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## **Rural Development and Panchayat Raj in Manipur**

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### **Introduction:**

A country can not be called a developed one if the rural area remains under developed. Thus, the development of rural areas can not be neglected. Democracy can not be completed unless there is dynamic involvement and active participation of people in all development works, planning and decision making. Considering its importance in this hour, a research work is deemed to be quite necessary in this area. The present study aims to examine the various rural development programmes with special focus to the role of Panchayati Raj in rural development and implementation of work effectively in Imphal West and Imphal East Districts of Manipur. The governments have launched various development programmes like CDP, IRDP, JRY, SRSY, MGNREGS, SGSY and IAY etc in rural areas in order to uplift these areas. A democratic polity demands the decentralization of power which requires the involvement of people effectively in local affairs and functioning. In order to enable to participate positively; there is need of devolution of power to local bodies in order to implement work properly and completion of work in time. India can not be called as the largest democratic country unless the power, authority are decentralised at the village level and democracy at the local level are instituted positively. Keeping this in mind our late father of Nation has emphasised on the need of devolution of power to local bodies making every village self sufficient village. Various committees like the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, Ashok Mehta Committee, and Dr. G.V.K Rao Committee or L.V. Singhvi committee have been formed in order to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions. These committees did not succeed to decentralise power to these local institutions. It is only after the passing of Panchayati Raj Act 1992 through 73rd Amendment Act, the Panchayati Raj Institutions have gained its constitutional status, become a part of governing bodies in Indian democracy with proper authority and power.

This work attempts to analyze the problems of execution of work and the administrative complexity of the Panchayati Raj system and the role of the elected representatives of local self-government in the proper implementation of the various rural development programmes. The Panchayati Raj Institutions are expected to take part as implementing and supervisory agencies in development activities so as to execute the rural development programmes efficiently and timely. Involvement of local bodies in decision making and development works really means the decentralization of decision making bodies. PRIs can narrow down the communication gap between the government and the masses. Panchayats and its related bodies act as a catalyst between the state and the people. Panchayat system is to broaden democratic structure reaching upto the grassroots level and allowing people to participate in all government processes, decision making and development works in rural areas. Thus emphasizing this importance, the various governments since independence started development programmes over the years, heading towards becoming of developed country.

Development comprises socio-economic in terms of its living standard, education, health etc. Even the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) mentions the elimination of poverty, improvement of health, gender equity etc. Keeping these goals in mind, the subsequent governments are trying to implement such programmes which comply with these goals such as self help related schemes, MGNREGS etc. Such programmes are the ones that women can take part in social, legal and political institution in an active manner.

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### **Objectives of the Study**

Rural development can change the life of people in rural areas. The responsibility of Panchayati Raj Institutions are numerous in respect of rural development. It can change the socio-economic, political life of people in rural areas. It is in this area that there is need to evaluate the achievements of various rural developments and the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in proper implementation of rural programmes. It is to find out the reason of the need of development programmes in rural areas. This is to study the various problems of these local bodies in implementing the various rural development programmes. This is to examine the participation of masses in the functioning of decentralised democracy. It is to evaluate awareness among the people regarding the various rural development programmes. It is quite necessary to know the loopholes in implementing the programmes for better implementation in future. There is need to find the role and responsibility of civil societies in rural development programmes and their sharing of responsibility along with local self bodies. Suggestions are shared in order to implement the programmes efficiently.

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### **Hypothesis**

In the context of good governance, the scale of participation of grass root level people is quite needed in order to have sharing and interaction with civil society and government. If that is so, one could see such positive sight in the north east in general and particularly in Manipur because, political violence

had already been launched in these states. So to study problems and prospect of panchayati raj institutions in our state with empirical analysis will have immense significance.

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## Methodology

The method adopted in this study is historical in the qualitative research kind. It is on the basis of content analysis. Relevant data to the study have been collected from concerned departments as primary sources and secondary sources from books, journals, paper clipping etc. To verify the secondary sources, personal interviews were conducted with some Pradhans, some members of the Village Panchayat and Zilla Parishad, officials and beneficiaries.

