



Indian Council of
Social Science Research



Two Days National Seminar
on
“Working of Panchayati Raj Institution in the Scheduled Areas of Madhya Pradesh: Expectations and Reality”

(17th & 18th, February, 2023)

Sponsored by

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Organised by

Department of Political Science & Human Rights
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak (MP)



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About The Seminar

The state of Madhya Pradesh has largest tribal population in the country. They are also extremely diverse in location, origins, socio-cultural history, language, livelihood and level of development. Nearly 14.7 percent tribal population of the country is residing in Madhya Pradesh. Presently Madhya Pradesh has 51 districts, Jhabua and Alirajpur districts have the highest tribal concentration in the state which is more than 80 percent of the district's total population. Districts like Dhar, Barwani, Chhindwara, Jhabua and Alirajpur contribute about 25 percent to the state's tribal population. According to 2011 census the tribal population of the state is 153.16 lakh constituting 21.1 percent of the total population of Madhya Pradesh and 33.6 percent of total geographical area notified as Scheduled Area. About 10 percent of the tribal population is located in urban areas, while 90 percent of it resides in rural areas. The comparison of percentage of Scheduled Tribes population shows that Madhya Pradesh consists of higher percentage of total, rural and urban Scheduled Tribes population than India. Therefore, it is often called tribal state of India. After the formation of new districts in the state, there are 11,784 villages, 5,211 Gram Panchayats, 89 Tribal Development Blocks 5 fully and 15 partly covered districts in notified Vth Scheduled Areas. Madhya Pradesh now has 49 TSP areas, 39 MADA pockets and 5 Clusters. Each of these has a specific project and fund allocation which is handled and coordinated by the Department of Tribal Development and Welfare. Besides this, about 39.43 lacks tribals are scattered outside Tribal Sub-Plan Area, which is 32.23 percent of the total Scheduled Tribe population of the state. There are 43 Scheduled Tribes inhabiting in the state among them three tribal communities namely- Baiga, Bharia and Saharia are notified as "particular vulnerable tribal groups (PVTGs)".

The distinct identity, culture and way of life of the tribal community of India have remained separate from the rest of the society for ages. Each tribal group settled in different areas of the country has its own separate traditional or caste panchayat. Through this caste panchayat, the community manages their social system and resources on their own since centuries. In order to maintain peace in their areas, to resolve mutual disputes and to manage resources, these people have themselves established institutions like meeting of aged people, village head, village panchayat, inter-village panchayat, tribal head etc. Tribal community has been regularizing, planning and controlling their social, economic and political affairs and mutual disputes and religious issues through traditional political institutions. These Panchayats along with administrative functions also provide a social platform to the society. These panchayats act as a pillar of support for maintaining harmony among all the people of the village. The system remained unchanged till Mughal period. The Britishers tried to change the system in the colonial interest but they could not succeed in their attempt due to the resistant of the tribal to the changes. Many tribal movements started to protest against these changes. Therefore, the British government realized and made separate provisions for administration of tribal areas. In the year 1874, the British government introduced the Scheduled District Act to provide administration in the scheduled districts. Through the Acts of 1919 and 1935 by the British Government, more autonomy was given to the administration of these areas. Similarly, the Constituent Assembly had also made several provisions for the administration of scheduled areas under the 5th and 6th schedules of the Constitution.

