

Panchayati Raj: Towards Good Governance

“Just as the whole universe is contained in the self so is India contained in the villages”¹ Mahatma Gandhi

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ABSTRACT: *This paper discussed about the Rationale of Good governance in present era of Globalization at Grassroot level. It discuss about the Rural India and 73rd Amendment act of 1992 and how Panchayati raj Institutions and the need of transparency and accountability through good governance . For the upliftment of rural village there is a esurience of delivering better service by using information technology and giving better quality of life at grass roots. For this there is need to strengthen democracy through good governance. The issue of governance at the forefront of the development agenda and states “good governance is one of most crucial factor for development”. Governance is wider than government which ensures the responsibility and accountability of various community i.e government, the civil society and the corporate sector.*

Keywords: *Good Governance, Transparency, Accountability*

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural India is where ¾ of our countrymen live. The Nation can, therefore, be strong and prosperous only when all villages are fixed from backwardness and poverty. Panchayats have been the backbone of Indian villages. Rural development is not a mechanical development. It is a human process it requires hard work, dedication, responsiveness and accountability of both official and non-officials to make rural development a success. In spite of strong trends of urbanization, the vast majority of the population is in rural still lives below the poverty line.

In recent, the emphasis in regard to development has shifted to rural development on account of the obvious failure of the earlier planned development effort to bring about an appreciable improvement either in the living conditions of the weaker sections of the rural population or in reducing the poverty and unemployment.. In order to ensure a balanced economic development the fruits of development should percolate to the grass-root levels. It requires changes in the economic, social, political and psychological behaviour of rural people who are illiterate and ignorant. Democratic decentralization aims at developing rural areas by the people themselves with the support of good governance by local bureaucracy. Panchayati raj institutions are the instruments to carry out the programmes of rural development. Good governance is of great significance in making Panchayati raj institutions functional and efficient.

The constitution of India promulgated in Jan, 1950 for setting up democratic and semi-federal system also includes a provision relating to the panchayat² . Even after providing constitutional status to Panchayati raj institution through 73rd Amendment Act of 1992, it was necessary for the states to devolve adequate powers and functions to them. The Good governance which strengthens the grass-root democracy to be efficient and effective.

Rationale of good governance in panchayati raj institutions:

Good governance is an essential ingredient for socio-economic development of the country. The concept of governance is simple “ The way those with power use that power”. It centers around the responsibility of government and governing bodies to meet the needs of the masses as opposed to select groups in society. It is seen as a set of values, policies and institutions through which the society manages economic, political as well as social process at different levels.

The issue of good governance in recent time, emerged at the forefront of the agenda for sustainable human development. According to the UNDP policy, Governance for sustainable human development, the concept relates to the quality of relationship between the government and the citizens whom it serves and protects. It is a fuzzy concept. According to World Bank’s document 1992 governance is the manner in which power is exercised in the Management of a country’s economic and social resources for development. Any government to rule effectively and in a citizen-friendly manner has to ensure good governance. Governance has emerged as one of crucial issue in the country. We can plan, Mobilize investment, train personnel, raise financial resources, induct the modern technologies and set for ourselves the goals for economic development, equity, social justice and better quality of life for all. Good governance should demonstrate the capacity to usher

in decentralization of powers that would prevent the sense of alienation among the elected representatives. It would promote welfare state in its true connotations where in people would be looked after by government as part and parcel of government machinery. It demands transparent administration by letting both not only decision making criterion and programmes drawn up open to the public but also by involving them. A good governance is epitomized by and can be secured by sound, responsive and competent administration, respect to basic human rights and values, strengthen democratic, institutional as well as structural frame work to ensure accountability and transparency.

Governance needs to be citizen-oriented, citizen-centric, citizen-friendly. In order to bring new developments in the system, it is much called for the governance system to include the required kind of changes, keeping in mind the need of the day. The government is primarily an information processing system, analyzing and interpreting data and making decisions based on them. We need to recognize that the goals of modern government are much more than economic efficiency. The need and demand for good governance has increased with the rapid expansion of the economy and the growing awareness and assertion of rights by an increasingly educated population, Accountable, Participatory. Good governance is critical for ensuring social inclusion, only through Panchayats which are Constitutionally mandated local democratic institutions, can ensure public, people participation and accountability. State governments regarding devolving more programmes and activities to panchayats is that panchayat have poor capacity and will not able to deliver, because of the weakness in terms of administrative and technical capacity with in panchayats leads to low capacity, inadequate devolution, disempowered institutions. Developing strong panchayati raj institutions it is essential to improve good governance and delivery of services which involves redistribution of power, institution building and development process that improve accountability to the people. Development is looked upon as holistic in nature, which creates an environment to foster a long, healthy, creative life among people and make the governance process which are locally relevant, democratic, participative and responsive.