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## A conceptual framework and need of rural development

Rural development means an overall development of rural areas in social, economic, political and cultural spheres so that people could lead a pleasant life. The rural development programmes propose to reduce the poverty and unemployment, to improve the health and educational status and to fulfil the basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing of the rural population.

It is a broad, inclusive term which takes in its consideration the socioeconomic and political development of the rural areas. It includes measures to strengthen the democratic structure of society through the Panchayati Raj Institutions as well as measures to improve the rural infrastructure, improve income of rural households and delivery systems pertaining to education, health and safety mechanisms.

The overall meaning of economic development means progressive changes in socio-economic structure of the people. The Scholars like V.K.R.V Rao translates the meaning of economic development as a change to the development of human beings ensuring them to realize their full potential. The change of economic development with a decline in the overall contribution of primary sector with the increasing rate of other sectors like secondary and tertiary sectors, restructuring of the occupational pattern increase in productivity of labour and improvement in skill are regarded as the varied elements of economic development. Now, it has been realized that the process of economic development could be increased with better organized and development planning. A more concise planning is a must for better economic development.

The development in rural areas is now come to be regarded as sine-qua - non national development and community welfare. The matter of problem is not only the development of the rural areas but also that of the welfare of the villagers and rural community as such in order to drive away the poverty and starvation. As per the record of 1991 census, 74.2 percent of the population of this country settles in rural areas. So, eventually, development in rural areas does mean extending and opening various opportunities in order to absorb the abundant resources available there in rural areas.

So far, India has launched various measures and schemes in order to achieve the target of rural development since its independence in 1947. Till now, India has witnessed almost Ten Five-Year Plans from 1951 -56 to 2002

The 11th Five Year Plan is already started. During the Five-Year plans, providing employment opportunities, self-sufficiency and maintaining the economic growth with the main focus on human beings have been giving the main priorities and importance. As a whole, rural development has broader prospective and purpose than that of the other development activities like agricultural, educational developments etc. Looking at the general notion, it means overall improvement and development of rural area, keeping in mind the improvement in the living style of the people in the rural area. It consists of all development activities and fields regardless of any particular area like irrigation, power, community service etc. Its purpose is very comprehensive. Looking at the strategic point of view, according to World Bank, it is formulated in such a way to develop the socio-economic well-being of targetted groups of people, the rural poor.

Rural areas provide accommodation to nearly three-fourth of the country's population which include a large number of persons below the poverty line. The 'poverty line' as the expenditure level, which will secure for the households 2250 calories per capita per day. A per capita income of Rs270 per annum (urban) and Rs180 per annum (rural) was considered sufficient to meet this calorie requirement. Both amounts were at 1960-61 prices. Rural development which surrounds the whole gamut of improvement in the living standard of the people, livelihood in rural areas can be supplemented by annihilation of poverty in these areas. Development, therefore, would mean progress in the well-being of the masses and their quality of life. On the other hand, the minimal level of well -being must include the satisfaction of the basic needs; and underdevelopment involves the denial of basic needs to the people while enhancing the material returns to the dominant groups. It deprives the majority of their survival and sustenance.

The Ministry of Rural Development now restructured as Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment and new department called Department of Rural Employment and Poverty Alleviation have been formed in order to pay more attention to the problems like unemployment and poverty in the rural areas.

For this purpose, the Department of Rural Development is carrying out numerous programmes, keeping in mind the required development of the rural areas especially for the vulnerable and weaker sections and women. They give more emphasis on development especially in terms of allocation of funds and resources. The Authorities have also realized that there should be an understanding between the local authorities and local people to successfully carry out the programmes as per the plan. So as to keep the required level, the development work should be people oriented and participatory, utilizing the indigenous talent of the local people and extracting the abundant indigenous resources. In order to improve the participation of the local people in the rural areas, the Government has passed different acts i.e. 1992 PRI Acts and formed different committees like Ashok Mehta Committee, Balwant Rai Mehta Committee in order to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Special initiative is being taken up to enable the Gram Sabha, being the pillar of PRIs, perform effectively and efficiently as the lowest unit of local self government. Gram Sabha, being the lowest tier of the PRIs, can act as a platform of decision of the local level problems and decentralized planning and implementation of the various development schemes.

