
- 2.5      Household details

Name	Age (yrs)	Educational status (code)	Main occupation (code)	Total annual income from main occupation

		Educational status code	(Illiterate-1, Just literate-2, upto middle-3, more than middle-4, Too Young to attend school-5)
		Main occupation code	Self employment in Agriculture sector-1, self employment in Non-Agriculture sector-2, wage employment in Agriculture sector-3, wage employment in Non-Agriculture sector-4

- 2.6 land holding pattern (code) -----
- (i) less than 2.5 acres-1
  - (ii) between 2.5 acres-5 acres-2
  - (iii) between 5 acres – 8 acres-3
  - (iv) above 8 acres-4
  - (v) No land – 5
- 2.7
- a) Patta land ----- acre
  - b) Non patta-land-----acre
  - c) Irrigated land -----acre
  - d) Non-irrigated land -----acre
- 2.8 Housing
- 2.8.1 Kutcha/pucca(put mark)
- 2.8.2 Roof:Tatched/Tiled/Concrete
- 2.8.3 Is the house electrified?  
(Yes-1, No-2)-----
- 2.9 Household Assets
- 2.9.1 Livestock
- (i) Buffalo ----- Numbers
  - (ii) Cow ----- Numbers
  - (iii) Goat ----- Numbers
  - (iv) Sheep ----- Numbers
  - (v) Poultry ----- Numbers
  - (vi) Others ----- Numbers
- 2.10 Agricultural implements
- (i) Plough ----- Number
  - (ii) Bullock cart ----- Number
  - (iii) Diesel pumpset----- Number
  - (iv) any other implements  
----- Number

**3. Public Distribution system (PDS) :**

3.1 Have you been benefited by PDS?  
(Yes-1, No-2)

3.2 If yes, answer the following:

3.2.1 Are you coming under BPL scheme?  
(Yes-1, No-1)

3.2.2 Do you have BPL card ?  
(Yes-1, No-2)

3.2.3 Do you have Ration card?  
(Yes-1, No-2)

3.3 If yes in 3.2.3, answer the following table related to ration card

Table Related to Ration Card

List of family members in Ration card	Date of issue of the ration card	Amount received by the family from the PDS									
		Rice		Wheat		Sugar		Kerosene		Others	
		Qty.	Rs/kg	Qty.	Rs/kg	Qty.	Rs/kg	Qty.	Rs/ltr	Qty.	Rs/kg

3.4 Whether the PDS centre/control shop is available in your village ?

(yes-1, No-2)-----

3.5 If No, at what distance the centre is available? ----- km from the village.

3.6 Are you paying more price than the actual price of PDS while purchasing from the control shop/PDS centre?

(yes-1, No-2)-----

3.6.1 If yes, how much extra you are paying?

Rice Rs /- Perkg, Sugar Rs/- - - per kg, wheat Rs. - per kg, kerosene Rs - per litre, others Rs-



- 3.6.2 Are you getting the sanctioned amount of goods on you head?  
(yes-1, No-2)-----
- 3.6.3 If No, how much less amount you are getting?  
Rice – kg , sugar – kg , wheat- kg,  
kerosene- litre, others-
- 3.6.4 Why are you getting less amount of goods?  
(i) The retailer is corrupt.  
(ii) Adequate amount of goods are not supplied to the retail shop.  
(iii) The card holder is unable/not interested to buy sanctioned amount.  
(iv) other reasons (specify) -----
- 3.7 What are the existing market prices of the following good?  
Rice Rs/- per kg.  
Sugar Rs/- per kg  
Wheat Rs/- per kg  
Kerosene Rs/- per litre  
Others Rs/-
- 3.8 How frequently you are getting goods from the PDS centre?  
(monthly/bi-monthly/  
quarterly/irregular )
- 3.9 Whether the goods received from the PDS centre is sufficient to maintain the family ?  
(yes-1, No-2)-----
- 3.9.1 If No, how much extra you purchase from the market per month?  
Rice- kg, wheat – kg, sugar- kg,  
kerosene- litre, others-

3.10 Are you satisfied with the quality of goods supplied by the PDS centre ?

(Yes-1, No-2) \_\_\_\_\_

3.11 Have you paid anything to the officials for issuing ration card in your name? (Yes-1, No-2) \_\_\_\_\_

3.11.1 If yes, How much? Rs/- \_\_\_\_\_

3.12 Do you feel that the dealer responsible for the distribution of PDS goods are selling some amount of it in the market?

(Yes-1, No-2) \_\_\_\_\_

3.13 Are you paying anything to the dealer? (Yes,-1, No-2) \_\_\_\_\_

3.3.1 If yes, how much? Rs/- \_\_\_\_\_ per month

3.14 what are your suggestions for improving the overall functioning of the PDS? \_\_\_\_\_

1. The quality and quantity of food items should be enhanced.
2. The government should exclude the high salaried urban professionals from the benefits of PDS and include more categories of rural poor
3. The government should fix the income limits for the distribution of goods.
4. Sufficient arrangement for the transportation and warehousing process of the PDS be made by the state government to ensure adequate and timely availability.

