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Gandhiji
Gram Swaraj
Decentralisation

Context and Content

Edited by

P.P. Balan
Sunny George
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PREFACE

This volume intends to give a glimpse of Gandhiji's coveted idea of Gram Swaraj with its application in avenues of day-to-day life of the people. This book comprises of lectures of invited dignitaries and the edited version of papers presented in the Second International Conference on "Gandhiji, Gram Swaraj and Democratic Organisation" held at KILA, during 27-29 November 2014. The conference was jointly organised by International Sociological Association and KILA.

The objective of the conference was to share the experiences in Ghandhiji's Gram Swaraj and Democratic Decentralization so as to formulate a strategy for further strengthening of Local Governments. Within this general framework of the objectives, we had fourteen areas for discussion in the Conference. Two hundred papers were presented by experts, administrators, academics and activists apart from a few invited lectures. The technical sessions helped to share the best practices by grama panchayats in varied and different areas in democratic decentralisation, In addition to this, as part of the Conference there were field visits to adjacent Grama Panchaysts, so as to give the participants a better understanding and feel of the ongoing system at the implementing level.

KILA is instrumental to impart good quality training and other inhouse and field level activities aiming at capacity building of both the elected representatives and officials of PRI's in and outside the State. It is functioning as the premier institute in the field of decentralisation and Panchayati Raj and provides sustainable supports to make the system more meaningful, informed and democratic. Publications of KILA are part and parcel of its activities related to the dissemination of ideas emerging out of experiences and field level experiments. This volume forms a part of this endeavour.

This book is an anthology of selected speeches and some of the papers presented and discussed in the conference basically related to Gandhiji, Gram Swaraj and its contextualisation. We granted priority to the young researchers in this field, so as to give impectus to their research and contributions and to enthuse them with Gandhian Philosphy in general and Gram Swaraj in particular.

We are thankful to Dr. M.K. Muneer, Hon'rable Minister for Panchayat and Social Justice for guiding us in these activities.

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List of Abbreviations

BC	Beneficiary Committee
CAA	Constitution Amendment Act
CEP	Community Empowerment Plan
CTA	Central Tibettan Administration
ESCAP	Economic and Social Council for Asia & Pacefic
GP	Grama Panchayat
GS	Grama Sabha/Grama Swaraj
KFB	Keral Federation of the Blind
KPRA	Keral Panchayat Raj Act
MGNREGA	Mahatma Ghandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
MYRADA	Mysore Resettlement & Development Agency
NBYA	National Blind Youth Association
NFB	National Federation of the Blind
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PRI	Panchayat Raj Institution
PVT	Particularly Vulnerable Tribe
SCP	Special Component Plan
SHG	Self Help Group
TSP	Tribal Sub Plan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WDR	World Development Report
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

Introduction

"Under Grama Swaraj all people in the village would jointly and cooperatively share alike the use of village resources for the welfare of all in the village; no private ownership, no state ownership; the village would be trustee and not owner….., therefore, there would be neither exploitation nor repression". Wrote the Mahatma as his views on the coveted idea of Gram Swaraj or Village Swaraj. Gandhiji wrote his, 'Hind Swaraj' or "India Home Rule', way back in 1908, during his return voyage from London to South Africa in answer to the Indian School of non-violence and its proto type in South Africa. After 30 years in 1938, while preparing the English translation, Gandhiji reiterated, "after the long thirty years, through which I have since passed, I have seen nothing to make me alter the views expounded in it".

Till date we have already covered 107 years of Hind Swaraj. The world has very much moved from the locale to the global, and in the present context of neo-liberal globalisation, it stands as a pertinent question that, can we create a local government, which can function as self-reliant, self-sufficient or self-sustainable? The world is changing and changing fast. Even countries cannot be self-sufficient and self-sustainable in the present world scenario, let alone villages and panchayats. Total political and economic independence of a village and the ideals of non-violence, satyagraha, trustee ship, etc. cannot be realised in the true sense in the modern world. So what should we do to establish Gandhian message and contextualise it in the Gram Swaraj. The collection of papers included in this volume is an attempt to propagate the present scenario of a globalising world.

The present volume, is an outcome of the International Conference on Gandhiji, Gram Swaraj and Democratic Decentralisation held at KILA, Kerala, during 27-29 November, 2014. This comprises of two parts. In the first part, we included five invited lectures and in the second having eleven papers presented in various sessions of the Conference. They collectively stand for in-depth knowledge based on personal relations academic findings, and field level experiences, of the luminaries.

The selected papers that are included in this volume make attempts to contextualise Gram Swaraj and Gandhiji in their respective fields. Out of the eleven papers, three papers are placing Gandhiji in the areas of alternate economic model, panchayti raj and environment. Three papers are exploring forms of Swaraj practices in three different types of settlements – Bodoland, Baila Kuppa and Sekmai Loi. The paper on Sekmai Loi also contributes to the wealth of traditional forms of government among the Scheduled Castes in Manipur. The ninth and tenth chapters capture the plight of Schedule Tribes in Kerala. The eleventh paper explains the relation between Swaraj and Suraj (Good Governance) and the probable outcome due to the relation between them. The remaining papers deal with the issue of physically challenged people and women and the possibilities of using Gandhian methods to strengthen their struggles for better living.

The paper by Chitta Ranjan Mishra on Gandhian economic model is prepared as an alternative with two objectives – one, to critically analyse the current model of development and second, to examine Grandhiji's notion of development and its stand as an alternative model of holistic approach. The paper also engages with issues related to sustainable development.

Dr.Mohandas has attempted to explain the content of Gram Swaraj and the way in which it is being practiced or contextualised in the Panchayati raj activities in the state of Karnataka. In this sense, the paper discusses at length the philosophy, rationale, foundation, organisation and essentiality of Gram Swaraj.

The chapter written by Chongtham Laxmi Devi, is a noval one pertaining to the enquiry of Green substance in the writings of Gandhiji. She noted that, when analysing the substances of the philosophy of Green thinkers, and Green Party, a lot of resemblance to Gandhian ideas are visible. Thus, she made an enquiry to note whether Green tenents are part and parcel of Gandhian Philosophy. She further pointed out that there are many correlation between the two; and today's Greens are very much obliged to the Gandhian Philosophy.

The paper by Nironjon Islary, explores how movement for a separate homeland within the line of specific identity helped in creating many autonomous councils in Assam. It primarily presents the process and composition of Bodos movement that helped in the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Council. This paper falls in the purview of decentrliased form of governance, giving special preference to the marginalised within the frame of work of Gandhian idea of Panchayati Raj.

The paper by Joanna on Balu Kuppa in Karnataka attempts to elucidate how Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on Gram Swaraj have been the basis around which Tibetan refugees in India have organised themselves when a symbiotic national community with specific political and geo-cultural boundaries get dismantled. It leads to the collective construction of secular community among the members of the former national community. By examining the practice of community governance adopted by the Tibettan Settlements in India, this chapter seeks to show how Gandhiji's advocacy for a village based political formation fostered by a stateless classless society found a ready votary in the Tibetan refugee settlement in India.

Rakesh S.K in his village study from Manipur explores the background functioning and the current state of affairs of traditional governments among the scheduled castes in Manipur

even after the implementation of the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution and the regular functioning of the Panchayat Raj Institutions, at the lower levels. The traditional local governments are known by the name Phamueiba and the study is centred around, such old traditional government, namely Sikmai.

Surjith, who is part of a Grama Panchayat administration in Kerala, brings out the fate of the Scheduled Tribes population who still forms part of an outlier section in the State. He noted that there is wider disparity within and between different tribal groups in the State. The study marks that, although there is a strong positive correlation between reservations of seats and inclusion of Tribes in local governments, there is no equity in capturing the new political opportunities between different tribal groups in Kerala. The study has attested that a few socio-economically and politically elite tribal groups cornered the maximum benefit of tribal reservation and the underprivileged and excluded segments gained a little. The decentralisation process initiated since the mid 1990s failed to make the expected changes in including the under privileged segments among the Scheduled Tribes population of Kerala.

The paper by Shilujas M on Life and Struggle of Tribal unwed mother in Wayanad explores the extend to which governmental policies and non-governmental activities contributed to change the living status of these women. It probes the efficiency of local government in implementing the projects.

Yadagiri's paper is on Gandhian views of Suraj (good governance) as a path way for inclusion of citizens in the state of affairs of administration. It explores within the framework of Gandhian Principles of sarvodaya, trusteeship, constructive programme, etc. and fried to explain their relationship with

participatory development and good governance. The paper concludes that "in order to deepen democracy and create countervailing institutions that can strengthen civil society and confer beurocratic influence as well, institutional pluralism needs to be promoted".

Renoj N.K. is illustrating a new academic attempt to locate movements of disable groups, across the country within the framework of Gandhian principles. This paper intends to find out and analyse the recognition and representation of the disable's movements in India and how the disabled communities apply the Gandhian mode of protest in their struggles to achieve their constitutional rights.

The paper by Prabhavati is looking into the areas where systematic or persistent discrimination targets, women and to understand whether Gandhian philosophy could provide an answer. Though women are more alert, active and bold today, it is a fact that majority of them face a marginal existence even in their homes. In this situation, the paper has tried to incorporate studies which corroborates the information generated from various sources that depict the mind-set of the society. The process of alienation of women from the political arena in the current scenario and the role of proxy political participation by the males is also put forth.

The studies explained in this volume that touches up on the status of eight different states in the country clearly share that Gram Swaraj has to go much more both in assimilating its content and practicing its context. The present day world within the framework of a neoliberal market mechanism is experiencing the impacts of both a world recessions due to a series of economic crisis, and a worldwide ecological crisis triggered by various forms of climate change and related issues. One way to resist the on slaught of this neoliberal policy and to overcome its impacts is to strengthen the local economy and society. When

this happened in a pro-people and democratic manner, its fruits will impact up on the overall wellbeing of the society. It will help us to resist the on slaught of neoliberal policies and to develop a self-reliant order at the local level. When secular and democratic values are coupled with this state of order we will be in a position to really honour, the "Father of the Nation".

Speech of Dr. M.K. Muneer

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments gave a break for uniform local government system all over the country. Kerala has attracted national and international attention for bold initiatives to establish local governments that can function as independent local self-governments with well-defined powers and functions. To safeguard democracy, people must have a keen sense of independence, self-respect, and their oneness and to insist upon choosing as their representative only such persons as are good and true. This is what Gandhiji said, as to how a citizen should be responsible in safeguarding democracy. Our topic today 'Gandhiji, Gram Swaraj and Democratic Decentralization' is significant in the larger context closely knit with these words of Gandhiji. As such citizens should have self-respect, a feeling of oneness, cleverness in choosing his representations who are good and true. These are the prerequisites for attaining our great goal of gramaswaraj. The lowest level of Kerala's decentralization is gramasabha. It has got worldwide attention. It is taken as a replicable model by other states of the country and even by some other countries. Kerala happens to be a model because no other Indian states have done anything better. It is a fact that we could cater to develop a participatory planning process at the local government level that can be adopted for at least adopted by others. The government of Kerala has devolved more powers, functions, functionaries and funds to local governments. And above that formally local tax for economic development for retaining social justice. We also succeeded in creating our own framework that the local governments function by its own without any tie up with higher tiers of government. Even now we have not yet attained the Gandhian concept of village swaraj. The local government should be capable of addressing the felt needs of local people. Our villages have to be free from casteism, communalism, terrorism, inequality and suffering. Such a state can be realized only by strengthening local governments.

Whatever achievements we have made in decentralization of power are made possible because of our firm conviction in democracy and participatory governance. We will continue to keep democracy by

incorporating people to participate in making decisions that impact their lives. Democratic decentralization is a formidable challenge. It is never so easy. Everybody wants decentralization. State government wants more power from Central government, local governments want more power to be devolved to them by the State governments and central government. All agree that power should flow from Loksabha to gramasabha. The flow of power from central government has started with the Constitutional amendments but it has not yet been properly reached the gramasabha. Unless and until we address this issue successfully, and ensure informed participation of people in decision making in gramasabha, all the nice talk about democratic decentralization - inclusive group, sustainable development and social justice will remain jargons in development discourses.

The question is decentralization up to which level. Most people would like decentralization up to their level and not beyond that. It is the presence of such persons and bodies stand in the ways of fast decentralization. We have to find ways to remove such impediments in the transfer of power from government to people.

I would like to highlight some outstanding features of Kerala's decentralizion experience. The development of a participatory planning process that has succeeded in identifying development needs of people and formulating plans to address these needs is an important achievement. Under the initiatives of Kudumbasree, the 41.5 lakhs of members of strong women self-help groups are implementing poverty alleviation programmes at local government level. It has emerged as a people's programme for women empowerment. Thanks for the efforts of committed officers and others. Government of India had taken lessons from the experience of Kudumbasree while formulating the National Rural Livelihood Mission for poverty alleviation programme that addresses the basic needs of destitutes and marginalized. I heard from some grama panchayats making declaration like nobody will starve in my panchayat because we have provision in our annual plans to provide food to all those who need. There will be not be a single houseless family in my panchayat once the housing scheme is completed. You may have heard about other replicable model projects implemented by panchayats such as total sanitation,

total computer literacy, houses for all, drinking water for all, e-governance, total quality management, and plastic free, litigation free panchayats.   First of all we want all other panchayats to replicate these models. A training programme called from a panchayat to panchayat is in progress to achieve the aim.   The fact is that there are many homeless and landless especially among the marginalized sections. This has to be addressed more effectively. I would like to draw a reference to another ambitious initiative of the government.   It is all about strengthening and empowerment of grama sabha. We have decided to setup Sevagram Kendras in all wards of the local governments. When I say local governments, I mean both rural and urban governments. The ward is an electoral constituency of the local government having registered voters ranging from 1000-2000 and above. The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act and Kerala Municipality Act defines gramasabha/ward sabha as meeting of all voters of the ward. Gramasabha is empowered with the lot of powers, functions and responsibilities. For example gramasabha is the authority to select beneficiaries of all development and welfare schemes and fix the priority of projects. It is also a forum that each and every citizen get opportunity to participate in the formulation of development plans and discuss issues of local governance.   Attendance in gramasabha meeting is not up to the required level. One of the reasons for attendance in the gramasabha is that do not have faith in the efficiency of gramasabha and often they take a negligent attitude towards it. They are not serious about the basic democratic sanctum very dear to them. It should not turn to be a crowd of voters for seeking some benefits or find it an opportunity to place their complaints.

Gramasabha meets 4 times a year and the quorum is 10% of the voters of the ward.   At present the meeting is not held in a systematic manner and the decisions taken in the meeting are not followed appropriately.   So, the government proposes to constitute ward development committees under gramasabha. The committee will be constituted by gramasabha and will function as a sub structure of gramasabha and assist the gramasabha to perform assigned functions and responsibilities. It is expected that the neighbourhood sabhas will enhance peoples participation in gramasabha. The sevagram kendras

have started functioning in all wards. The Kendras are supposed to be permanent office of the ward development committee and the neighbourhood. It will also be office of all micro level organisations and participating bodies approved by the panchayat functioning at ward level. It will function as an extension centre of administrative office of the local government regarding service delivery. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas of grama swaraj, constructive programme, ahimsa, satyagraha and sarvodaya have become more relevant in our own times than in the past. The introduction of grama Kendra is a humble attempt to translate ideas of Gandhiji in action. We should be able to focus in this centre. I call upon the participants of this conference who will share the unique experiences of decentralization of power to discuss this initiative in detail in ensuing sessions and give inputs to add impetus of the ongoing process of decentralization all over the state. I hope meaningful deliberations and experiences shall continue.