The share for rural development is increasing gradually over the years in order to enable to maintain the required development of rural areas. The main emphasis of the Five-Year Plans shall be based on improving the socio economic conditions in the rural area, solving rural poverty and narrowing the gap of regional imbalance.

The strength of Indian economy depends upon the strength of rural areas. It is truly said that rural economy is the backbone of Indian economy. Keeping this matter in mind, our leaders have reiterated many times the need for the efficient implementation of the economic planning. In almost all the Five-Year Plans, the importance of rural development has been highlighted and emphasized.

Looking back the Historical background of Rural Development Programmes in India since independence. Analysis of rural development programmes under Five-Year Plans

The First Five Year Plan (1951 - 56) focused on overall development of the Nation. The First Five -Year Plan explains that the “development is the method and Rural Extension the agency through which the Five Year Plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages. It was during this Plan that emphasis was given in constructing the village agency for development of the village and strengthened the cooperative movement in the rural areas.

Again, another programme started during the First Five -Year Plan was Programme of the Community Development which emphasised on development of agriculture and its allied activities, education especially elementary education, supplementary employment, social welfare, irrigation, land reforms, rural electrification and providing training among villagers in order to strengthen the village industries like cottage, handicraft etc. The Second Five -Year Plan (1956 - 61) aimed at attaining socialistic pattern of development. Community Development Programme still existed. In the mean time, Intensive Agriculture District Programme (IADP) was introduced in the year 1960-61 and followed by various programmes such as Integrated Area Development Programme (IADP), High Yielding Variety Programme (HYV) in 1960 during the Third Five -Year Plan (1961 - 66). During the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74), the share on the rural development was subsequently increased. This plan made emphasis on the neglected region and areas. Likewise, Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) was started in 1970-71. A new level of planning called Block Level planning which mainly focus on the rural development through the involvement and participation of people at the grass root level was also started. Various new special programmes were launched during the Fifth Five - Year Plan (1974 - 79) with a goal to remove poverty and starvation, attain self - reliance and create more employment for people. Special Programmes (i) Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers (MFAL) Programme (ii) Small Farmers’ Development Agency (SFDA) (iii) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) (iv) Tribal Area Development Programme. (TADP) In addition to the above programmes, other programmes like Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) launched in 1974-75, Desert Development Programme (DDP) during 1977-78 which focused in controlling further desertification of the desert areas. DDP was to focus on maintaining ecological balance, stabilizing sand dunes, maintaining water and soil conservation, plantation of trees, and development of Pastures. Above all, a single largest anti-poverty programme called Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was launched in 1978 - 79. Another programme called Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM) was launched in 1979 in order to provide skill and self-employment to youths in rural area. The Sixth Five-Year Plan (1980 - 85) anticipated to bring about the living standard of the people who were deprived socially and economically through various employment programmes. With this very principle, the working of the IRDP began with a new principle called Anthyodaya principle to cover the poorest first and reach other poor later. During this Plan, another programme called the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was introduced in order to generate employment and strengthen the infrastructure in rural areas. Later, in 1983, another programme called Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was launched to enhance the living standard of life by providing at least “100 man days of employment” to the jobless rural poor especially during the dry season.

The importance of women and children were highlighted during this Plan by launching a new programme in 1982 - 83 meant only for women and children called the Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA). The employment generated programmes such as IRDP, RLEGP were still implemented with distinct approach in the Seventh Five-Year Plan. The two main employment programmes i.e. NREP and RLEGP were merged and called as ‘Jawahar Rozgar Yojana’ (JRY) in 1989 which focused on providing rural employment, rural infrastructure etc. The Government also established a district level authority called District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) in order to execute various development programmes in the rural areas at the district level.

The Eighth Five Year Plan (1992 - 97) was begun when socio-economic order in the international scene was undergoing a great change. The Plan expressed “human development in all its facets as the ultimate goal of the Eighth Plan.”

Main task during the Plan was to manage the change from the centrally planned economy to market economy without undergoing a change in the socio - cultural structure of the country. The Eighth Five-Year Plan was considered as a ‘Performance oriented Plan’. More attention was given in building up of durable productive properties such as “all weather roads, minor irrigation works, land levelling and prevention of soil erosion, construction of schools and primary health centres, production centres and vocational training centres.”