No doubt, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act provided respectable spaces for the tribal community in the working of PR System but this legislation was not in accordance with their separate administrative system, different need, ethos and their traditional institutions with which they have been associated for ages. Keeping in view of the agitation by the tribals and

judicial verdict of the Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Bihar and Maharashtra High Courts, a need was felt for extending the provisions of part IX of the Constitution to the Scheduled Areas by enacting law in the parliament. As a result of such demands and needs of the tribal communities, a committee of parliamentarians was appointed in June, 1994 by Government of India under the chairmanship of Dilip Singh Bhuria. The committee wanted traditional institution on which modern super-structure should be built because diverse tribes living in the schedule areas had their own distinctive culture and special problems, but the issues of having separate panchayat raj system came up for the first time. The committee presented its report in 1995. Many of the recommendations of the Bhuria Committee were accepted by the Union Government and the Legislation was passed, to be known as Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996. This Act was also popularly known as PESA Act. This Act extended 73rd amendment Act to the Scheduled Area mentioned under the Clause (2) of Article 244 of the Constitution. After that, it became mandatory on the part of the states to amend their existing Panchayat Acts in conformity with the Extension Act within year i.e. December 24, 1997.

PESA Act and its implementation in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh was the first state in the country to enact and implement the PR system in the true spirit of this Act. On the line of central PESA Act, Madhya Pradesh Panchayat Raj (Dwitiya Sanshodhan) Adhiniyam, 1997 was enacted by the state assembly. It received Governor's assent on December 2, 1997 and was promulgated on December 5, 1997. While redefining the powers of PRIs, the Act Adds Chapter XIV-A, which delineates the constitution of Gram Sabha, prescribes the mode of reservation of seats for them along with the powers and functions of these institutions of the scheduled areas.

Expectations from the PESA Act

The Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha are the basic institutions of the decentralized governance. These are the first modern political institutions that seek to place direct political power in the hands of the people, without the mediation of elected representatives. The Gram Sabha offers equal opportunity to all citizen of a village to discuss, criticize and approve or reject the proposals of the panchayat executive and assesses its past performance and thus it is a watchdog of democracy at the grassroots level. Since after the passing of PESA by the parliament the Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha has become the central issue in the PRIs discussion. The Union Finance Minister in his budget speech (1999) declared that 1999 to 2000 as the year of the Gram Sabha, which was a great attention. Besides, after passing of ambitious MGNREGA and FRA Acts by the parliament, Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha's power, functions and duties has much more increased. The Gram Panchayat and the Gram Sabha has a crucial role in execution of both programmes. The Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha are empowered through this Act for giving approvals for development plans, prioritizing, identifying beneficiaries, promoting active participation of people in implementing development programmes. Social auditing, transparency, monitoring and controlling over fund, identifying beneficiaries for other individual schemes and raise the public grievances in Gram Sabha meeting and much more powers have been devolved to Gram Sabha. The PESA enabled the Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha to ensure greater participation of the people and effective implementation of tribal development programmes. Really the gram sabha is the gateway to grassroot democracy, the base of the Panchayati Raj, one of the most important institutions of the new direct democracy at the village level, a mechanism to bridge the gap between civil society and the panchayat. Under the PESA Act, people have received the opportunity to play a role in deciding their own destiny.

Grassroot Reality of Implementation of PESA Act in Madhya Pradesh

Thus, almost 25 years have elapsed to implement of PESA, 16 years of MNREGA and 15 years of FRA in the Madhya Pradesh and during this period several studies have been conducted which come out with very different grassroots picture of working process of Gram Sabha. No doubt, the Gram Sabha is the most powerful foundation of decentralized governance but unfortunately it could not become a vibrant and important institution at the grassroots level because of self-interest motivated leadership and bureaucracy. It is another fact that, even in states where PESA rules have been framed, the administrative machinery working as it is, nothing changed on the ground. Madhya Pradesh is the seventh state out of 10 states with fifth schedule areas to implement the law. Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra have already formulated PESA rules to implement the 1996 central Act, while Chhattisgarh has notified their PESA rules on 8th August, 2022. The Chief Minister of M.P. announced in a public rally in Indore on 4 November 2021 that the Government of M.P will implement the provisions of PESA Act in a phased manner. Finally, Government of Madhya Pradesh has notified the rules for implementation of PESA Act on 15th November 2022. It is a matter of great concern that state government has notified the rules and regulation after 25 years of its existence. Some other reasons which are making PESA Act weak, are- Union Government brought many other legislations and included many provisions of PESA Act into these legislations. For instance- The Land Acquisition Act, 2013 and Forest Right Act, 2006 have empowered Gram Sabha immensely. This complex situation is also hampering the working of PESA. It has been observed that land was acquired by the government and private firm without prior consent of Gram Sabha. It is not happening only in Madhya Pradesh but also in other States like- Jharkhand and Odisha. Many cases regarding land acquisition without taking consent from the Gram Sabha are coming from these states.