I would like to say that when I went to South Africa, I could see how South Africans respect Mahatma Gandhi. How his life is reflected through various museums and the exhibitions.

Dr. M.K. Muneer
Minister for Panchayats and Social Justice
Government of Kerala

Speech of Smt. Ela Gandhi

I feel really deeply privileged and honoured to be here not only with the dignitories on the stage, but also to be one of you because all of you are involved in very important work in your areas I also want to say that I am deeply honoured, inspired and privilaged to open the art gallery and to see the exhibition. It is a wonderful exhibition and the most inspiring exhibition. I want to congratulate the artist Mr. Abey Joseph for wonderful depiction of the ideas of Gandhiji and in particular I am also deeply inspired for the steps he has pictured at the end of the exhibition to show that Gandhiji has given us a path that is for us to climb up those steps and for telling his ideas that he has set for us.

I think of Gandhiji as somebody whom we worship and who had extraordinary abilities and personality. And that we can't do what he has done. And the minute we say that we can't do what he has done, we have lost the battle, we have lost the plot because his message was that every one of us is capable of doing what he did. He said so in his life time. And so it is for us to take-up his message as a challenge to work towards the kind of world view that he had with every person, every individual has to have access to the basic necessities of life. Now that is the challenge that we all face.

We often talk about, in our constitutions, in our conversations, even at the level of United Nations. We talk about we, the people, we talk about the people's self-government, we talk about rights of the people and yet we don't think how are the people going to exercise these rights? How are the people going to contribute towards the governance of the country? Secondly, what happens in the end is that these words remain just the word without any depth because we have not really empowered the community to participate. We are not really creating a participatory democracy. We talk about democracy but we are not creating a participatory

democracy. I want to say that I feel deeply inspired by what happened in Kerala. I see 100% literacy and that I really want to know what is the secret. How did you achieve 100% literacy?

I see that the people are not only educated but I meet many people from Kerala in all walks of life and I see that they are not only educated in knowing in daily knowledge but they also have a personality, values that we talk about, deeply ingrained values of how can we relate to people? How can we live our life in this world? And those values how the good education from good farming principles? And so the education is not just a question of literacy that you have learned to read, write, and to count. But we have also learned how to learn. I think that this again is a secret that I could get here in Kerala and I would like to learn that in the next two days. I am privileged to be here with you and to interact with you and to learn from you how you the things. I also want to say that I think one of the most important things is that you don't feel satisfied with what you have achieved so much and now you sit back and relax. No, I think that what we heard already from the speakers is that there is much more to be done. What we see from the arts, shows the whole path of steps and it shows that there is a long way that we still have to walk. That will bring us to the ultimate which we all want to see.

I know that it is depicted as ramarajya- good of all, a beautiful country where everybody has access to everything. But I don't want to relate that word to one religion and I also see this in Kerala that people of all religions get together and nobody talks about their religion as good ones. We talk about as a uniting force as something that enriches and different ways that people worship and people have the spiritual experience brings us to an enriched society and not a society where we fight each other, but love each other and so I see that there is that willingness to continue on that path and to grow towards something the world is to see as an example and I see that Kerala is actually in that position to lead world this battle to get over to a sustainable and lasting world and

that next generation of people would say 'yes, our forefathers looked after the world.'

This is the wholistic approach to how we go. And I see this happening here and I really comment you and I just want to say that I have very little to give, I want to learn more from you. I want to take much back to my country, South Africa. Thank you very much for this privilege and to be with you.

Smt. Ela Gandhi
Grand Daughter of Mahatma Gandhi
Former MP of South Africa

Speech of Sri. Mani Shankar Aiyar

I have the greatest pleasure in celebrating the honour given to me for inaugurating the Silver Jubilee Celebrations of the Kerala Institute of Local Administration. The last 25 years and throughout the last 35 years KILA has the standing as the premier institution of local government administration in research and training anywhere in India and deep involvement in South Asia. It has become an excellent centre. My hearty congratulations to all those who worked to bring up this institution as an institution of excellence. They have shown how it is possible to undertake capacity building for architecting panchayat members on a very very large scale. They also showed that capacity building is required for not merely the elected panchayat representatives, but for a lot of other people as well- the officials concerned with local administration, the Members of Legislative Assemblies, Members of Parliament, representatives of political parties, students and the media. All of these have been trained at the induction training that has been established by KILA to ensure that there is at least the first wards in Panchayat Raj within three months of election of new representatives is indeed a unique achievement and demonstrates that it can be done and all that is required is to have the will to have it done. This has been made possible and promoted into actual action on the ground through participatory planning because of a very extensive programme of TOT-Training of Trainers. The consequence is that where ever in Kerala like a web network, we have trained trainers who can assist the local authorities, who can assist the local representatives and the people in general on how to do whatever it is that they are required to do.

This is why the ward sabhas here in Kerala which are called grama sabhas at the ward level. These indeed has been as effective as they proved to be and equally facilitated the kind of new initiative now being taken to train members to participate in the grama sabha. This in effect was to training every single malayalee to participate in the process and that is the only way in which we can ensure the Panchayati Raj truly becomes effective. For the litmus test for the effectiveness of Panchayat Raj, is not the performance of the president of the panchayat,

not even the performance of the members of the Panchayats, not even the outcomes. What is critical is the functioning of the grama sabhas. To have a panchayat ward without effective grama sabhas is like that having democracy without an effective Parliament. Which in fact we are seeing in Delhi these days. I am also able to get away from there.

We are having in Delhi a kind of collapse of representative democracy. This tragedy is being repeated in most perhaps all the state assemblies. Our hope for democracy therefore rests on the panchayats and in turn the effectiveness of Panchayat Raj depends upon the grama sabhas. I think in many ways in the 64th amendment, the biggest lacuna was the absence of any mention of the grama sabha and although this is rectified by introducing the concept of grama sabha in the 73rd amendment before it was passed, we have had hope given to that with the result that Grama sabha exists where ever panchayats exist. The local state legislation has almost never made adequate provisions for the statutory empowerment of these Grama sabhas. To say what it is exactly that at a minimum they are required to do and in the absence of such statutory election, the grama sabha, has become a gallery, perhaps a social gallery and in many parts of India, a non-existent gallery which clearly has been convened little or no impact . The fact is that if the Grama sabhas has nothing to do then why should people waste their precious time attending these useless gathering. For the people to attend the gathering, they have to have sense that the complaints they need, their suggestions they need to convey even perhaps the congratulations they need to convey, reach those who are responsible for undertaking the executive action. In the absence of an empowered panchayat representative, you can't have a duly empowered Grama sabha. What happens in most of the Grama sabha meetings is that the local elected representative says, I will pass on your suggestions to the BDO, or the district education officer, or the district health officer or whoever is the bureaucrat.

The whole principle of Panchayat Raj has laid down by Rajeev Gandhi was that you cannot get responsive administration unless those who are running the administration are responsible to those who are the beneficiaries. And that you cannot have a responsible administration

unless it is a representative administration. So, these three 'Rs' constitute the foundation of Panchayat Raj- Representation leading to responsibility towards those who are governed and thus ensuring that there is responsiveness on the part of the administration to those who are being administered. But none of these, the three 'R's do not work unless the 3 Fs are present. That is the effective empowerment of these institutions including the Gramasabha with functions, finances and functionaries. The Grama sabhas exactly does not require either finances or functionaries. But it needs to know what are the finances that has been made available, which activity, and who are the functionaries who are supposed to function under the guidance, supervision and control of the elected representative. Once these are present then it should be possible for the gramasabha to hold the elected representative accountable of what he does. In theory, democracy in Delhi or the state capitals works on the assumption that the elected representatives- MPs and MLAs can hold the ministers accountable for what they have promised to do and for what they have failed to do. That principle needs to be brought into really assistance at the Gramasabha level. In parliament there is a kind of constructive responsibility that is placed on the minister. But ministers have discovered so many ways of escaping their responsibilities. That to the example is just possible of the Finance minister of India to say on 25th of May, that within 15 days or within 100 days there will be so much black money brought back into India. That each Indian will have Fifteen lakh rupees in his account. Then he says 6 months later that is not possible. We don't know when it is going to be done.

But in a gramasabha, the responsibility even less than that of the finance minister why then people be attending these meetings. As I left Delhi to Kerala so also the people escaped from gramasabha meetings to do other things. Because they do not find that the grama sabha is a forum of representative or responsive governments. We have to make them that. So the training that has been offered by KILA and its really new idea of seva kendra at the level of ward sabha. These can only become effective if we raise a general understanding of what are the powers of gramasabhas and then perhaps the least intellectual act in the entire P.R.Act. I refer to the extension to the schedule area of

P.R. Act which provides for 3 fundamental functions for the gramasabha needs to be introduced in to a gramasabha legislation of every state in the country. No.1 that all beneficiary identification will be undertaken by the gramasabha and only by the gramasabha that needs to be made in. Secondly, that the Panchayat Raj has never be allowed to become B.D.O Raj or become Sarpanch Raj by one individual or a nexus from the lower bureaucracy and the elected president determining what needs to be done? It has to be done in a collegiate manner with the equal participation of all ventures in the same way as the cabinet government is based on the principle of the Prime minister being first among equals and the collective responsibility evolving on the government or any and every action of that government. And therefore if we can get this principle going of collective responsibility on the part of panchayat as a whole, then any plan, programme or proposal coming from the panchayat will first has to be accepted by the gramasabha before it proceed with implementation. So, approval which the word used in PESA of plans, programmes and projects of the grama panchayat makes to be recognition incident but truly empowering the gramasabha. Thirdly, as provided for in the PESA the gramasabha approval or rather authorizing the issue of the utilization certificate.

I know that none of these is happening in the tribal areas. That is not the fault of the tribals. It is the fault of the stick on that democracy has reduced to picking on the weakest. Now we push back and there are many proposals to dilute whatever has been due to.   Equally most tragic fact in independent India is that recognising tribals to be the poorest weakest members of the society. In the process of 7 decades we have displaced as many as 65 million tribals in the interest of what is called development. No wonder and doubt that development is desirable but is destructive and because they regard that the development is destructing, we have an ongoing civil war in the heart of India which our entire state apparatus has not been able to put down to the better part of 3 decades. We never succeed in putting it down, unless the tribals are given the place they deserve. It is pointed out that the tribal population of India is only 8% of the total, but, the share of the tribals in the displaced population of India has been 55% and it went on to say that in the state of Gujarat the share of the tribal population of

tribals is same as all India figure nearly 8%. The share of the displaced tribal population as high as 76%. This is called democracy. And this is what we are inflicting for our weaker sections. The only way we wish these weaker and weaker sections can come into their own is by being able pool the administration responsible. For that, the existence of sevagrams as proposed in Kerala and the training of those who are going to man these seva centres as well as the training of the gramasabha members themselves in addition to training and capacity building at all other levels that is already been under taken by KILA to constitute a monumentary breakthrough in making Panchayati Raj effective. So, therefore I would like to dedicate the next quarter century of KILA to building gramaswaraj. Gramaswaraj must be built at the gramasabha level.

If we learned a number of lessons despite all the evidence to the country and not a pessimist about Panchayat Raj because at the end of the day democracy is a game of numbers. The number of M.Ps and M.L.As in the country is not more than 5000. Whereas the number of Panchayat representatives is 32 lakhs. There is no way this unequal battle can be won by the minority.

Could I clear all Panchayat representatives they need to be unified? They need to understand what is their common interest. They need to get together in the shape of a trade union. And in Kerala had progress been made more effectively than anywhere else in the country. That is why indicators are far superior to anywhere else in the country. So, my congratulations go first and foremost to Kerala and only then to the Kerala Institute of Local Administration. I also think we need to record enlightened ministers, Thomas Issac who spoke here and donated the work they have done and hope that notwithstanding various setbacks that happened in the political process that at the end of the day tragic move will be upwards rather than stagnant or even going downwards. All over the country, we are seeing progress in Panchayat Raj. But the gap between the better ones and the worst ones is growing like the gap in India is growing between the rich and the poor.

We find that Kerala continues to do very well but not as well as it used to do. The devolution Index of The Union Ministry for Panchayat Raj, it is not entirely reliable document but which as of now the only measure we have shown that in recent times Maharashtra has overtaken both Kerala and Karnataka. I think Tripura is catching up extremely fast. It is very interesting that hill states like Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh had progressed. I wondered how that was, until I learned in Europe, it is Norway which is at top of the lead as far as local government is concerned. The explanation is very simple. In mountainous areas of any terrain the government finds it difficult to stretch out its sticky tentacles. In consequence of this, local people become more powerful. What is perhaps decisive is that men folks in the hills and the mountains go to the place of work or go into the army and so and women are left to tend the economic life of the village and so they get the opportunity of politically entering public space they quicker to take advantage of that than anybody else.

I would request KILA in the context of the training given to the gramasabha and the establishment of the seva kendra to make a visit to Sikkim where has been practice of a lady guardian officer, that term is unfortunate. A guardian officer what they call them who is a lady attached to lady village president. So that she acts as the intermediary between the village panchayat and the bureaucracy. Also I think we need to see in India, and Kerala is not as required as in more backward states in India that the ladies of the gramasabha meet one day before the gramasabha meeting so that they are able to work out what it is that women want and use women's spokesman who generally be younger, therefore more educated and more articulate to voice the grievances of half the village before the entire gramasabha and warn them who refuse to listen to the voices will loose have to vote in next round. There are lessons to be learned even for Kerala from outside. A committee has recently been established in Karnataka, under the chairmanship of former speaker Ramesh Kumar. The report they prepared only last week is put up in the website. I would recommend to Kerala to look at that draft report or rather than the final report now. Because I think it contains a lot of lessons which even Kerala could learn from them. The important exercise that KILA should

undertake in its post silver jubilee Celebration is to undertake a major country wide study of the recommendations that have been made in the Karnataka Report. I think Kerala also needs to look over its shoulders at the dark forces that are beginning to imitate you. Rajasthan is one, Haryana is another. Bihar is a well-known third. But they are all catching up. And therefore watch out this first position. What I want to stress is that these progress is taking place everywhere, that in unexpected cases you are seeing progress and in expected places you are not seeing the kind of progress that you should. And therefore this is a continuing exercise. So long as there is working progress in this regard there will always be role for KILA.   .

So, my congratulations to KILA on the Silver Jubilee. I hope in the course of the working sessions that we have from about now onwards we will have the opportunity of bringing the other suggestions that KILA might take seriously, more seriously than any of the governments will bring.   And prepare a kind of manifesto. For what should be done for Panchayati Raj in the next quarter century of Panchayati Raj for KILA came up in 1990. And therefore now celebrating its silver jubilee year. Panchayat Raj came into effect in 1993. And therefore its Silver Jubilee Celebrations will be in 2017. And preparations that would have to make from now I do hope as in all other case of panchayats KILA will take the lead in organizing the National Celebrations of Silver Jubilee in Panchayati Raj.