A new sub-programme called Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) under the major scheme JRY was launched to provide houses to homeless people in 1993 - 94.

The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) was collided with the celebration of the country’s 50th year of independence. It Stated, “The Principal task of the Ninth Plan will be to usher in a new era of people-oriented planning, in which not only the states, but the people at large particularly the poor, can fully participate.” Due to its participatory nature, the Ninth Plan was regarded as ‘Participatory Planning’. Many changes were taken up during this Plan. Many schemes and programmes like the IRDP, TRYSEM, and Ganga Kalyan Yojana (GKY). Supply of Improved Toolkits to Rural Artisans (SITRA) and Million Wells Scheme (MWS) were redesigned and integrated as “Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarajgar Yojana (SGSY). Also other important programmes such as JRY and EAS were united and renamed as “Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY)

Another major programme called the Basic Minimum Services (BMS) was launched in 1996. This programme included seven important services as given under:-

- 1) Public Distribution System (PDS) for the poor
- 2) Good quality of food to children
- 3) Providing good connectivity to remote areas
- 4) Taking care of good health of the rural poor
- 5) Supplying drinking water
- 6) Construction of dwelling house to BPL families
- 7) Universalisation of elementary education

Development of Wasteland and unused land into productive land, cultivation of medicinal herb and energy plants, minor irrigation, and plantation of bamboo based products. (b) Rural non-farm activities including khadi and development of industries in villages, handicraft industries. (c) Small scale enterprises (d) Medium scale industries

17 Magnitude of Unemployment Due to the various forms of unemployment, there is no single measure to capture the magnitude of unemployment in India. Apart from the decadal census figures, the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) conducts more detailed Sample Surveys every five years on employment and unemployment. It undergoes three different lists for measuring: \* The Current Weekly Status (CWS) includes a person if he has not worked even for one hour during the week though ready for work. \* The Current Daily Status (CDS) measures all the days of employment / unemployment as well as underemployment during the reference week. \* The Usual Status (US) concept which has to refer to a period of one year and classifies a person as employed or unemployed on the basis of his activity for the major part of the year. Chronic unemployment can be measured by US and CWS data. However, for policy formulation regarding supplementary employment, all the above three different lists are used at a time. Keeping this high unemployment, the government appointed Special group on Targeting Ten Million Employment opportunities in 2001. Followings are the main recommendations. It (i) Focuses on the unorganized sector which provides jobs for 92 percent of the labour force for additional job creation; (ii) Recommends the diversification of agriculture so that this sector will provide about 50 percent of all jobs by the year 2011 - 2012. Rural Inequality It is an important characteristic of rural economy. Due to this gap among the people in rural area, the rural economy suffers setback further. According to the report in the year 1971 revealed by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) regarding inequalities in rural economy are as follows:- 1) 50 percent of rural households had no livestock whatsoever. 2) 45 percent of rural households had no farm machines. 3) 10 percent of rural households had no durable assets.

1.5 Poverty Human Development Report (HDR) 1997 defines Poverty as the denial of opportunities to enjoy a long healthy, creative life and to enjoy a decent standard of living, freedom, dignity, self respect and the respect of others. Income is the most common measure of poverty. Another is basic needs approach. Measurement of Poverty One of the first attempts to define and measure poverty was done by the working group of the planning commission which defined in terms of a minimum level of living. The HDR 1997 attempted a new type of calculating and defining Poverty called Human Poverty Index (HPI). Longevity is measured by the percentage of people who are expected to die before the age of 40. Knowledge is measured by the percentage of adults who are illiterate.

As per the report of NSSO, there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of people below the poverty line in recent times, the percentage below the Poverty line reduced from 51.5% in 1972 - 73 to 26% in 1999 - 2000. In absolute term, the population below poverty line has declined to 260 million after remaining stationary at around 300 million for almost 30 years.