Many studies have been showing that the level of awareness regarding panchayat is very low among the panchayat representatives and Gram Sabha members in the Scheduled Areas of the country. Almost all the Gram Sabha members and even some bureaucrats are not aware about the provisions of PESA. As a result, Gram Sabha has been made almost a formal institution with no active participatory role to various assigned works. The clear gap can be seen between the macro decision and grassroots reality. However, the PESA Act has empowered Gram Sabha and Panchayat for controlling government offices at village level i.e. School, Aganwadi, Balwadi, Health Centre and Patwari office etc but unfortunately picture was not satisfactory. The PR representatives and Gram Sabha members are not capable to handle and control these institutions. In many places of the states, the non tribal people and government officers have decisive position and have been taking decision on all the issues without prior consent to the Gram Sabha. According to the PESA Act, natural resource management shall be done by Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha but unfortunately even then forest department have captured all the delegated powers.

The picture of functioning of Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha which are emerging in Vth Schedule Areas is very complex. In a brief, keeping in view the Tribal way of life, tradition and custom, a new effort has been made by enacting PESA Act which ensures active participation of the tribes in their development. The Gram Panchayat plays a vital role in the implementation of this Act as well as the other schemes. In this situation, for the better understanding to Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha need another discussion so that all the issues of functioning of Gram Panchayat and Gram Sabha could be covered. For this purpose, a clear

understanding of tribals' relationship with the Gram Panchayat is quite essential. The proposed seminar is a humble attempt in this direction.

Objectives of the Seminar

The purpose of the seminar is to examine and analyze the effectiveness of PRIs in the scheduled areas of the Madhya Pradesh not only in promoting tribal development and capacity building but also in fostering the cause of social justice and equitable growth. Another objective of the seminar is to know how far and how many best practices and capacity building initiatives have been effective at the operational level. Yet another objective is to identify the difficulties faced by the local-level decision-making units in monitoring and implementing rural development policies and schemes. In order to attain the above objectives, the Seminar intends to find out the loopholes that exist in the PRIs and the real problems confronting the beneficiaries. In addition, the Seminar intends to focus on social, political and legal issues and to seek suggestions from the policy makers, members of the civil society, noted academicians and stakeholders about possible solutions regarding overhauling the PRIs. So, this national seminar will provide a platform to academicians, researcher and activists who are studying, working or engaged in local rural bodies in tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh. The participants will try to explore ways by which the administration of PRIs in India can be enhanced.

Sub-themes of Seminar

- 1 Concept of decentralization and devolution of power for making democracy more participating
- 2 Traditional Political Institutions and their functioning in Tribal Areas
- 3 Exploring ancient ways of tribal people for taking decision at village level
- 4 Democratic Decentralized Governance in 5th Scheduled Areas after enforcement of Constitution,
- 5 Implementation of PESA Act in 5th Scheduled Areas of M.P.
- 6 Justice, Equity and Inclusive Growth under the PRIs in Scheduled Areas.
- 7 Participation and Role of Tribal Women in the GP and GS.
- 8 Status of Tribal Women in Panchayati Raj Institutions
- 9 Mobilization and utilization of own source of revenue.
- 10 The Role of the Indian Constitution in augmenting laws and policies on PRIs.
- 11 The social and legal problems facing by the PRIs in scheduled areas.
- 12 E-panchayats and the role of information technology.
- 13 Role of Gram Panchayat in the Socio, Economic and Political Development of the Tribal Community in India.
- 14 Institutional capacity building through training and community participation.
- 15 The role of law in ensuring transparency and accountability in PRI institutions.
- 16 Initiative by NGOs, Civil Society and Media for the betterment of PRI in scheduled areas

About University and Department

The Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak has been established by an Act of the Parliament of India. It came into existence by the Indira Gandhi National Tribal University Act, 2007 and came into action on July 2008. The jurisdiction of the University extends to the whole country and it is fully funded by the Central Government through the University Grant Commission.