Sri. Mani Shankar Aiyar
MP, Former Union Minister for Panchayati Raj
Government of India

Speech of Shri. Kalyanam

Good morning everybody. I have been asked to speak on my association with Gandhiji. I think today in the whole of India I am one and I think the only person may be six or seven others who had impression with Gandhiji. I don't think even Mrs.Ela Gandhi has ever seen Gandhiji.

 I would like to go down to the memoryline and tell you how I started life. I led a filthy life as compared to the hell we are going through now It has to be an admitted fact. I had never heard of Gandhi till I was about 17 or 18 years. I started reading newspapers only when I started going to college. Then I saw there is a person called Gandhi who wanted independence. I was wondering why he wanted independence.   Later I came to know that he wanted to help the poor people in the villages. In those days metropolitan cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Madras are very well developed where all the facilities we needed are available. These facilities were lagging in all the villages in India. I never knew about the cities because I lived in a village. Inorder that the poor people in the villages also get all the facilities given in the urban centres. He wanted to bring unity. One time we had been governed by the Mughals . Then we had the British Raj; one nation one country. Gandhiji wanted to avoid partition; but it didn't succeed. Partition came; he didn't celebrate the partition. He came to Delhi only on 9th of September 1947 and he lived upto 30th January. Those 5 months I remember he visited a number of refugee camps where Hindu and Muslims come and settled down. During that period a number of complaints came to Gandhi. He received around 50 letters a day, out of which atleast 10-15 were critical of the government which was formed on the 15th of August 1947. They blamed the ministers for leading a life of luxury and when people were struggling to live in the refugee camps. The complaints that came were brought into the notice of the ministers. But nothing happened. Gandhi's life vision was to bring about unity of all religions. In the British days I never heard of any Hindu and Muslim struggle. They were living

peacefully together. And all these started with the independence movement. Gandhi had been alive only for hardly 5 months after independence. He was the most distressed and very unhappy. He distributed pamphlets to show what he felt in those days. He continued to live to pull out to start another revolution because the way government was functioning; he was not satisfied at all. People started making money even in those days. Corruption started immediately after independence. Now it is everywhere. Corruption was made even in Olympics to get a gold medal. That is how we are living. You know, Gandhiji had a dream for India, he made of a number of suggestions, rules and laws. He wanted first of all to dissolve the congress because it was not the congress party alone that brought out independence. They can't take the credit. He wanted to dissolve the Congress and make it a Lok Seva Sangh. That was not done.

Other thing that he wanted to make was introduction of prohibition. You Know how poor people drink and loose their money, Similarly they gambling and are lottering. Government expenses should be curtailed by reducing the salaries of all government servants, particularly of government servents Even now you see D.A is given for government servents and is revised every 3, or 5 months depending cost of living. What about the rest of the people? They don't get any D.A. or money. Even in the government service there is pay differences. People working in the railway department, they are getting railway fares free. In air lines also same thing. What about the people working in the post and telegraph department? They don't get free postage and telegraph. Similarly in electric system. They don't get free electricity. There is great disparity. Not only that there are a number of other things that Gandhiji suggested. For instance he wanted not to erect statues and waste money. We see how much money is wasted now. I believe that the present government is going to waste nearly 7 crores on building a statue of Sardar Patel in Gujarat and they are planning to build another big statue for Gandhiji. They are going to spend another 80 -90 crores. I know about it because they came to me to consult and take my advice. And similarly Gandhiji wanted education to be given to all people within about 10 years. Now 67 years have passed. We know how many people are illiterate. And this adult franchise has

attained many things. It is because of that we have got all types of people elected as represention in India. Rajaji has commented about it saying our representatives in parliament are persons with no ostensible means of livelihood. Gandhiji is respected all over the world except India. Indians have forgotten him. Go to any place or abroad. In America, there are 65 statues. He wanted the entire humanity's unity; and the entire world respect him and admires him for unity of religions.

With these few words I would like to congratulate KILA for celebrating the silver jubilee. I request them to carry forward Gandhi's message. Thank you.

Shri. V. Kalyanam
Former Private Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi

Speech of Dr. T.M.Thomas Issac

My political journey started with the listening of Christian socialism and Gandhism. Both of which descent later for Marxism, a course to be taken indeed. But 1990s was a period of rediscovery of Gandhi for two reasons. (1) It was a period of globalization and for which we wantedGandhi's ideal of self- reliant India is the most evocative ideal one can have. (2) This was also a decade where we began to seriously experiment with decentralization and we in Kerala part of what has come to be known as the People's Plan Campaign. An important criticism against the campaign, particularly from the left was that the campaign is inspired by World Bank studies, recommendations so on and so forth. And countering such a criticism, one better defence could be rather to point out here in India as part of freedom struggle, Mahatma Gandhijihad proposed Panchayati Raj, decentralization so much so that many decade before even Word Bank had come in to being. So, Mahatma Gandhiji has been a very essential part of the ideological value which is making the onward march of democratic decentralization in Kerala.

Now looking back of the last two decades what we have achieved I must say I am not disappointed. The Honourable minister has now listed some of the major achievements given by recent periods.Though I would have liked to go much further what has been achieved but what have been achieved is creditable enough. For two decades Kerala was very successful. All sources of financial pressures was there to curtail financial devolution. Even today, around one fourth of the plan funds go for local governments with utmost freedom for local governments to decide upon what to do. The power structure of democratic decentralization is also in the making. Whatever be the problems, I still do believe that a democratic space has been created in Kerala at local level so that there is a conscious citizenry. Such democratic spaces do not exist in most parts of India. It should be a necessary condition not a sufficient condition and therefore you find various degrees of excellence when we examine the local governments. I like to draw something like100-125 local governments in Kerala. Every

day I would like learn as a citizen. Now the best practices I think is going to be an event. There are some excellent models which underline the potential, the democratic potential of decentralization. But I must also confess that there are I think almost double of panchayats that could be just the opposite of what we believe government should be. We have a large number of majorities hanging in between.

On the whole, there has been a decline on popular enthusiasm and democratic participation. Now the challenge before Kerala is how to rectify and take this democratic experiment forward. There is no doubt whatever be the political inclination. If you are thinking of local governance, one has gone to think in terms of a decentralized system of government.

If you look at the political experiments in the whole of Latin America, one common element in all these political experiments is democratic decentralization. And therefore now I have come to firmly think that we need,it is high time that we need to have a second edition of the people's plan campaign in Kerala. There has been major shakeup not from above but from below to the participation of people. How to mobilize people and to set a way in starting a phase in democratic decentralization is a better political challenge. Now in the first phase of democratic decentralization people are mobilized and a political will had created state to devolve money, devolve personnel, and make the rules and so on. But we felt disillusioned even before institutionalization of the democratic traditions happen. The campaign has given and we suffer from that today. But I am also aware you cannot repeat of what happened 10 years back. At that time, planning was used as an instrument for social mobilization, not a technical process of deciding the priority. More as an instrument for social mobilization in favour of decentralization. Now that process is more or less maintained. Therefore there is no need to have a repetition of the same mould of the people's plan campaign. Therefore we have to find new instruments of social mobilization and it is my conscious view. I am actively involved in the experimenting for the last three years how to have a major sanitation campaign in Kerala. And chronologic to that a popular vegetable cultivation which would mobilize people in such a way that they make a new phase in the democratic experiment can be initiated. Now the thrust is the sanitation

campaign. Not only everybody can participate but everybody has to participate if it has to be made success. It is not technology at processing plants which would clean up Kerala but processing at source, people segregating at source and participating in keeping their streets clean, their neighbourhood clean, their beaches clean. It has a potential of mobilizing people in an unperceived way under the local bodies. And now once we say, bio-gas, bio-slurry, bio-compost, and then the next step would be to have organic vegetable cultivation.

The growing health consciousness sounds as an ideal instrument, intervention, programme, in which it is possible to mobilize all sections of people. Now is it possible to mobilize this large section under these programs? It has been proven beyond doubt. I don't want to put the details. And fortunately we have also a core organizational structure already existing in which these can be embedded. And that is Kudumbasree movement in Kerala and to much less has been residential associations. So these three tracts of sanitation, vegetable cultivation, under the organizational umbrella that will be embedded in Kudumbasree: Neighbourhood groups which I think is very very significant than of the central groups. They define some identity of which you choose they defined by the sheer fact is given every body is in the neighbourhood. Therefore ideal structure is to put Gramsabha; you don't have to create new neighbourhood groups I am experimenting in my panchayath.

Well, Gramaseva Kendra would be not only seat of development committee of the ward but office of the ADS of Kudumbasree. It will be a place where there is some recreational facilities for women to come in the evening to meet. So it has a much larger meaning. So this has something visual which I think very important democratic decentralization. They define some of democratic experiment that has happened in Kerala. How to go forward? How have a new edition of people's plan and success which I think will depend upon how we could rise and show. Well, this path, path which have been founded by Gandhiji, a path which later today run across whole world.

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Dr. T.M. Thomas Issac
MLA and Former Finance Minister,
Government of Kerala

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Gandhian Economic Model as an Alternative

Chitta Ranjan Mishra

With the emergence of industrialization and capitalism, philosophers from the western countries brought up a new thinking of development, which they called the 'Western model of Development', or the 'Capitalist model of Development'. The central aspect of this model is that the economic growth, measured by the Gross National Product (GNP) or per capital income, industrialization, urbanization and other developmental activities. After their independence, various Asian countries have emphasized on economic development. Since economic growth and per capita income happened to be conspicuously low in Asian countries they decided to accord high priority to programmes which could realize the maximum possible growth rate under given conditions. Though some other objectives were also listed in the development plans, however, the basic thrusts of the plans were invariable on sustained increase in the GNP per capita income.

Though it enhanced the economic condition in the world, but it effects negatively on the people and on the environment. It has destroyed

the rural society and agriculture, including the production of food (Dirlik, 2012).In other words, the existing development paradigm ignores the humanistic approach in the development model and further deprives the rights of the poor and creates a wide gap between the poor and the rich. This model also impacts on the environment and it degrades the environment and as a result, global warming or the so called green house affect caused due to the excessive emission of carbon dioxide and the process of deforestation. Worldwide, each year 250 million tons of carbon emission is caused by electricy,550 million tons produced by the world's 400 million cars and 600 million tons result from deforestation(Flavin1990). The global warming is a challenge to sustainability because it may lead to the thermal expansion of the earth's surface waters and rapid melting of alpine and polar glaciers and ice caps and thus lead to the destruction of beaches, homes, coastal towns, ports and crop lands in different parts of the country (Haqu, 2000).

Since the 1990s this model has got new shape called Liberalization,Privatizationand Globalization (LPG) which is not making life better for the most needy and poor. Joseph Stiglitz argues that, though globalization has some role to reduce the isolation in the world and has some other good qualities, at the same time, it has caused many problems such as poverty, and inequality in the world. (Stiglitz :2002).Due to free trade or liberalization and globalization, small scale industries in these countries are facing the threat of a shut down. As a result, unemployment has increased in the third world countries. Therefore, there are numbers of questions raise in mind that, is this model totally failed in the society and what are the shortcomings in this model?and is there any model which has provide an alternative on this model? This paper has two objectives, first to critically analyse the current model of development, Second, to examine the Gandhi's notion of development as an alternative model for economic development.

The Gandhian project of reviving the village economy is the basis of the Gandhian model of economic development (Baviskar:1995). The central element of Gandhi's programme was revitalizing of village communities and craft production by employing indigenous and simple technologies that would provide jobs for the youth and ensure a decent

livelihood for the rural population (Singh:1997). Schumacher, a noted Gandhian economist, advocated Gandhi's alternative model of economic development, based on the village economy. He favoured small scale and cottage industries, including those based on Khadi, to provide employment to all and thereby solve the problems of poverty and unemployment (Dash: 2006) and argued for maintaining the principle of equality and equal distribution of income in the society and believed in village economy (Pyarelal:1997).Gandhiji argue that progress of the country lies in the development of the people in rural areas and the development of rural economy lies in the development of village industries. He believed that western kind of industrialization would destroy Indian society by eliminating the rural industries. Through his Swadesi idea, he wanted all the people to be self-reliant and independent(Sharma: 1992). For him, village industries, such as Khadi, paper-making, hand pounding, hand grinding, match making, oil pressing, etc would provide employment to the population and enhance the skill capacity of the people (Pyarelal:1997). He believed in reconstruction of village economy based on Gram Swaraj, as an important pillar of economic development in India. He argued for the economic development model which was employment oriented, rather than production oriented. He had convinced the development of agriculture as a means of enlarging employment and emphasized on the small industries, rather the large scale industries (ibid.). Here, it intends to examine the Gandhi's notion of development and its several features.

Before going into the details, one should know about the concepts of development and sustainable development

1.2 Development: Concept and Context

Development is basically a normative term and carries several meanings. There is no clear meaning of the term "development", since many scholars articulated the term in their own ways. The term development implies some sort of advancement in the positive directionand the term 'development' means 'change', which implies betterment, confidence, expectation of progress of human society and improvement in the human conditions (Johnson: 1983). The term

development also refers to "creating the conditions for the realization of the human personality"(Seers: 1972). In other words, development is a multi-dimensional concept which combines all the forces in a systematic manner and creates the conditions for the realization of greater human personality. Some other scholars have defined it as increase in income, employment, quality of life and pursuit of happiness. Development means meeting the basic needs of life(Hussain: 1990) and making a better life for everyone. In an uneven world, a better life means essential meeting of basic needs: sufficient food to maintain good health; a safe healthy place to live; affordable services available to everyone and treated with dignity and respect (Peet: 2009)

In capitalist societies, development has conventionally been measured in terms of the size of the economy with the support of the Gross National Product (GNP).From these definitions, it is implicit that the concept 'development' has many meanings and it has various meanings for different set of people. Some scholars may give the importance to the economic aspect of development and some others emphasize on the social and political aspects of development. Against this background, it is essential to evaluate its changing paradigm.

1.2.1 Changing Nature of Development as a concept

The concept of development was first used in the discipline of biology as an evolution of living beings. In biology, the term "development" or "evolution" referred to the process through which organisms achieved their genetic potential. Wolf (1759) and Darwin (1859) advocated that the notion of development evolved from a conception of transformation that moves towards the appropriate form of being to more and more perfect form(Gastovo, 1997). During the same period, the terms "evolution" and "development" were used interchangeably by scientists. The concept of development, which was also used in eighteenth century as a biological metaphor, changed its shape into the social sphere. Justs Moser, the founder of social history, used the term development as the gradual process of social change.

With the emergence of industrialization and capitalism, philosophers from the western countries brought up a new thinking of development, which they called the 'western model of development', or the 'capitalist

model of development'. The central aspect of this model is that the economic growth, measured by the Gross National Product (GNP) or per capital income, industrialization, urbanization and other developmental activities. During this period, economic growth began to be considered as a new gospel and neo- classical growth theories retained their pro-capital basis, promoting capitalization rigorously. The third world countries became the favored recipients of large doses of foreign aids, western technology and transfer of skill from the developed countries. As a result, the state-led industrialization became the formal policy of the third world countries. Thus, the term development acquired a strong economic connotation, so strong as to become synonymous with economic growth (Sharma, 1980).