23 According to Report undertaken by NSSO, the poverty incidence ratio or head count ratio Comparison of population below the poverty line between India and Manipur 1993 - 94 and 1999 - 2000

	1993 - 94	1999 - 2000
All India	37.27	32.36
Urban (%)	35.97	27.1
Rural (%)	23.6	26.1
Manipur	45.01	36.09
Urban (%)	7.73	40.86
Rural (%)	40.04	7.47

Source: - Reports by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) year 1999 - 2000, p. 175. The percentage of rural population below poverty line was 45.01% in the year 1993-94 in Manipur. It was more than 37.27% national rural population below poverty line. The percentage has come down 40.04 even though rate of decline was quite slow as compared to the all India percentage of rural population below poverty line. 36.09 % of the population was below the poverty line in the state of Manipur in 2000. The Tenth Plan has taken the above figure of 26% for planning purposes. Out of the 260 million below the poverty line, 195 million (75%) and the rest 65 million (25%) are in the rural areas and Urban areas respectively. The Planning Commission has fixed Rs. 327.56 rupees per capita per month in 23 Report, National Sample Survey Organization, 1999-2000 21 rural areas and Rs. 454.11 rupees per capita per month in urban areas as per the latest estimate in the year 1999 - 2000.

24 Policies for eradication of Poverty The Fourth Five-Year Plan started giving greater emphasis on the need for special poverty alleviation programmes for disadvantaged areas and sectors such as small and marginal farmers, artisans, SC/ST Communities etc. Several programmes such as Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA), Marginal Farmers Agricultural Labourers (MFAL), Tribal Area Development Programme (TADP) and Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) were initiated. The Eighth Plan adopted an integrated programme of local area development of selected villages. Poverty is predominantly a rural phenomenon; urban poverty is only a spill over of the rural poor who migrate to the urban areas in search of some source of livelihood. Therefore, the emphasis has been on removing rural poverty through a two pronged approach – (i) providing direct wage employment to the unemployed/underemployed by utilizing the labour to create and maintain community assets like irrigation, tanks, roads etc. (ii) promoting rural self - employment by helping the beneficiary to own some productive return through a mix of subsidized bank credit and outright subsidy. The pattern of execution of Rural Development Programmes in Manipur follows the pattern of Rural Development Programmes of the country as a whole. Thus, it is obligatory to write a brief note about the initiation of the 24 Ibid 22 programme in our country while briefing about Rural Development Programmes. Directive Principles enshrined in the constitution aim at the establishment of a welfare state committed to the realization of the ideals proclaimed in the Preamble of the Constitution. Article 40 states that the state shall organise village panchayats as units of self- government. The Government plans to improve the living standard of the people in village areas and hence initiated various development measures. However, the progress was not satisfactory and it needed to be reformulated and restructured with proper planning and method.

1.6 Rural Development in Manipur

Community Development Programme was also introduced in Manipur immediately after its launching in 1952 at the all India level. It started in the Thoubal CD Block on 2 October year 1952, when 55 Community Development Projects were launched throughout the country.<sup>26</sup> It was working under the umbrella of the Directorate of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj. The Programme was started in order to make the rural people understand and attentive of the National Development Programmes of Social Development and Reconstruction so that they were benefited so as to bring a change in the socioeconomic life of the villagers in Manipur.

In 1952, during the First Five-Year Plan period, Programme of Community Development was divided into three stages. The allocation of fund was decided on the size of the above three stages. The three stages were - (i) Pre basic stage (ii) the more intensive stage (iii) post intensive stage.

The CDP could not activate the people very much and was unable to achieve its target.

During the Second Five-Year Plan (1956-61), the Government established 8 more Community Development Blocks in Manipur. These were as follows:

1. Imphal East CD Block Sawombung \_\_\_\_\_ April 1955
2. Ukhrul Tribal Development (TD) Block Ukhrul \_\_ October 1956
3. Jiribam CD Babupara \_\_\_\_\_ April 1957
4. Tamenglong TD Block \_\_\_\_\_ October 1957
5. Churachandpur TD Block \_\_\_\_\_ October 1958
6. Phungyar - Phaisat TD Block \_\_\_\_\_ October 1959
7. Bishnupur CD Block Bishnupur \_\_\_\_\_ April 1960
8. Chandel CD Block \_\_\_\_\_ October 1960