Ensuring transparency and accountability in good governance:

The State has always occupied a significant role in our country. There has been an increasing concern evinced towards administrative reforms. Governance is wider in nature which encompasses, the achievement, goals of economy, efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. Initiates towards ensuring accountability through transparency, disclosure of information to the public by bureaucracy and politician have started gaining wider acceptance. To achieve the objectives of economy and efficiency under a good governance the term governance was replaced with conceptualization associated with public administration. The idea is embedded in the concept of liberalization which places explicit emphasis upon the dominance of the individual over collective preferences. They want their freedom and rights to be protected. Issues of accountability, responsiveness, Transparency are important as economic efficiency in running the affairs of the state. Accountability involves the existence of mechanisms that ensures the public officials and political leaders are answerable for their actions and use of public resources and which will require transparent government and a free media. Competence in making and executing appropriate policies and delivering efficient public services is essential, while respect for law and respect for human rights should buttress the entire system of good government recognized that secrecy and lack of openness in transactions is largely responsible for corruption. We can prevent number of scams occur in governments. The public will know what the government is doing, framing policies, what their rights, wages etc. It was a step towards responsive governance. If the mindset of politicians and bureaucrats undergoes a change and share the information and power with the people, rendering financial assistance, technical support and political advice, the IMF also lays great emphasis on good governance by ensuring accountability of their public sectors. The challenge of good governance would certainly require government to be re-invented, bureaucracy to be re-positioned, non-government business sectors to be re-invigorated with a social motive for all this there is need to shift to normative model of managing government. A reinvented government must have both ethical consistency and organizational flexibility to remain faithful to the goals of public service. It has function in a more missionary, have less machine-like and less hierarchical structure and procedures. Governance demands transparent administration by letting decision and policy – makers not only decision making criterion and the programmes drawn up open to the public but also by involving people.

Present status of good governance in panchayati raj institutions:

Recently our country celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the panchayati raj day on the 24th April, 2013. In spite of number of recommendations made by various committees, know what is the status of P.R.I in the era of globalization Is it developing or lagging behind?3”

- In Andhra Pradesh after a gap of 7 years elections were held in three phases in the month of July, 2013. We analyze the following points.
- Devolutions of 3Fs i.e. Functions, Finances, Functionaries are far from the letter and spirit of constitution.

- Article 243G with A243ZD have not been progressed except in few states.
- Panchayati raj is not followed by structured, scientific, consistent and sustained process of devolution which is leading to poverty and inequalities.
- The 12th plan failed to prioritise the role of panchayati raj institutions and in adversely inclusive growth.
- The new reforms were lagging.
- Panchayati raj unable to influence the human development outcomes.
- Video-recording was absent.
- There was a lot of cynicism and hearsay for the failure of panchayati raj institutions.
- Aggressive in implementing plans.
- Remove the perception among the people and ensure there is no shirking responsibility by panchayati member.
- The attendance of Grama Sabha and ward members meeting was poor.
- The new initiatives will make the elected representative more responsible and it will encourage women but neglected the group to voice their views.
- Devolution is essential for human development but the support of the factors like:
Accountability in delivering mechanism.
The clear delineation of roles and responsible of officer.
Stringent monitoring mechanism
Increase public awareness and capacity building of public
Functionaries at all levels.

II. CONCLUSION

Hence, the need for periodically rethinking on and even remodeling of the concept of Good governance is possible if our policies are implemented with the quality of manpower, sincerely and efficiently. We need to change the perspectives, poor training, procedures and encourage good people. Unless and until the mindset of bureaucrats is hard to change and set of procedures are re-oriented towards self decision-making a good governance is impossible with transparency and accountability.

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