In the years of1980, the structural adjustment programme started. Thisprogramme emphasized on reducing the role of the state, withdrawing subsidies, liberalizing processess and opening up of economies to international trade and finance.Therefore, it is found that the development has different connotations with the changing times. In spite of the gradual changes in the meaning of development, it is still perceived as economic growth for the all the countries in the world.The basic thrusts of the plans were invariable on sustained increase in the GNP per capita income. Hence, the concept of development came to be identified with the concept of economic growth (Mishra and Puri: 1991)

2.1 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is a new concept to counter the old paradigm of development. It promotes forms of social change that are aimed at fulfilling human material and non-material needs, advancing social equality, expanding organizational effectiveness and building human and technical capacity towards the sustainability (Roseland: 2000). In this model the promotion of human well being does not have to dependent upon the destruction of nature. The term sustainability originally belongs to ecology, and focus of analysis shifted from that of ecology to that of society. The chief focus of sustainable development is on societal change, especially through changes to the way in which the economy functions (Ekins :2000)

The rise of global environmental problems, such as climate change, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, has led to a growing demand for the sustainable development. The term sustainable development came into public arena in 1980 when the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources presented the World Conservative Strategy (IUCN: 1980). It aimed at achieving sustainable development through the conservation of living resources. The main three dimensions or pillars of sustainable development are, first; the social- this relates to human values, relationship and institutions, second; the economic- this concerns the allocation and distribution of scarce resources, third; the ecological- this involves the contribution of both the economic and the social and their effect on the environment and its resources. (Ekins: 2000).

The term 'sustainable development' has been prominent in discussions about environmental policy since themid 1980s. Following the central role it played in the United Nations(UN) appointed Brundtland Commission (1984) and its report,Our Common Future (WCED 1987),it has appeared with increasing frequency in academic studies and reports. The United Nations has played a very prominent role in stimulating engagement with model of sustainable development. The UN has organized several World Summits including the United Nation's Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), which took place in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, otherwise known as the Rio Earth Summit and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in 2002.According to the WCED report, it implies meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Nayar: 1994).

Gandhi contributed a model which generally as the alternative model in the world. His concern on environment, simple living and high thinking idea, non violence, sanitation, critique of industrialization and western civilization are examples by which one can say that Gandhijiwas a votary of sustainable development. In the twenty first century Gandhi's notion of development really stands as an importance foundation in the age of climate change, global warming and environmental degradation. Here we, intends to analyseGandhiji's notion of development.

3.1 Gandhiji's notion of development

Gandhi's notion of development was basically a holistic approach and emphasis on the socio economic reconstruction of the society with the basis of a moral construct. His idea of development was the humanitarian perspective and believes on the sustainable model and environment friendly wellbeingof all the people. Gandhiji's ideal structure of the economy is to restructure the economic system and equally distribute the wealth of nation. He argued that there should not be conflict between the capital and labour believing the self sufficient economy in the country. Gandhiji have came across the several economic writings of many economic theorist like, Adam Smith, Ricardo, Karl Marx. etc and influenced a lot by these writings(Koshal and Manjulika: 1973).According to him,development should be holistic and this approach had given importance on the economical,intellectual,emotional and spiritual development model in the society. His book, *Hind Swaraj* is the important doctrine of his economic model. He emphasised on the voluntary reduction of wants and emphasised on co-operation rather competition. He was given the concept of the constructive programme, where he emphasized on the various aspects by which village would develop. Reconstruction of the village economy was the main foundation of economic development of Gandhiji. Apart from this, he was against the modern civilization which called as the western civilization.

3.2 Gandhiji's criticism of Modern Civilization

Gandhi was one of the ardent critics of western civilization. Gandhiji argued that, the western civilization is a threat which is stronger than the colonialism. Gandhi had his own definition of civilization. According to him, "civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty" (Parel,1997). He argued that, modern civilization is not based on the morality and ethics. It encourages the unethical practices in the society. He revealedmany issues in his intellectual and philosophical work *Hind Swaraj*. Gandhiji argued that materialism is the main characteristic of modern civilization in which spirituality seemed to have been undervalued (Parel, 1997). In his criticism, he aimed at things like, modern industrialization, modern professions of medical, law, machine culture etc.

He argued that, formerly, men were made slaves under the physical compulsion, but now they are enslaved by temptation of money and of the luxuries that money can buy. There are now several types of diseases of which people never dreamt before. This modern civilization is neither based on the foundation of the morality nor the religion.

3.3 Gandhi's development model

Gandhi was a firm believer in the economic development model that emphasises on equality, healthy environment and that is based on the ethics or morality. Gandhiji's model of development has comprises the modern features.

On Rural Development: India lives in villages and further argues that if village perishes India willtoo. He believed that the progress of India depend upon the progress of the village economy or on the development of the rural economy in India. Rural economy was the central place ofhis economic idea of development. (Pyarelal, 1977). He believed in interdependency, self sufficiencyrural industry and reconstruction of the economy. He gave an"18 point Constructive Programme" by which rural economy will be reconstructed.

On Environment: Gandhi was not an environmentalist but his philosophy somehow revealed that he was a votary of environmental philosophy. Theenvironmental historian RamachandraGuha considersGandhiji as an environmentalist. Guha argued that, Gandhi's idea of simple living high thinking, satygraha, truth,non violence and development made him anenvironmentalist. Gandhi in his writings reveals that,hetreasured the nature and argued for the conservation of the biodiversity. He stated that,since human being has no power to create life, he has, therefore, no right to destroy it too.

On Swadesi: To Gandhi, swadesi is the sprit among us which restricts the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote (Sharma, 1992). The spirit of the Swadesi guides the behaviour of the men and encouragesthem the use of the local resources. It emphasis on the local skill and indigenous work and it make people self sufficient and self dependent. Through this idea

people would develop their economic conditions and become self sufficient.

Bread Labour: Gandhi was greatly influenced by the writings of the thinkers like.Ruskin and Tolstoy. He borrowed the idea of bread labour. He further argued that, God has given everyone the capacity to work and earn more than his daily bread and whatsoever is ready to use that capacity is sure to find work.

Trusteeship: It is notedthat, the capitalist system of economic development based on the private ownership of the means of production and property. Gandhi had developed a new theory called Trusteeship. It is an organizational structure where production could be organized and means of production distributed among the masses. There were many thinkers argued for private ownership and centralized economic power in the hands of the small elite. Here Gandhi sounds as a socialist thinker stated that private property should bechannalised for social action and for the use of the welfare of the entire society. He stood for economic equality in the society and people should have to behave like a trustee, rather than owner of the private property. Prof.V.K.R.V. Rao argued that the trusteeship emphasis certain ideas such as, sustaining minimum living standards, prohibiting selfishness or disregarding of the personal interest.

In that sense, trusteeship is a theory of need-based production, equitable distribution and social justice. Trusteeship is an economic conscience by which an individual when engaged in economic activity takes into account not only his own interests but also the interest ofthe society at large.

Village Industry: Gandhijiemphasized on indigenous industries like, khadi, soap making, paper making, match making, oil pressing etc. In the village industriespeople are to engage themselves in their home stead.

On Machinery: A common perception of the most of the people is that Gandhiji was totally against the machine or industrialization. However, it is not true, He argues that cottage industry spinning wheel a machine but the opined that one should not becrazy to the use of

machine which leads to unemployment. He argued that the production system should be localized and distribution system in the local industries should help the economy be more sustainable. At the same time he was against industrialization which promotes social problems.

Constructive Programme: Gandhi in his book, *Constructive Programme: its meaning and place*, argued that, it is '*Poorna Swaraj*' or '*Complete Independence*' by truthful and non violent means (Gandhi, 1941). In 1935, Gandhi started his rural constructive activities in Sevagram to implement his idea of constructive programme which emphasis on the use of khadi, village industry, basic and adult education, sanitation, welfare of women.

Constructive Programme he used as a tool to develop the economic activity of the village and thus, Gandhiji's economic model was a holistic one based on the approach based on the village economy. Gandhi's society and economy would be built around the village, utilizing all the strength and skill of the village inhabitants to produce whatever they might need, with the exception of the relatively few goods that might be required from nearby areas. Gandhi believed that the industrialization lead to the pauperization of villages, to the disintegration of the human personality, to mass unemployment and the exploitation of the weak by the strong (Rao, 1970).

On Sustainable Development: From the above discussion one can see that Gandhiji was the champion of sustainable development. He always argued for the environment friendly development based on the ethics of non violence. Basically his vision on sustainable development who two fold; one: the idea of inclusive growth and focused on the rural economy, second- on simple living and high thinking. Gandhi in his economic idea always emphasis on the inclusive growth which based on the equality or equal distribution of wealth. His idea on trusteeship, breadlabour, ethics in economy are the examples of his idea on inclusive growth. He advocated the village economy as the centre of an idea of economic development. Achieving, trusteeship was a way of life rather than a method to procure a particular end (Gandhi, 1947). Everybody on this earth have the natural rights to live with the basic needs to maintain their life and live with dignity and prestige.

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Gandhi: as an early Green

Chongtham Laxmi Devi

By studying the writings of Gandhiji and by other imminent authors on account of him, it is hard to find Gandhiji's concern about wilderness preservation, bio-diversity conservation, species loss or depletion of the forest areas etc. Even in his autobiography, though he narrates his visits to some hills, frequent sea voyages and travel by train in almost every part of India, but a single sentence of his appreciation towards natural beauty or aesthetically moved by the scenic beauty is not found. But when environment or Green movement emerges from the last part of the 1960's, it is not possible to keep Gandhi far away from Greens. As a result of this movement, many Green thinkers come out in the academic circles and suggest various ways to solve the current prevailing environment problems viz, global warming, ozone layer depletion, pollutions, acid rain,etc. In the practical form, Green Party begins to appear in the political scene in most of the European countries and later on, other countries of the world.

Green party, Green philosophy, Green thinkers and ecologically responsible citizens, all will be put under a common banner 'Green' (capital 'G'). By opposing the anthropocentric approach of earlier political philosophy or traditional political parties, Greens take strong bio-centric stand by considering human beings as one of the species living in this biosphere. Greens' vision for a better world is full of normative, ethical values. It rejects the idea of seeing everything on this earth only in terms of economic values , rather they prefer knowing the significance of aesthetic and intrinsic values. Greens draw their ethical stands from Gandhian philosophy and his personal life.

When analyzing important philosophy's of Green thinkers and principles of Green Party, a lot of Gandhian substances are found. Thus, it is high time to enquire that whether Green tenets are part and parcel of Gandhiji's philosophy or not. Core points of similarity between Gandhiji and Greens are given with the following headings.

Gandhian Philosophy and Green Party's principle

German Green Party, Dei Grunen which is established under the four strong foundations of ecology, social justice, decentralization and non-violence surprises the world by entering German Parliament in 1983. Last two tenets of Green Party are found to be staunch Gandhian concept. In the book 'Politics of Environment', Neil Carter (the author) expresses the view of Murray Bookchin, one of the prominent Green thinker that ecology recognizes no hierarchy on the level of eco- system. There is no 'king of beast' or 'low of ants' (Neil Carter, 2007). The thinker argues that humans are naturally co-operative and will flourish best in a decentralized, non- hierarchal anarchical society, such as in early pre-literate societies, which he claims, are organic and at one with nature, seeking neither to dominate nor by dominated by it. On the other hand, Gandhi has been known for his strong advocacy for decentralization both in terms of economic and political power.

India's Panchayati Raj Institutions is Gandhiji's dream project for village swaraj with strong decentralization in character. He wants every village to be a republic, having full power capable of managing its own affairs, and defending itself against the whole world (Vagwan, Vishnoo. 1996). This according to Gandhiji is possible only in a non-

violent society. Under such a society, the state would be a federation of villages…. He remarked, "If we humanize society and bring moral significance to acts and relationships, we should work in a decentralized village economy where machinery would be employed so long as it does not disturb much of the fundamental framework of society and the freedom of human spirit" (ibid, p 267). Gandhi further says regarding decentralization, "the end to be sought is human happiness combined with full mental and moral growth. I use the adjective moral synonymous with spiritual. The end can be achieved under decentralization. Centralization is a system inconsistent with a non-violent structure of the society,"(Harijan. 18/1/42, p 5).

Gandhiji 'the greatest ever idol of non-violence' is known to this world by his powerful non-violence weapon through which he freed India from the foreign yoke. According to him, non-violence is not the weapon of the weak but for the brave who has strong soul force. He opines that a man who went to war without any arm to shield himself or to attack others is the bravest one.

Being a political party, it is really surprising to adopt non-violent stand for Green Party. The aim of political party is to acquire power and run the government. It is well known that state is an absolute form of coercion, thus Gandhi never wants the existence of state. His strong opinion is that state represents violence in concentrated and organized form. The individual has a soul but the state is a soulless machine, it can never be weaned from violence to which it owes its very existence (Jayapalan: 2003). Thus, Gandhiji's ideal state is something that must be compatible with non- violence. By adopting Gandhiji's vision for a non- violent society, Green party strongly opposes any form of war, believes in peaceful non- violent civil protest and peaceful negotiations over the differences. Green politics is concerned with giving no- harm to environment both biotic and a-biotic. At the level of green principle, where there is a trade off between non-violence and other green ends such as sustainable society, Greens need to show that non-violent is prerequisite for that end (Neil Carter: 2007). Otherwise it will be a trump by ecological imperative (ibid). However, at the level of strategy, a principle of non-violence places an onus on

the opponents to show why coercive or violent method is superior (ibid).

Green's Bio-regionalism and Gandhiji's Self-sufficient Village

Many Green thinkers formulate various measures to save this world from further deterioration of environmental crises. One of the most acceptable form is 'bio-regionalism'. In the book of Andrew Dobson "Green Political Thought", he mentions 'bio-regional paradigm' of Kickpatrick Sale; "we must get to know the land around us, learn its lore and its potential, and live with it not against it. We must see that living with land means living in, and according to the ways and rhythms of, its natural regions, bioregions." (Dobson: 2007).

Within the bioregions, people would live in communities, because 'If one were looking for a single basic building block of the ecological world, it would be the community' (ibid, p 91). Sale suggests that the 'human animal' has historically favoured communities of 500 to 1000 people for face to face contact and 5,000 to 10,000 'for the larger tribal community or extended community' (ibid). Community bigger than this, is regarded as undesirable because they cannot be sustained on their own resources (ibid). The bioregional community would seek to 'minimize resource-use, emphasize conservation and recycling, (avoid) pollution and waste' and all of this would be aim at achieving sustainability through that Sale called 'self sufficiency' (ibid). In this book, the author emphasizes Sale's desire to change present omnivores and gluttonous habits of human beings.

Regarding self sufficiency, Gandhiji says. "My idea of self sufficiency is that villages must be self sufficient in regard to food, cloth and other basic necessities. But, even this can be overdone. Therefore, you must done my idea properly. Self-sufficiency doesn't mean narrowness. To be self– sufficient is altogether self- contained. In no circumstances would we be able to produce all the things we need. So, though our aim is complete self-sufficiency, we shall have to get from outside the village what we cannot produce in the village; we shall have to produce more of what we can in order thereby to obtain in exchange what we are unable to produce," (Harijan, 30/11/35, p 333).