There are two Community Development blocks i.e. C.D. Block Haorangsabal and C.D. Block Wangoi in Imphal West District and three 25 Community Blocks i.e. C.D. Block, Sawombung, C.D. Block Keirao Bitra and C.D. Block, Jiribam. Zilla Parishads, Gram Parishads and village Panchayats are applicable only in valley districts and existed under their district community development blocks but in the hilly region, there are District Autonomous Councils existing under their District C.D. Blocks. 1.7 Role of State Institute of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development (SIPRARD) The SIPRARD established in 2000, is the institute which imparts training to Panchayat functionaries which includes all staffs concerning the Panchayati Raj and Rural Development and the need of Panchayati Raj in handling programmes of Rural Development and tackling various issues and problems. This institute is working under the guidance of Rural Development Department. The SIPRARD is the biggest training institute of rural development in the state. Formerly This Institute was named as the Manipur Panchayati Raj Training Institute (MPRTI) and later changed into State Institute of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development vide Govt. order No. 7/7/90 - dated 04-01-2000 to maintain similar form of the SIPRARDs in accordance with the norms of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. Objectives of the training courses under SIPRARD a) To understand the procedure and technique of planning and execution of Schemes; b) To be aware of removal of poverty; c) To organise and develop the coordination between officials and elected representatives, NGOs etc; 26 Training It provides both in - campus and off - campus training programmes. The SIPRARD organised 15 training courses comprising 11 on campus and 4 off-campus programmes conducted by the National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad in collaboration with the NERC, Guwahati in the year 2000-2001, Further, During 2001 - 2002, the Institute had provided training to 458 trainees through 12 training courses including both off - campus and on - campus at District and Block level. The Institute conducted forty six training programmes (25- in campus and 21- off campus) during the year 2002 - 03.

## Literature Review

Abundant literature materials are available. There is plenty of literature on this concerned and related subject. Many intellectuals and scholars have carried out a number of studies in similar pattern. However, no scholar has conducted any work on the present topic.

The original works of the great scholars and intellectuals have been analysed and their contributions have been taken into consideration in the study for a clear, vivid and undiluted idea of these intellectuals. In addition to these available books, journals or periodicals related to the concerned subject are also covered for better analysis and contribution. Various historical and regional studies have been done at the micro and macro levels on the Panchayati Raj system and Rural Development Programmes. Panchayati Raj system and democratic decentralization has turned a new shape after the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee reports. It is because the committee report laid down the very foundation for the Panchayati Raj or Local Self Government. Present study is related to the rural development programmes-its social and economic analysis. Similarly, various related studies and books have been referred and reviewed which are relevant and necessary for the study. Followings are the referred studies:-

Abdul Aziz traces the evolution of rural local governance system in Karnataka indicates its present status, suggestions for more effective. He reveals that the meetings of the Gram Sabha were held almost regularly in the 56 beginning and irregular in the year to come. It talks about the necessary and requirements for the good and effective local body with a normative good as such. The minimum requirements of a good and effective local governance system are the followings:

- (I) that structure should have a conducive environment in which it functions.
- (II) have an appropriate institutional structure.

He has focused on the response of the Karnataka government towards keeping these parameters in view. He reviews the evolution of local governance system in Karnataka to see how far the latter has moved towards the normative goal. There were local fund committees in each district in 1874 for implementing construction development works. But these committees are not people friendly. The Mysore village Panchayats and Local Boards act, 1959 was passed keeping in mind the broad framework of the Balwantrao Mehta Committee. In spite of satisfying the requirements for a strong local self body it does not provide financial autonomy in reality.

Financial autonomy was not provided in full swing as stated in the 1959 Act. The Karnataka Panchayati Raj Act 1993 suggests forming a three tier system of fully elected decentralized governance.

George Mathew has thoroughly studied and analysed regarding the autonomy of local bodies in the state of West Bengal, Karnataka, Orissa. He considered for need of reforms in Panchayati Raj system and emphasizes for constructive role of the judiciary in the administration effectively. He further suggested making the structural infrastructure of panchayati raj more efficient. He stated that conducting regular elections of the panchayats would enhance the political awareness, public participation among people and involvement of people in decision making of local self bodies and implementation of rural development works.