Department of Political Science and Human Rights

Department of Political Science & Human Rights was established in 2008. It is one of the premier Department of Faculty of Social Sciences. The primary objective of Department is to foster interdisciplinary insight on issues pertaining to contemporary issues of Political Science. Department promotes interdisciplinary thinking and creates opportunities for the students. Department has a regular UG, PG, Ph.D. Programmes and offers courses on International Relations, Foreign Policy of Indian, Contemporary Issues & trends of Global Politics, Human Rights, Indian Government and Politics, Politics of Tribal Development, Comparative Politics, Political Theory, Public Administration. Department regularly organizes National/ International Seminars, Conferences, workshops, round table discussions, talks and lectures.

About Amarkantak

Amarkantak is one of the best tourist and religious place of Madhya Pradesh. Amarkantak is situated in Madhya Pradesh in India. It has an average elevation of 1048 metres (3438 ft). The holy rivers- the Narmada, the Sone and Johila originate from the Amarkantak.

How to Reach: Amarkantak is situated 30 kms in the west of Pendra Road Railway Station (Chattisgarh) on Katni-Bilaspur track of South West Central Railway. Almost all the trains plying on this track stop here. It can be reached by bus from all directions as there are good frequency of buses on Jabalpur, Raipur, Bilaspur, and Allahabad, Rewa, Shahdol, Dindori and Anuppur routes. Amarkantak can be approached by air through Jabalpur (M.P.) in the West and Raipur (Chattisgarh) in the East.

Nearest Airport

1. Bilaspur - Distance 120 KM from Amarkantak.
2. Raipur - Distance 230 KM from Amarkantak.
3. Jabalpur - Distance 230 KM from Amarkantak.

Nearest Railway Station

1. Pendra Road - Distance 35 KM from Amarkantak
2. Bilaspur- Distance 120 KM from Amarkantak

Registration Fee:

Participants

Research Scholars & Students (M.Phil /PhD)	Rs. 500
Academicians/Faculty Members	Rs. 600

The registration fee has to be deposited/credited to the following Account Number:

Account Holder Name	:	Seminar on Panchayati Raj
Account Number	:	110090928769
IFSC Code No	:	CNRB0006752
Name of the Bank	:	CANARA BANK
Branch	:	Lalpur IGNTU, Amarkantak, Madhya Pradesh

Accommodation: Modest Accommodation will be provided to all the outstation participants and will be accommodated in the University Guest House/Hostels.

Travelling Allowance: TA/DA will be provided to only selected participants (only main author) subject to submission of full paper.

Guidelines to the authors

The author/s should submit the abstract either in Hindi or English and not exceeding 500 words. Title of the abstract, keywords, Designation of the authors/co-authors, Institutional affiliation, Email and Mobile Number has to be mentioned clearly along with the abstract on the separate page. A soft copy of the Abstract and Full-Length Paper has to be mailed on the following email-id: **udayigntu@gmail.com**

Important Dates:

Last date of Abstract Submission : 5th February, 2023 (udayigntu@gmail.com)

Last date of Registration Fee : 10th February, 2023

Full Paper Submission date : 10th February, 2023

Seminar Dates : 17th & 18th February, 2023

Publication of the Proceedings: All selected quality papers will be published in the form of book with the reputed National/International publishers.

For any queries related to National Seminar, please feel free to contact at the following address:

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