In the above saying, Gandhiji hints the need for exchange of things or trade. In the same line, Greens remark that it would be wrong to, then to characterize Greens as recommending complete economic independence – they are perfectly aware that "There are always goods and services that cannot be generated or provided locally, regionally or nationally" (Dobson: 2007). The ground rule, however would be that 'self reliance starts with the idea of producing things yourself rather than through exchange' (ibid).

In the above remarks of both Green and Gandhi, it is clear that both emphasizes strongly on self- sufficiency of villages. Villages should be able to produce the basic needs of human beings, food, clothing, shelter etc. Trade or exchange of things that are not available in their respective villages should be considered secondary.

Both Green and Gandhiji's critique to industry, machine, urbanization

Greens vehemently criticized 18th century enlightenment movement as it led to various scientific inventions including machines, technologies…and thus brought industrial revolution to the European countries. The process of industrialization contributed to environmental degradation by accelerating resource consumption in large scale for mass production, urban development and pollution ..etc. Greens strongly oppose super ideology 'industrialism'. Greens point out that industrialism suffers from the contradiction of undermining the very context in which it is possible, by unsustainably consuming a finite stock of resources in a world that does not have a limitless capacity to absorb the waste produced by the industrial process (Dobson, 2007, p 19). Industry produces commodities more for profit not for need (ibid, p 167). Industrialism is associated with overproduction which are resolved by 'creating new wants, and by extending the system globally to new consumers in new markets' (ibid).

Gandhiji also intensely criticized industrialism. He never wanted India being an industrialized nation. In his words, "Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competitors. It is because these factors are

getting less and less every day for England, that its number of unemployed is mounting up daily. The Indian boycott was a flea- bite. And if that is the state of England, a vast country like India cannot expect to benefit by industrialization. In fact, India, when it begins to exploit other nations – as it must do if it becomes industrialized- will be a curse for other nations, a menace to the world. And why should I think of industrializing India to exploit other nations? Don't you see the tragedy of the situation viz., that we can find work of the 300 million unemployed, but England can find none of three millions and is faced with a problem that baffles the greatest intellect of England? The future of industrialism is dark for the west, would it not be darker still for India?" (Young India, 12/11/31, p 355).

He said that India would not have western model of development, if she had to do so she must search another planet to be exploited. In his words, "God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the west. The economic imperialism of the single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 millions took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts", (Harijan, 20/12/28, p 422).

Gandhiji was so scathing on machinery, he says, "Machinery has begun to desolate Europe. Ruination is now knocking at the English gates. Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin." (Hind Swaraj, 2010, p 76). His footstep is more or less now followed by Greens. According to Prof. Barry Commoner, the new technology is an economic success- but only because it is an ecological failure. (Commoner, 1973, p 151). The author of the classic book 'Small is Beautiful', E.F Schumacher systematically criticizes the modern technology. In this book, he opines that the modern world is shaped by technology. It tumbles from crises to crises, on all sides there are prophecies of disaster and, indeed, visible signs of breakdown. (Schumacher, 1975). He further says that there is measure in all natural things – their size, speed or violence. As a result, the system of nature, of which man is a part, tends to be self- balancing, self- adjusting and self- cleansing. Such great natural capacities are not in modern technology, thus technologies act like a foreign body, and there are

numerous signs of rejection. The modern world shaped by this modern technology, finds itself involved in three crises simultaneously;

i)   Firstly, human nature revolts against inhuman technological, organizational and political patterns, which it experiences as suffocating and debilitating.

ii)   The living environment which supports human life aches and groans and gives signs of partial breakdown.

iii) It is clearly to anyone fully knowledgeable in the subject matter that the inroads being made into the world's non- renewable resources, particularly those of the fossil fuels, are such that serious bottlenecks and virtual exhaustion loom ahead in the quite foreseeable future.(ibid)

Schumecher propounds another formula that "the amount of real leisure a society enjoys tends to be an inverse proportion to the amount of labour saving machinery employs". He proves the above statement by saying that people of industrialized nations like USA or Germany live under much more strain than people of Burma, a country which lies in the bottom of the league table of industrial progress. Because, there is so much less labour- saving machinery to help them, they accomplish much less than industrial people do. (ibid, p 103)

In the same book, Schumecher even quotes one of the saying of Gandhiji that "the poor of the world cannot be helped by mass production, only by production by the masses". He further explains, the system of mass production, based on sophisticated, highly capital-intensive, high energy- input dependent, and human labour- saving technology, presupposes that one is already rich, for a great deal of capital investment is needed to establish one single workplace. On the other hand, the system of production by the masses mobilizes the priceless resources which are possessed by all human beings, their clever brains and skillful hands, and supports them with first class tools. Again, the technology of mass production is inherently violent, ecologically damaging, self- defeating in terms of non- renewable resources and stultifying for human person. While the technology of production by the masses, making use of best modern knowledge and experience is

conductive to decentralization, compatible with the laws of ecology, gentle in its use of scarce re- sources, and designed to serve human person instead of making him the servants of machines. Schumecher prefers to name it as 'intermediate technology' to signify that it is vastly superior to the primitive technology of bygone ages but at the same time much simpler, cheaper and freer than the super- technology of the rich. One can also call it self -help technology or democratic or people's technology – a technology to which every can gain admittance and which is not reserved to those already rich and powerful. (ibid, pp. 106-7)

In order to substantiate the above argument in defence of production by masses, Greens further proclaim that, to decentralize and proliferate the means of production would restore freedom to more people. This again implies the adoption of a more labour intensive rather than a more capital- intensive type of technology. Gandhiji's advocacy of the *charkha* (the spinning wheel) a limiting case of this argument. (Dobson: 2003)

Both Greens and Gandhiji oppose urbanization. For the former, urbanization is unnatural, all the human activities in urban areas are against the will of the nature, thus its activities are mainly responsible for causing ecological imbalance. At the same time, Gandhiji gives his intense desire to let villages flourish. He says, "If the village perishes India will perish too. It will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost,"(Harijan, 29/8/36, p 226).

"Earth has everybody's need but not for nobody's greed"

Gandhiji's above mentioned famous dictum now becomes the Greens' belief on the 'finitude of the earth'. Due to human greediness for accumulating wealth in fewer hands since 18th century, the prevailing environmental crises result. Due to these crises, earth's carrying as well as supportive capacity of complex form of lives is now really uncertain and can't say how long it will last.

The world is so uneven till today, dividing the world into rich-north and poor- south. In the words of the Keekok Lee, in his article 'To de- industrialize, is it so irrational?' says that if industrialization is a

good, and if the USA is taken as a model of successful industrialization, then it is a good which cannot be achieved by every economy in the world (Dobson, 2003). Lee opines that it is an exclusive club of affluent few. He gives the reason, that USA has only six per cent of the world population, but she uses up nearly forty per cent of the world resources. Theoretically, the remaining ninety six per cent of world's population have to access to sixty per cent of the world's resources. It is just not possible for every country to achieve the level of industrialization achieved in the USA today (ibid). Lee, even gives us a supposition that if there is a magic wand, by it single touch creates enough raw materials for industries, but earth's capacity to absorb the waste materials released by industries and other human activities is very limited. As things stand at present, the greater amount of carbon dioxide and heat produced by the industrialized world, together with the lesser amount by the developing world, are already sufficient to give grave cause for concern about the warming of the earth's atmosphere. (ibid, p 110)

In the simple language, the planet earth is a finite system. In this finite planet, having infinite cars, economic growth for consecutive years, indefinite population growth is not possible at all. Keeping this in mind, human greediness for becoming more and more affluent must be give up and a mean path for development should be taken up immediately. In his book, 'The Evolution of Green Politics' John Burchell quotes one beautiful statement of Vincent, "Growth oriented economies cannot go on using finite resources. Technological innovations cannot solve the problems indefinitely, although appropriate small- scale technologies are seen as one aspect of the solution. Technological advances can only postpone the problem", (John Burchell: 2002, p 18).

Environmentalists as watermelon (green in outside, red in inside)

Environmental problems are so much deep rooted, it needs radical change in prevailing social, political and economic system in this world. Until and unless this change is made, further deterioration of the environmental problems cannot be checked.

Nowadays many environmentalists come up all over the world for saving the earth from environmental crises. But, most of them want to maintain a status quo in the currently prevailing systems. They are not ready to give up their consumerist lifestyle, throw away culture, owning nice cars, taking shelter under AC roofs…etc. Arne Naess, who is considered as the father of deep ecology movement says that an ecologically responsible lifestyle would entail: anti- consumerism in general, with stress in low energy consumption, active support of 'self made is well made', bicycling, collective transport, family planning, participation in biodynamic agriculture etc. (Naess, Arne. 1972, p 224)

It seems that, being a Green is not so easy as it appears, because it needs to give up luxurious lifestyle that is sole aim of an individual. Thus, environmentalists are now compared with watermelon, green in outside and red in inside. 'Simple living' that is already successfully shown by Gandhiji to the world, now becomes the 'litmus test' for being green. Gandhiji lived in huts instead of palaces, in the village instead of city, ate fruits and nuts (that also only five articles in a day in later part of his life), wearing 'khadi' cloth prepared by himself, having dinner before sunset, travelling long distances in third class train, walking by foot …etc. These things reflect Gandhiji's simple life.

In a letter to Pandit Nehru in 5/10/1945, Gandhiji wrote, "I am convinced that if India is to attain true freedom and through India the world also, then sooner or later the fact must be recognized that the people will have to live in villages, not in towns, in huts not in palaces. Crores of people will never be able to live in peace with each other in towns and palaces. They will then have no recourse but to resort to both violence and untruth.

I hold that without truth and non- violence there can be nothing but destruction for humanity. We can realize truth and non- violence only in the simplicity of village life and its simplicity can best be found in the Charkha and all that the Charkha connotes. I must not fear if the world today is going the wrong way. It may be, that India too will go that way and like the proverbial moth burn itself eventually in the flame round which it dances more and more fiercely. But it is my bounded duty up to my last breadth to try to protect India and through India the entire world from such a doom.

The essence of what I have said is that man should rest content with what are his real needs and become self- sufficient. If he does not have this control, he cannot save himself. After all, the world is made up of individuals just as it is the drops that constitute the ocean…This is a well- known truth."

Gandhiji, thus stood for simplicity in life and voluntary poverty. (Vyas, H.M, 1962, p 13)

Views on the upliftment of the condition of women

It is well known that, in the Indian National Movement common village women folk began to participate in the struggle only after Gandhi came to India's political scene. Earlier very few women participated but they were mostly from urban elite families. Participation of rural masses both men and women gave more significance and momentum to the Indian National Movement, before that it was exclusively for western educated urban elites. Gandhiji really wanted to uplift the condition of the women and empower them. He says, "I am uncompromising in the matter of women's rights. In my opinion she should labour under no legal disability not suffered by man, I should treat the daughters and sons on a footing of perfect equality," (Young India, 17/11/1929).

Like Gandhiji, Green Party gives their sole commitment for uplifting the condition of women and also takes a firmed stand on the empowerment of women. In terms of organizational structure, it gives same responsibility to woman as man that is quite contrast to other traditional political parties (Neil Carter:2007, p 120). The gender parity rules encouraging women to participate at all levels of the party provide a very visible difference; women generally make up at least 50 per cent of Green representatives in federal, state and local legislatures (ibid). In one example Swedish Green elects two spokespersons one man and one female (ibid, p 121).

Will *Vegans* be the only option to save the non- human species?

Nowadays Greens begin to talk for the voluntary give up of eating meat as the best alternative to save the non- human beings. Without

this moral force it is not possible for the secure existence of other birds and animals in this planet. Greens realize that by seeing some birds or animals, if we remember their taste and saliva is running from our mouth, then it will be very hard to guarantee the very fundamental right to live for the non- human species. One of my close friends who posted in some rural areas of Rajasthan shows me photos of big swans, peacocks, deers, camels..etc. which roam freely without any hesitation for being killed. I am really surprised to see the pictures because that thing is not possible at all in my place, because men are really meat starved, they are so gluttonous, there is nothing they don't eat. There are many instances that dead animals (may be due to disease) are buried by their owners, but when night comes other meat starved men just took it away and ate. In this situation, how can birds and animals live safely? In Rajasthan, wild birds and animals roam independently without any fear of villagers because all the inhabitants are pure vegetarians. Thus, Greens' claim, 'Will *Vegans* be the only option to save the non- human species' is so realistic.

Gandhiji was a staunch vegetarian. In his lifetime, there are many cases on which he was compelled by his personal physician to take meat in the form of beef tea or chicken soup when he was at the door of death. But he refused to take it because not only physically but also morally he had already gave up meat. He preferred death instead of taking meat. We really need to learn Gandhiji's way of being vegan. Avoiding meat without soul force, will be in vain. Like Gandhiji under many circumstances we will be forced to take meat, if we give up meat only for physically, we will ultimately eat meat on many excuses. Thus, ecologically responsible citizens must adopt Gandhi's way of giving up meat for avoiding injuries to other sentient beings because earth is not a planet only for human beings but also for other non-human species, which have full right to live here.

Conclusion

Though Green philosophy and Green Party is western originated concept that also emerges only from 1970's, has got its relevance throughout the world because all the inhabitants in this planet are currently affected by one or some other forms of environmental crises.

Western countries are already reached the pinnacle of development in terms of energy consumption, living in the luxurious lifestyle, possessing a good number of cars ...etc. It will be difficult for them to step down from their already developed status, for example lowering down energy consumption, giving up consumerist lifestyle and throw away culture ..etc . Thus, Asian countries which are developing in a fast pace must have its own way of developmental model differing from western model. Its people begins to consume from bottom level to somewhat higher one, so it will be easily adjustable for them to what level they can consume or what sort of lifestyle they can pursue or how many cars they can have…so on. In this juncture, India really needs to have its own way of development in an ecologically friendly manner. From the above given remarks, we know that Gandhiji wanted India to be a torch bearer for a new world. Through India world also will emancipate from the current doom. The great Norwegian philosopher, the father of deep ecology movement, Arne Naess says, "The greatest tragedy for India is India discards Buddhism and neglects Gandhiji's green teaching". Time is really running out from our hands, we must do something before it is too late. It is high time for India to imbibe Gandhiji's green teaching in formulation and implementation of policy programme of the government and in the lifestyle of every individuals.

It can be concluded by saying that though Gandhiji happened to live in an era where there was no such environmental crises like today, his practical life, his vision, his philosophy reflects as a toughest Green forever. After thorough analysis of the important tenets of Green Party and ideas of Green thinkers, it can be firmly accepted that Gandhiji is the earliest Green whose thinking is six decades ahead than the present generation.