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## Conclusion

As last part of the thesis, chapter six will sum up main findings of this work. Present author attempts to conclude whether the analysis supports or rejects the main hypothesis constructed in Chapter I. In the previous chapters an attempt has been made to assess the various rural development schemes taken up by the government of India in reducing the poverty and the role of Panchayati Raj in implementing those development works effectively. In line with this development works so, various major development schemes taken up in Manipuri have been touched upon. It discusses various problems, difficulties faced by Panchayati Raj Institutions, loopholes, findings and suggestions. Panchayati Raj Institutions seem to face a lot of interferences in proper functioning and implementation of work.

There are irregularities in releasing fund. Funds are not released in time and insufficient to achieve the target. The concerned department can not submit the utilization certificate in time that is the main reason for not releasing of fund in time. Elected Members are more interested in generating new assets rather than ensuring proper use. Development is concentrated more on the member's area or ward. No sufficient knowledge regarding the programmes is generally seen among the members. There is lack of training for elected members and staffs of the implementing agencies.

It has been observed that partiality and favouritism are clearly visible in the identification and selection of the beneficiaries. While preparing the list of probable beneficiaries, the village Panchayat members, the Pradhan of the locality select their own people which are of better economic standard and close to them, ignoring BPL people. There is also a lot of political interferences in the identification and selection of beneficiaries in the village especially from local MLAs, MPs etc.

The elected representatives of the village do not conduct detailed household survey; do not prepare any data of rural poor while selecting the beneficiaries. Villagers are kept blind in this regard. Generally, the officials at the block level and also at the district level accept the forwarded list of village representative without much verification.

In most cases, the list of beneficiaries at the block or district level gets rearranged in order to provide space for the people who are close to MLAs/MPs etc. There is hardly any chance to get selected for those people who are not close to any representative of people like MLAs, Pradhan, Zilla Parishad members etc. Under such circumstances, the targeted people may not get benefits provided under many rural development schemes. To go by the target of the programme, identification and selection of beneficiaries must be proper in true sense of the term.

Number of persondays is quite less than the 100 days Guaranteed in the MGNREGS Act. Daily working hours among the job card holders is quite less as compared to the guidelines given in MGNREGS. Number of women job card holders is more than number of men job card holders in MGNREGS. So, Women job card holders dominate over the menfolks in the work. Women do not hesitate to work and thus reminding the work culture of the women in the society. It shows that manipuri women are very energetic and physically strong and they are not less than other energetic women in the world. It gives us the information that women in Manipur are at stake and having culture to work as that of men.

Gram Sabha: It is a statutory institution provided in the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act, 1994. Gram Sabha consists of all registered persons in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of the Panchayat at the village level.

In spite of all these defects, there is improvement in socio-economic conditions of rural people. So, people have intention to welcome such programmes. There is overall improvement in cleanliness of surroundings. Many new local assets are developed. It further imposes the work culture among the people and it has succeeded upto certain extent in this regard. Programmes like SGSY have incorporated the feeling of entrepreneurship 163 among the people. Schemes like IAY have decreased the homeless people in the districts upto a great extent. People show smiling face whenever such schemes knock their ears. The implementation of rural development programmes through the Panchayat Raj Institutions has brought a radical change in the socio-economic conditions of the rural people especially those people who are below poverty line. The execution of the rural development programmes has changed even the social and political affairs and mindsets of the people. There is improvement in the income and overall living standard of the beneficiaries. The most interesting one is that people have no work are provided work especially under the schemes like MGNREGA, SGSY etc. Schemes like PMGSY has improved the road connectivity in rural areas, these are the nerves of the development.

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## GLOSSARY

Chakat - Feeding the State servants.

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Garod - Military Court.

Hanjaba - A village head.

Hidang - A village head. Kai-rup - Tiger Party.

Lai-Haraoba - A festival performed once in a year to pacify the local God.

Lai-rup - Lai Party.

Lup - One division like the modern block.

Lallup - Compulsory military training.

Langsoi - An instrument for pacifying elephant.

Lamboos - A big spear.

Meira Paibi - Women Torch Bearers.

Nupi Khainaba - Divorce.

Pacha - Women's Court.

Phamdon Phamloop - Executive Body

Panch - five.

Piba - The head of a clan in Manipur.

Puya - Puran, anonymous old book of Manipur.

Shinglup - Firewood Association.

Sagei - Clan.

Shing - Ginger.

Umang Pothang - carrying state servant's luggage.

Yairek Santry - Guarding the State servants at night