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Swaraj in Exile: The Case of Tibetan Settlements in Bailakuppe, Karnataka

Joanna P Coelho

This article attempts to elucidate how Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on Gram Swaraj have been the basis around which Tibetan refugees in India have organised themselves. The arrival of thousands of Tibetan refugees in India began with the escape of the XIV Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso to India in March 1959. When a symbiotic national community with specific political and geo-cultural boundaries gets dismantled, it leads to the collective construction of a sense of community among the members of the former national community. Anticipating a long period in exile, the Dalai Lama decided to give priority to a more permanent rehabilitation in the form of settlements with facilities to enable all Tibetans to live in homogenous communities. Modelled along Gandhiji's views on gram swaraj, these settlements were self-sufficient with schools, monasteries and livelihood avenues for the Tibetan refugees. The aim behind relocating the refugees into these exclusive settlements was a prevention of assimilation to the country of refuge and a preservation of their Tibetan identity and culture, so

that not only the current generation, but also the succeeding generations would be prepared to take on the responsibility for the Tibetan struggle.

With its focus on the two Tibetan settlements in Bailakuppe, the objectives have been twofold i.e to understand the community's efforts at practising direct democracy in exile and to delineate the various organisations that helps the settlements in sustaining gram swaraj.

Thus by examining the practice of community governance adopted by the Tibetan settlements in India, this paper seeks to show how Mahatma Gandhi's advocacy for 'a village- based political formation fostered by a stateless, classless society' found a ready votary in the Tibetan refugee settlements in India.

From Village Republic to Gram Swaraj

Ideas pertaining to Gram Swaraj have always been part of the Indian ethos. Since early Vedic times, the village was considered the basic unit of administration in India. Pandit Nehru attributed this system of village self- government to be the foundation that gave strength to the Aryan polity. Although Indian village government has never been democratic in Western terms, there was a sense in which the whole body of villagers took their part in village affairs (Wade: 1987). Inscriptions recorded on the walls of the Sundaravarada temple in Kanchipuram documents a written constitution that dealt with elections to a village assembly around 750 AD (Lokraj Andolan). Included in the inscriptions were qualifications required of contesting candidates, circumstances under which a candidate would be disqualified, right of public to recall the elected members when they failed to discharge their duties properly, etc.

These village republics of India were part of the Indian political and social landscape until the Mughal rule and the later arrival of the East India Company. In 1830, the then acting Governor General of India, Sir Charles Metcalfe ((Metcalf:1995) wrote:" the village communities are little republics, having nearly everything that they want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations…This union of village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India through all the

revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness, and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence. I wish, therefore, that the village constitutions may never be disturbed."

But as the centralising hold of the East India Company increased, the centralisation of all executive and judicial powers in the hands of the British bureaucrats diluted the village republics of their age-old powers and influence. During the nationalist struggle, Gandhiji's attempts at nation building were rooted in the concept of a confederation of villages. After Independence, this trend set in by the British, was continued by the Indian administration. This is because Pandit Nehru, influenced by his experience of partition, approached nation building and national reconstruction as primarily top down. For this he assigned a central role to the states. Ambedkar's condemnation of villages as a sink of localism and a den of ignorance and narrow mindedness and communalism (Ambedkar: 1948), also helped consolidate the marginalisation of Gandhi's views on and aspirations for village republics. A mere formal acceptance of the idea of local autonomy and local self-governance was reflected in the incorporation of village panchayats in the directive principles of the Indian Constitution (Behar and Kumar: 2002). Subsequently in 1959, the institution of Panchayati Raj was created by Pandit Nehru which set up local democracy at the district, block and village level. However the Panchayati Raj proved to be the proverbial God that failed on account of several reasons, prominent among which was the hostility of political leaders and bureaucracy (Borah :2012).

The real impetus to Panchayati Raj was given by the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act. Influenced by Gandhiji's ideas on gram swaraj, it has achieved some measure of success. In January 2001, the Madhya Pradesh Government added the word gram swaraj to the Panchayati Raj Act. Gram swaraj was claimed to be a new system of local-self governance, which moves from indirect to direct democracy. But it has so far not been very effective. Gandhiji's dream of a stateless democracy attained through gram swaraj has remained unfulfilled with the Panchayati Raj system of modern India.

Gandhi And Village Republics

Actually, neither was the picture of gram swaraj as conceived by Gandhiji a resurrection of the old village panchayat. Rather it was the formation of independent village units of swaraj in the context of the present day world. Being a practical idealist, Gandhiji realised the practical usefulness of the ideal of Stateless Democracy, which is not the "withering away of the State but "scattering of the State" (Vyas 1962: 8). In Hind Swaraj, he elaborates his idea of Gram swaraj:

"My idea of village swaraj is that it is a complete republic, independent of it's neighbours for its own vital wants, and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is a necessity. ..Here there is perfect democracy based upon individual freedom. The individual is the architect of his own Government."

In his conception of village swaraj, he specifies that the village's first concern should be to grow crops for food and cloth. It should have a reserve for cattle, recreation, playground, village theatre, schools and activity that is conducted on a cooperative basis.

Though Gandhiji himself says that there is nothing inherently impossible in the picture of village swaraj of his conception, the Indian State has been struggling to come towards Gandhiji's vision of gram swaraj. The failure has not been one of implementation alone. The philosophy and institution of the Panchayati Raj themselves are quite faulty in comparison with those of Gram Swaraj (Bhole).Although increasingly more and more people are now thinking of gram swaraj as an alternative social paradigm, many of them still do not have the confidence and courage to accept and implement it whole heartedly in its true nature (Bhole). Given this scenario where not only India, but various countries around the world have been unsuccessful in fully implementing Gandhiji's idea of gram swaraj, it is interesting to note that this institution has not only been accepted as an ideal by a refugee community, but has been the basis of successful sustenance and development of the community in exile. The adoption of Gandhiji's ideas on gram swaraj is just one of the many influences that Gandhiji and the Gandhian way of life has had on Tibetans and the Tibetan cause.

Gandhi's Influence on The Tibetan Cause

In the two versions of his autobiography My Land and My People (1962) and Freedom in Exile (1990), the fourteenth Dalai Lama writes of the influence he felt from Gandhiji's life when he visited the Rajghat on the first day of his first visit to India in 1956. He writes in Freedom in Exile (1990):

"I made a pilgrimage to Rajghat….where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated,… felt grateful also to be in a country that had adopted ahimsa…to me, (Gandhi) was – and is- the consummate politician, a man who put his belief in altruism above any personal considerations. I was convinced too that his devotion to the cause of non- violence was the only way to conduct politics."

In a foreword to Gandhiji's biography, " My Life is My Message" the Dalai Lama, who dedicated his Noble Prize to Gandhi, admitted that as a young man, he was deeply impressed by Mahatma Gandhi's principles of non-violence and ahimsa, as well as his simple living in accordance with Indian philosophy. The Dalai Lama has made Gandhiji's teachings of non-violence, ahimsa, as well as his ideas of Hind Swaraj as the guiding principles of the Tibetan struggles in exile. He has received praise as well as criticism for his insistence on ahimsa. Today Hind Swaraj is alive as a vision for freedom of a struggling Tibetan nation. Samdhong Rimpoche, the Tibetan Government in Exile's first Prime Minister has also published his Satyagraha manifesto, where he proposes the Tibetans should go back to Tibet and practice Satyagraha against the Chinese.

While Gandhiji's principles of ahimsa have been the more visible aspect of Gandhian influences on Tibetan struggle, Gandhiji's doctrines on gram swaraj have been an integral component to the Tibetan cause in exile. In his acceptance speech as Prime Minister on September 5, 2001 Prof Samdhong Rimpoche stressed that Tibetans need to establish a non-violent society to serve as a model for the rest of the world. He said "In order to do this, we should first develop a culture of ahimsa in our exile communities. We can begin by designing projects for non-violent means of livelihood in the exile communities…In short, I intend to promote the Gandhian concept of Gram Swaraj in our settlements" (http://www.tibet.ca/en/library/wtn/archive/old).

In this paper, two Tibetan settlements in Bailakuppe/ Karnataka, to observe how gram swaraj forms the bedrock of those two settlements. The specific focus has been on how the Tibetan refugees in Bailakuppe practice direct democracy in exile.

Refugees as the Victims

While the notion of refugees existed since Biblical times, refugee formation is largely a twentieth century phenomenon. It is often a direct consequence of the attempts made by the newly independent countries in Africa and Asia who transplanted the Western ideal of nation state in their own territories. The modern nation state with its homogenising principle led to the ideal of a unified cultural identity. Those that refused to be homogenised were looked upon as the 'other'. In its extreme, this intolerance of difference led to a situation where people were forced to flee their motherland and become refugees.

The persecution and alienation that defines the refugee, both in his home and host country, give the impression that a refugee is condemned to dictates beyond her/his control. While the refugees are victims of statecraft and the discursive power of nationalism and human rights, they are at the same time active agents of social transformation. They try to counter the experiences of loss, marginality and displacement by developing a sense of diasporic consciousness. The paper, has examined how the Tibetans, through their Government in Exile, have been successful in developing this sense of diasporic consciousness to such an extent, that they have been able to preserve their otherness, their distinct identity and avoid assimilation with the Indian nation state. The practice of gram swaraj, followed in the Tibetan settlements played a pivotal role in creating, sustaining and promoting the Tibetan nation in exile.

Birth of Tibetan Refugees

The status of Tibet has been a contentious issue since the twentieth century. While China claims that Tibet was a part of its territory since the thirteenth century, its current stand on the issue took shape only after the People's Republic of China (PRC) came into being. To question the legitimacy of Tibet's incorporation into PRC is to question the legitimacy of the idea of the Chinese State as constructed by the Chinese

Communist Party; it is to raise questions against the cultural and political nationalism that has been fostered within the PRC and has fundamental bearing on the identity of modern China (Sperling: 2004).The Tibetan position on its relationship with China and on the Chinese invasion, keeps changing in an attempt to build a vision of Tibet that reflects the new sense of nationalism that grew out of the 1959 revolt and the years of exile that followed. Discussing Tibet's status *vis- a-vis* China, and the intricacies of what Tibetans see as invasion, are beyond the scope of this presentation. This presentation suffices to say, after China occupied/ liberated Tibet in 1949, in 1950 the People's Republic Army of China, marched into and occupied Tibet. For nine years there were fruitless attempts at negotiations between the Governments of China and Tibet. In March 1959, fearing kidnapping and assassination, the XIVth Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, fled to India. Following the Dalai Lama, thousands of Tibetans fled to India as refugees.

Construction of Tibetan Identity

Of the millions that have fled to their homeland, seeking refuge and a new life in host societies the world over, the Tibetans stand out. They have taken refuge in a neighboring country which has traditionally been their spiritual guru, not as individuals alone, but rather as a national polity that has escaped the destruction taking place in Tibet. Though the Tibetans were forbidden from using India as a base to fight their political battle against China, they were given *carte blanche* in their struggle against perceived cultural extinction. When a symbiotic national community with specific political and geo-cultural boundaries gets dismantled, it leads to the collective construction of a sense of community among the members of the former national community. In an alleged attempt to compensate for his alleged personal guilt and to placate the critics of his pro-China policy, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Indian Prime Minister took personal interest in facilitating the Tibetans in their goal of rehabilitation of the Tibetan refugees, and constructing and sustaining their collective identity through language and religion. The Dalai Lama with the support of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) soon got on with the task of the creation and sustenance of a unified Tibetan community in the face of disparity with regard to the Tibetan populace. Gandhi's concept of gram swaraj

became the basis around which they reorganized and governed themselves in the various Tibetan settlements. This in turn, facilitated the processes of direct democracy that has become one of the hallmarks of the Tibetan community in exile.

Direct Democracy as Part of Exile

Forsdyke (2005: 2) draws a linkage between exile and political power in the Archaic and Classical period in Greece. He argues that the revolution by which the democracy was established was a direct outcome of a particularly violent episode of intra-elite politics of exile. Though exile played an important role in the legitimation of democratic rule in the initial stages of democracy, in contemporary times democracy is associated largely with the nation states. In fact, democracy is seen as the most appropriate form of governance for the nation state.

In this context, the Tibetan case appears unique, as democracy arrived with the dissolution of Tibet as a separate entity. Prior to 1959, Tibet was a theocratic state with the supreme political power vested in the Dalai Lamas, though of course in practice there was a certain amount of decentralisation. The exile community therefore had no direct experience of democratic governance when it came to India, and the participatory democracy developed by the Dalai Lama and Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) since 1960 was the first in Tibet's history. In my opinion, the democracy practised by the Tibetans in exile is more of a direct democracy.

Frechette (2007: 98) argues that the Tibetan exiles are in a democratic transition, as they have embraced democracy as a normative ideal towards which they are reforming their political system. Though not legally recognised by any country in the world, including India, the Tibetan case is a social fact of how a Government can provide legitimacy and function in exile. Despite the limitations brought about by their status as refugees, their exile position hastened their efforts at democratisation. The absence of entrenched landholding interests in exile, which enabled new structures of governance to emerge, favourable host government policies, as well as considerable international aid, contingent at times on democratic reforms, assisted their efforts (Frechette 2007: 99).

The Tibetan Government in exile was re-established by the Dalai Lama with the setting up of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) at Dharamshala in the Himalayan State of Himachal Pradesh in India in 1959. The aim was to organise the refugee community and to guide the Tibetan struggle for self-rule. In many ways, the Tibetan refugee community is one of the most successful refugee communities in the world. A large part of the credit for the Tibetan success story should go to the efforts made by the CTA.

The CTA comprises of the *Kashag*, i.e. the cabinet with eight ministers called *kalon*, with the *Kalon Tripa*, that is the Prime Minister (now called *Sikyong*, i.e. political leader) as Chief of Cabinet. Whereas earlier the Dalai Lama played a crucial role in these elections, now these elections are more democratic, with the *Kalon Trip*a being directly elected by the people. In 1963 a Constitution - the Charter of the Tibetans in Exile - was adopted by the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (ATPD). The Assemblies are structured around the Tibetan homeland, namely Kham, Amdo and U Tsang, rather than the exile communities. But once they are elected, they then represent Tibet as a whole. Mr. Lhasang Yeshi, an MP in the present Tibetan Government in Exile explained to me the logic of structuring the Assemblies along the Tibetan homeland. "Initially that is the main representation, the main symbol of Tibet, and I think that day as well as today the importance is still there because China always says Tibet is just Tibet Autonomous Region. So we say that Tibet includes the three provinces. So it makes a huge difference. It is a huge political statement. Anyway once we are elected we work for Tibet as a whole. So practically, as we do not represent any specific constituency, and get no MP development funds, having the Assemblies represent areas in Tibet, does not affect the development of the settlements in exile."

The people are directly involved even in the elections to the Assemblies (The elections to the Assembly are held in two stages: the preliminary and the final stage. In the preliminary stage, every voter could propose the name of maximum of ten persons on a ballot paper. A consolidated list of the top twenty candidates is drawn up at the settlement level, with twenty percent of the seats reserved for women

(Subramanya 2011: 66). The final stage is conducted in a similar fashion with additional mode of candidate selection, i.e. voluntary candidates.

The exile administration controls such resources as school admission, health care benefits, pensions, scholarship opportunities, direct aid to the desperately poor, and employment in the administration and its many businesses. Through this framework, the exile administration is able to govern effectively in the absence of its own coercive apparatus (i.e., police, army, courts and prison system). One of the primary functions of the CTA is to oversee the functioning of the refugee communities in the various settlements.

Case of Lugsung Samdupling

Following the Dalai Lama, eighty thousand Tibetans fled to India. In the following years, the numbers kept on increasing. Once the refugees were given asylum in India, accommodating them and facilitating them to maintain themselves became a priority. Though initially most of the Tibetans were allotted road construction work along the Himalayan border, it was not a permanent solution. The work was not financially sustainable and it led to the problem of hundreds of unattended Tibetan children living exposed to dangerous conditions, while their parents worked on the roads.

Anticipating a long period in exile, the Dalai Lama decided to give priority to a more permanent rehabilitation, with facilities to enable all Tibetans to live in homogenous communities. With the help of the Indian Prime Minister, a number of settlements were established in different parts of India. While in the late 1950s, the refugees pouring into India from Tibet were accommodated in various places in North and North Eastern India, in the 1960s it was decided that to relocate them to various settlements in South India. Such a relocation of the refugees served several purposes: it was a means to further rural development in India, it took some tension off the border, and it made the refugees easier to monitor, control, and register (Magnussum et al 2008: 6).

As of today, there are a total of fifty-eight agricultural, handicraft-based or scattered settlements of Tibetan refugees in India, Nepal and

Bhutan. Each settlement is administered by a settlement officer, who in turn is guided by the CTA, the Local Tibetan Assembly and the laws of the host country. Modelled along Gandhiji's ideas on gram swaraj, these settlements are self-sufficient with schools, monasteries and livelihood avenues for the Tibetan refugees. The logic behind the establishment of self-sufficient settlements was to enable the Tibetans to become economically self-sufficient within five years, thus reducing India's economic burden. The Indian Government also thought that it would help India's food needs by bringing unused land under cultivation (Kharat 2003:55). Relocating the refugees into these exclusive settlements was a prevention of assimilation to the country of refuge and a preservation of their Tibetan identity and culture, so that not only the current generation, but also the succeeding generations would be prepared to take on the responsibility for the Tibetan struggle. As mentioned earlier, the settlements were organised and governed along the principles of gram swaraj. In the following section of the paper will elucidate how the Mahatma's ideas on gram swaraj have been actualised in the settlement.

The Formation

When Pandit Nehru wrote to the Chief Ministers of State Governments asking them if was land available in their territories for the resettlement of Tibetan refugees, he received a positive response from the Government of the then Mysore State. Subsequently three thousand acres of forest land was identified in Bailakuppe for an initial number of three thousand refugees. In December 1960, the first group of Tibetan refugees were sent from various transit camps in North India, to Bailakuppe in the then Mysore State. While the beginning was tough with Tibetans having difficulty adapting to the lower altitude, different climate, topography, and the constant threat from the large number of wild animals, with the combined efforts of the Government of Mysore, the Indian Central Government the UNHCR and the Tibetans themselves, the Tibetan settlements of Lugsung Samdupling was established. A few years later another settlement Dickey Larsoe, was built adjacent to it. Both these settlements are referred to as Bailakuppe, the name of the Indian town that is closest to the settlements. Though their arrival was seen by both the refugees and the

local community, as being a temporary feature, after over fifty years, the refugees are now a greying community. Overcoming initial insecurity, reluctance and the topographic and climatic harshness, it has now evolved to be a model refugee settlement. It is the resilience, persistence and hard work of the Tibetans, support from the host Government, as well as the model of gram swaraj adopted by the settlement, that have made the two Tibetan settlements in Bailakuppe today one of the largest and most developed settlements of Tibetan refugees in India.

Once they arrived in 1960, the Tibetans slowly cleared the once thick forest, land with the help of tractors and other equipment provided by the Government of India. One agency that contributed immensely in the initial resettlement and development of the Tibetan settlement was the Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA). Inspired by Gandhiji's concept of village republics, MYRADA began as a voluntary effort to rehabilitate Tibetan refugees in India. The assistance given by MYRADA was largely technical- construction, engineering, agricultural and veterinary sciences and ground water exploitation. This programme, which also involved an establishment of a school, Cauvery Village Project (CVP), came to an end in 1978 with over twenty thousand Tibetans, successfully settled. The administration of the school as later handed over to the Central School for Tibetans.

Mahatma's ideas

Considering that Government is the best which governs the least, Gandhiji saw village republics as promoting a stateless democracy. In village swaraj, the village being the decentralised small political unit endowed with the fullest powers, every individual will have a direct voice in the Government (Gandhi 1962: 9).In the settlements, the Tibetans have their own administrative system, functioning under the CTA. The Settlement Officer (SO) appointed by the CTA looks after the immediate needs of the refugees and also functions as a means of communication between the CTA and the Tibetans. The SO also implements some of the programmes of the CTA such as training programmes for technical education and informs them of the

programmes and policies of the government -in-exile (Tarodi 2011: 9).

All the administrative posts are democratically elected, and ultimately accountable to the CTA. There is a three-layer hierarchy with the *chupon* or 'head of ten' at the base. The *chupon's* duty is to organise labour for community projects, organise festivals and hear grievances. At the next level in the hierarchy, is the camp leader. Every year, on an appointed date, the camp members gather at the settlement office and each member writes his or her preference on a ballot paper. The elected camp leader, works without monetary benefit for one year. He or she is the intermediary between the SO and the camp member. In case of any problem, the chupon, or the camp member has to first contact the camp leader. There is also the Tibetan Justice Commission situated in the settlement. This Commission is equipped to handle all non-criminal cases. The Commission entertains a complaint only it has evidence that the person has first attempted to get the problem resolved at the level of the chupon, camp leader and lastly the Settlement Officer.

A Self Sufficient Village

In explaining his concept of village republic, Gandhiji had said that the unit of society should be a village or call it a manageable small group of people who would, in the ideal, be self-sufficient (in the matter of their vital requirements) as a unit (Gandhi 1959: 8). The Tibetans settlement of Lugsung Samdupling is self-sustained and manages its own affairs. The settlement has houses that were built by the Indian Government for the refugees that came initially to the settlement. Apart from the houses, each family (of five members) was given five acres of land. The settlement also has two schools- one Central Tibetan School, whose administration has recently shifted from the Government of India to the CTA; and TCV, a school run entirely on sponsorship and managed by the Tibetans themselves.

Gandhiji stressed the contribution of cooperatives in the smooth functioning of gram swaraj. In 1964, the Tibetan Cooperative Society was registered under the Karnataka Cooperative Society Act. This Society is the political and economic nerve centre of the Bailakuppe settlement and its functioning is a classic example of the principle of

direct democracy. There are four sections of the Lugsung Samdupling Cooperative. One is IOC, Indian Oil Corporation petrol bunk; there is also a workshop for tractor and for the mechanic and for lithe. Third, the cooperative also has supermarket, and the fourth section comprises handicraft. Earlier, the Cooperative also had the profitable section of poultry farming. But, wanting the settlement to be associated with Gandhiji's principle of ahimsa, the Dalai Lama requested that the poultry project be abandoned. Today an Old Age home for elderly Tibetans stands in the same building that housed the former poultry farm.

Hygiene and Sanitation

In the earlier years of exile, unaware of the health, hygiene and sanitation requirements of a hot and humid country like India, a large number of Tibetans fell sick and even died, due to lack of hygiene. In course of time, they adopted earlier unknown hygiene and sanitation practices. Paying heed to the centrality of health and hygiene in Gandhi's notion of an ideal village, the Tibetan settlements also stressed on this dimension of settlement life. The Settlement Officer informed that the cooperative society has water purification plants. For a payment of just one rupee per litre, one can get access to purified drinking water. The settlement office also has a project concerning overhead tanks, wherein each camp has an overhead tank.

Whenever any camp member faces any difficulty pertaining to health, hygiene and sanitation, he contacts his *chupon*, who then with the help of the camp leader, tries to address the problem. If it cannot be handled at their level, the camp leader then informs the Settlement Office. Depending on the seriousness of the problem, the SO may even request the CTA to constitute a project to deal with the issue. In this way, from time to time, the settlement has had various small and big projects to deal with health and sanitation issues of the settlement.

Religion and Settlement

Mahatma Gandhi did not see religion as separate from politics. "My devotion to the truth has drawn me to the field of politics, and I can say without the slightest hesitation and yet with all humility that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not

know what religion is" (Gandhi cited in Ardley 2002: 68). Tibet's entire political process has always been based on the intricate link between politics and religion and this is seen in the settlement as well. Religion is a pervasive feature throughout the settlement. Prayer flags, stupas, small shrines dot the landscape. The four sects of Tibetan Buddhism, Kagyu, Nyigma, Sakya and Gelup, each have their monastery in the settlement. Apart from the prayers and religious rituals conducted regularly by individuals and families, the Settlement Office, on the directive from time to time organises community prayers. The SO explains the procedure, "whenever the directive comes from the CTA or His Holiness's Office, we just put it back in the envelope and along with some introductory letter we give to the camp people. So they will read out to the people. And they make timelines. So certain periods they put aside in a day to recite poojas."Thus in the settlement, a fine balance is maintained between religion, governance and democracy. The settlement also strictly practices Prohibition. Despite being a tourist destination, alcohol is not served in any of the restaurants in the settlement.

Conclusion

The preceding paragraphs elaborate how the Tibetan settlement at Bailakuppe tries to put into practice the various directives given in Gandhi's gram swaraj. The Tibetan administration sees this implementation of gram swaraj as an experiment in practicing Gandhism which they hope to repeat in Tibet once they return.

The experience of mankind testifies to the fact that collective life is more genial, varied and fruitful when it is concentrated in small units and simpler organisations (Vyas 1962: 7). Since her Independence, India has been trying implement Gandhi's ideas on gram swaraj. But as we have noted, at the beginning of this paper, our implementation has fallen short of the ideal. The recent attempts to introduce the word gram swaraj in the Panchayati Raj Act, has given new hope. Yet, we have a long way to go, and the old challenges facing the full implementation of Ganhiji's ideals remain. The seriousness and success, with which a refugee community in India has adopted Gandhiji's ideas on gram swaraj, when we, the land of Gandhi, are still faltering, then makes an interesting irony. A further examination of the reasons for

this irony, would give us some insights into how we can ensure a better implementation of Gandhiji's ideas on gram swaraj in India.

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The Unfinished Agenda of Gandhiji's Gram Swaraj - Status of Panchayati Raj in Karnataka

Mohan Das. K

Karnataka has been a pioneering state in nurturing Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. Prior to the 73rd amendment to the Constitution, Karnataka had put in place a unique two-tier system of decentralized local governance, through the Zilla Parishads and Mandal Panchayats. In the wake of the 73rd Amendment, Karnataka is the first state in the country to enact the Karnataka Panchayats Raj Act, on May 10, 1993. Karnataka is one of the two states that have transferred all 29 subjects listed in the Constitution of India to PRIs1. In 1987 Karnataka State initiated to constitute a first generations decentralization reforms with "central theme" being creating and empowering strong district level local government. The constitutional amendments of 1992, with its emphasis on reservations for deprived classes of the population in leadership, combined social justice with decentralization constituted second-generation reforms in the state.

The thriving system of democracy demands association of people at different levels of administration. Panchayati Raj aims at associating people with administration at the grassroots level. Though Gandhiji,

advocated for a village based political formation for the creation of Gram Swaraj, the idea of Panchayati Raj did not find a place in the Draft Constitution of India. The working of the Panchayati Raj in different States in post colonial India is not satisfactory. Gandhian ideal of Gram Swaraj remains an unfinished agenda even after fifty years of implementation of the Panchayati Raj Team and two decades after the enactment of the 73rd Amendment and its implementation by various States. The present paper like to analyse Gandhi's concept of Gram Swaraj , unsatisfactory working of Panchayati Raj system and factors responsible for it with special reference to present status in Karnataka.

Ironically, the real liberty for the Indian people has become more and more remote during half a century after India achieved its independence. The confidence about the suitable path for reconstructing the Indian socio-economic and political order, which existed in the early years after Independence, has now given way to disoriented, confused, and despondent state of mind in the country. This is well-reflected in the utter confusion that exists today in respect of the choice between Swadeshi and globalization, or liberalization and planning, or market and State, tyranny or Gramswaraj. Although increasingly more and more people are now thinking of Gramswaraj as an alternative social paradigm, many of them still do not have the confidence and daring to accept and implement it wholeheartedly in its true nature. The terms such as Gramswaraj, Gramsabha, Panchayats, Panchayat Samitis have been adopted now by many to create an impression of their allegiance to the philosophy of decentralization and people's grass-root democracy in the country, while actually what is being promoted is only a ghost of Gramswaraj or a Pseudo-Decentralization. It is in this context that the present paper seeks to discuss briefly the philosophy, rationale, foundation, institutions (organization), and essentiality of Gramswaraj (GS).

That Government is best which governs the least. This is the nearest approach to the self–regulated stateless society. However, the fundamental concept of Gram Swaraj is that every village should be its own republic, "independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is

necessary." Each village should be basically self-reliant, making provision for all necessities of life - food, clothing, clean water, sanitation, housing, education and so on, including governance and self-defence, and all socially useful amenities required by a community. That latter may include a theatre or a public hall. For India as a whole, full independence will mean that every village be a republic with full powers. Then, as now, these were revolutionary ideas or only an utopian phenomena and the reality of Gandhian philosophy of Gramswaraj has been sidelined due to its "irrelevance". .

Gandhi favoured participatory democracy and advocated for 'a village based political formation fostered by a stateless, classless society' for the creation of Gram Swaraj, the idea of Panchayati Raj did not find a place in the Draft Constitution of India. This happened because the Congress Constitution Committee rejected the idea 'believing that the Congress could neither forgo its political role nor become so utterly decentralised' as envisaged in the Gandhian concept of Gram Swaraj. So much so that the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Indian Constitution and the Minister of Law, Dr B.R. Ambedkar, did not care to reply to the letter from Dr Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly, as to why the plan did not even use the two words 'Panchayati Raj'.

Ambedkar's stance on Panchayats was perhaps based on his apprehension that the Panchayats shall be dominated by upper castes and exploit and repress the lower Castes. But, the then Prime Minister of India and the leader the Congress Parliamentary Party, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, chose to remain silent on this issue; perhaps, he favoured a centralised polity for making India a modern and developed state. But, the zealous pleas of Prof N. G. Ranga and others virtually forced Ambedkar to accept an amendment moved by K. Santhanam which later got incorporated into Article-40 of the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India. It directed the state to set up Village Panchayats and endow them with the authority to function as units of self-government. ¨This did lead to the enactment of Gram Panchayat Acts by various States; these were no more than half-hearted attempts for the creation of rural local government institutions.

As a goal, Gramswaraj is an ideal non-violent social order, in which self sufficient, self-reliant, self-governing village-states function independently in vital matters. It is a total revolution and a complete grass-root democracy in which people are awakened to their capabilities and are fully empowered. It substitutes production by masses in place of mass production, and governance, administration, and planning by masses in place of governance by classes. It is founded on spiritual values such as inner self-rule, love, compassion, service, sacrifice, etc. Redefinition of development, minimum government, universalism, individual, national, etc. Gramswaraj is different from Panchayat Raj and Decentralization which are currently in vogue in India and abroad. A remarkable ideational ascent in respect of Gramswaraj has occurred in India during 20th century through the efforts and work of the visionaries like Gandhi, and Vinoba. The present Gramswaraj has failed and has remained incomplete so far. We ,have to complete this unfinished task if it wants to survive in the years to come.

The absence of a Gandhian spirit in the Panchayati raj system is responsible for its failure to achieve rural empowerment, biggest drawback of the Panchayat raj system was that it did not focus on empowering people. Instead of this the Panchayati raj system gave importance to decentralisation of power, which in turn resulted in decentralisation of corruption and "harmed" village life. For eg. today, Indian agriculture is suffering due to "wrong" farm practices which increased expenses. The constitutional arrangement of Grama panchayath has become more complex when we add more conventional institutions, formal and informal, like the khap panchayats in Haryana, Pani Panchayats in Orissa, vana panchayats in Uttarakhand, caste panchayats in Karnataka, gavki in Maharashtra and oor in TamilNadu.

All these constitutional and conventional panchayats deal with economic development, social justice, dispute settlement, rural development and social welfare services. A question may arise in this context: have these multiple agencies been working in tandem or encroaching upon each other's domain? There are conflicts and contradictions in the domain of self-governing institutions when they distribute the slice of the cake to the villagers. For these reasons, they

are also called as self- aggrandised governments. Sadly, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have not been successful in inculcating political consciousness among the people. The reasons are not far to seek: financial constraints, lackadaisical bureaucracy, rampant corruption and politicians' insensitivity.

Though over three million men and women are elected to the PRIs, they have no idea about their rights and responsibilities. Unless political bodies at all levels including the MPs, the MLAs and government officials take a positive stand, the Constitution will not bear fruits to the 73rd Amendment. The PRIs in India, barring a few exceptions, are growing in size and scale but without the roots. What we witness today is a darkness of suspicion, disillusionment and disappointment. The founding fathers' intentions are marred by, election boycotts in the fear of losing the caste hegemony, auctioning for panchayat positions, violence and pressure to prevent capable candidates from contesting elections for the reserved seats, gross financial irregularities, fraud, corruption, misuse of funds and so on. This is due largely to a crisis of ethos and culture. The dynamic, honest and committed youths keep off the rural leadership. On seeing this vacuum, leaders capture the helm of affairs whose conduct reflects covetousness, non commitment; materialism, non temperance; and collusion, not cogitation for genuine empowerment. The rural youths prefer to migrate to cities in search of jobs or reluctantly feast on agricultural income which works as disguised unemployment. These representatives too run around politicians and officials for funds and services in the rural areas. Thus, public interest takes a back seat. Elections will serve little purpose unless people are endowed with resources and authority to steer the machinery of governance.

Over the years, the centre and the states have set up numerous committees and commissions. These have made recommendations for institutional and procedural reforms. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission, in its report on local governance, has considered the core principles of local governance reform. These include subsidiarity, devolution, capacity building, citizen-centricity and accountability. This reform package presents two contradictory viewpoints. One, the policymakers wish to devolve more powers to

the PRIs in the name of citizen-centricity (examples: community policing, maintaining public order and resolving local disputes). And two, they have become platforms to perpetuate exploitation and injustice meted out to weaker sections. Both paradoxical roles are products of two ideological strands and present the superstructure of the PRIs without a structure or base. This implies that the moral potential for the success of grassroots institutions is yet to be intensified.

The ground reality has not changed much in terms of economic development, empowerment and social justice. In other words, there is neither raj nor panchayats with autonomy and independence. These elected representatives of village republics are losing credibility and people's trust. Their sense of fairness, justice and equity has also become questionable. The cultural terrain of the PRIs, which hitherto neglected all reform measures, needs a second look. The current debate on corruption reminds one of Plato's utterances. Plato was hostile to democracy because the people lacked expertise and enlightenment to understand governance. Robert M. MacIver calls this situation as "aristocratic fallacy" wherein both the rulers and the ruled are incompetent. The people select a good physician and an able lawyer but not a good representative. Competence and wisdom in governance are rare phenomena.

The Gram Sabha is the place where the first brick of our democratic edifice lies but it remains unnoticed. The potential and power of the people, if tapped properly, can transform the lives of masses in rural areas. Today, however, what we witness is that there is no effective meetings of Gram Sabhas are convened to assess the performance of Gram Panchayats. And even if these are convened, there is poor attendance.

The Gram Sabhas can act as watchdogs of a committed and accountable democracy. They can supervise and monitor the functioning of the village panchayats and government functionaries. They can also examine the annual statements of accounts and audit reports of the Gram Panchayats prepared for implementing the rural development schemes. Their success varies from state to state.

In Karnataka, the Gram Sabhas are only advisory bodies. They should be made the sanctioning authority for taking up the developmental programmes at the village level. They should meet at least for four times a year. Maximum decentralisation and transparency will ensure accountability and reduce corruption. The list of beneficiaries, muster rolls, bills, vouchers, accounts, applications for licenses and permits should all be tabled, examined and approved by the Gram Sabhas. If the people are dissatisfied with their representatives, the Gram Sabhas should be endowed with the right of recall. The Gram Sabhas should be empowered to penalise local bureaucracy for dereliction, embezzlement and fraud. These can provide a direct link between the service providers and service recipients by shortening the long chain of accountability under which crooked civil servants manage to escape punitive action on account of legal plumbing. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) hold the key to good governance. Over 70 per cent of India's population continues to live in the villages and 60 per cent of the nation's workforce draws its sustenance from agriculture and related activities. This sums up the importance of PRIs. The states should re-examine the Gram Panchayat delimitation for greater efficiency in the delivery of services. When small villages are clustered, gains can be expected, but the trade-off could be in terms of larger Gram Sabhas

Status in Karnataka

In Karnataka the people's participation is inversely proportional to the Gram Sabha's size. Many Gram Panchayats are too small to function as autonomous institutions of local government. To be an economically viable administrative unit, a Gram Panchayat must have a minimum population size. The state should constitute ward sabhas which will exercise in such panchayats powers and functions of the Gram Sabha and of the Gram Panchayat as may be entrusted to them. Panchayats should have their own staff. They should have full powers with regard to recruitment and service conditions of their employees within a broad framework of state laws and certain standards. The state government should not have the power to suspend or rescind any resolution passed by the PRIs or take action against the elected representatives on the ground of abuse of office, corruption, etc. or to supersede/ dissolve

the panchayats. In all such cases, the powers to investigate and recommend action should lie with the local Ombudsman who will send his report through the Lok Ayukta to the Governor.

As many as 1,801 Panchayats in Karnataka have failed to utilise funds released by the government for the welfare of people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, more than one-third of the 5,629 village panchayats did not spend funds earmarked for the benefit of SCs and STs. As per a study, 33 members of Bangalore Urban ZP, 18 members of Bangalore Rural ZP, 22 in Ramanagaram ZP ,28 in Kolar ZP, 12 members of Chikkaballapur ZP,57 members of Tumkur ZP, 34 in Chitradurga ZP,34 in Davanagere and 17 in Shimoga ZP have not submitted details about their assets.

As noted above in 1987 Karnataka State initiated to constitute a first generations decentralization reforms with "central theme" being creating and empowering strong district level local government. The constitutional amendments of 1992, with its emphasis on reservations for deprived classes of the population in leadership, combined social justice with decentralization constituted second-generation reforms. We are now mid-way through what may be considered third generation reforms in decentralization. The theme now is greater accountability, greater transparency and role clarity. The clear emphasis should be on good governance and accountability through decentralization.

Several steps, both through legislative and administrative action, have been taken by the State Government in this direction, from building mechanisms for increased participation of the people in decision making, in streamlining the fiscal mechanisms that fuel decentralized local body functioning and administrative mechanisms that enhance the efficiency and capabilities of Panchayat Raj Insitutions. The present system of Panchayat Raj has almost completed 18 years and completion of its third term. This report is generated aiming at the objectives of Gram Swaraj Project and by analyzing the present status of panchayats in "Most Backward Talukas" of Karnataka. The implementation of Gram Swaraj Project in Karnataka State started from the year 2006-07 which was based on Prof. Nanjundappa committee to address the issues of regional imbalances in his report. With this background the State Government intended to strengthen 1341 Gram Panchayats which

come under most backward taluks in collaboration with the World Bank. The project duration was fixed and a detailed 5 year planning and budget allocation was designed. Gram Swaraj Project aimed at effective implementation of fiscal performance, quality of gram sabhas and service delivery performance of gram panchayats.

Since Decentralization Analysis Cell (DAC) is responsible for analysis, evaluation, monitoring and development of intergovernmental fiscal system, on this behalf, a review on key outcomes of the project had been conducted in the mid-way of the project and a draft report on it was submitted in November 2008. Now the same has been updated for the complete project period for the review of gram panchayats performance in all aspects. The DAC intent its study to find how far the panchayats are able to achieve and reach in its goal of inclusive of function, funds and functionaries.

Conclusions and suggestions

A few suggestions or recommendations emerge from the above illustrations are submitting for further discussions

1. The proceedings of the ward/gram sabha must be elaborated and disseminated to every panchayats member. The time and agenda of the ward/gram sabhas meeting has to prepare by the GPs not by the taluk office as is the practice today.

2. The resolutions passed in GS meetings must be made binding to Gram Panchayats officials and the line departments.

3. Provide proper information on the ratio of utilization of fund towards capital and non-capital works.

4. The implement agency to provide more details on the ratio of utilization of funds towards capital and non-capital works to the concerned officials at the taluk and Gram Panchayat level in future.

5. The Taluk Panchayat should appoint a person to look into the functioning of TRCs and maintenance of TRCs.

6. The initiative of using local associations/self help group should be thought more seriously. Although, this has been put forth in the

Gram Swaraj Project, this has not been advocated effectively to the members of the local association in their capacity building.

Hence to conclude there requires a greater co-ordination between Taluk Panchayats and Gram Panchayats in improving the social indicators. This is because, majority of the elected representatives and officials have not understood the objectives of each scheme thoroughly that is being devolved to the third tier of the local governance. This has led them not giving much preference in improving the social indicators in local planning process. It is suggested that more emphasis should be laid on disseminating the information by both Zilla and Taluk Panchayats about each scheme so that GPs can implement those scheme more effectively.

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Provision of Political Representation: The Case of BTC

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Nironjon Islary

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This paper explores how movements for a separate homeland with the line of specific identity helped in creating many autonomous councils in Assam. It primarily presents the process and compassion of Bodos movement that helped in the creation of two accords-inability of first accord to fulfil the aspiration of Bodos led to make second accord popularly known as Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under Sixth Schedule. This paper focuses on BTC, its entire functional structure, and constitutional provisions and safeguards. It also presents the relation between the State of Assam and BTC, and political dynamics of the council.

Autonomous Councils in Assam

It was during the British rule that the Bodos first raised the demand for a separate homeland along with the hill tribes of northeast India. With the formation of All Assam Plains Tribal League (AAPTL) in 1933, Bodo leaders submitted memorandum to the British commissioner for a separate homeland for plain tribals. However their demand failed to convince the British authority. Aspiration and agitations of tribals of both in hills and plains remained unfulfilled during British regime, except enacting scheduled and partially scheduled areas particularly for hill tribes of Assam.

After independence, Assam started experiencing several movements, which led to the resizing of the geographical boundaries, and many new tribal hill states such as Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, and Meghalaya, were established. These new hill states were the outcomes of long movements. Along with several movements of hill tribals for separate homeland, Bodo intellectuals formed a literary body called Bodo Sahitya Sabha (BSS) in 1952, to work for educational, cultural and literary development of Bodos. Subsequently Bodo intellectuals felt the need for a political organisation in order to address the issues and grievances of the plains tribal of the state. Eventually, Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) an umbrella political organisation was formed in 1967. Simultaneously, Bodo intellectuals felt need to form a student body to address issues and problems and to help the Bodo students while pursuing education in schools, colleges, and universities across the state. As a result All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) came into being in 1967. Gradually student body (ABSU) felt need to involve in politics to address their aspirations and grievances and to do that they reflected to quest for political power. This consciousness gradually took a definite form and developed to the stage of demanding statehood (Bodoland) in order to safeguard the interest and identity of Bodos through political movement.

Thereafter, once again, various tribal groups both in hills and plains launched movements for separate homelands. As for instance- Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) categorically demanded a separate state for the Bodos and the plains tribal of the region called *"Udayachal"*. PTCA launched a movement with demanding the creation of a state on the northern banks of Brahmaputra valley to be known as 'Udayachal' and autonomy for the tribals living on the southern banks of Brahmaputra (Hussain 1987). The wave of movement for the Udayachal demand had significantly penetrated to the people across the state. Studying the wave and power of the movement and unity of all plain tribals, the State Government carefully sought the means to dismantle the movement, subsequently state government succeeded to create disbelief within the leadership of PTCA. Finally, within the leadership of PTCA got split and emerged ideological differences, and factional and physical conflicts, resulted total collapse of the movement. Henceforth PTCA had failed

to bring any significant change; objectives of the agitation remained immaterialised, later on most of the leaders co-opted by the Assamese leaders. Dream of an Udayachal state completely dismantled.

Nevertheless, aspirations and dreams of a separate homeland of Bodos were not fully died down. However, it emerged to the failure of the PTCA movement seemingly led to welcome the radical path to the younger Bodo leaders- which perceived threat of further reorganisation and reduction of size of Assam, sharpened after the Assam Gana Parishad (AGP) has come to power. Later on, the All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) launched a massive movement for the creation of a Bodoland. The magnitude of movements spearheaded by the various groups of tribals both in hills and in plains peaked and the state had to resort to an ingenious political mechanism to resolve tribal unrest. State made decentralisation policies, provided constitutional provisions specifying subjects to introduce autonomous councils to the plains and hill tribals.

To experiment decentralisation policies, state government created Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), which was signed with the ABSU and Bodo Peoples' Action Committee (BPAC) in 1993. This was the first accord signed by the state government for plains Bodo tribe. The success of Bodos' in achieving Autonomous council to fulfil their aspiration set a tangible example, motivating other groups tribal to demand their own territorial boundaries.[1] Henceforth state government organised more councils that are autonomous by enacting the Autonomous Council Act specifying particular name of the tribes. For instances, Rabha Hasong Autonomous Council (RHAC), Mising Autonomous Council (MAC), Lalung (Tiwa) Autonomous Council (LAC), Deuri Autonomous Council (DAC), Sonowal Kachari Autonomous Council (SKAC), and Thengal Autonomous Council (TAC) were created by the State government in 1995.[2] These autonomous councils while spearheaded decentralisation also mainstreamed identity politics. Subsequently, the Bodos felt disheartened, as corruption has seeped into the BAC, and found unfulfilled aspirations of the community. As a result a new armed group re-organised and continued armed struggle to repeal the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) Accord.

Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT)

Inability of Bodoland Autonomous Council to fulfill aspirations of Bodos and graved corruption led to the creation of a new radical revolutionary armed group called BLT on June 18, 1996 under the leadership of Prem Singh Brahma. It aimed to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodos, i.e. to create a separate state of Bodoland in the north bank of the Brahmaputra, creation of an autonomous district council in the south bank of the Brahmaputra, and inclusion of the Bodos of Karbi-Anglong district into Scheduled Tribe (ST). Three years later of its inception, BLT unilaterally decided to suspend its armed struggle on July 14, 1999 and agreed to negotiate with the Government of India. Henceforth the BLT involved in several rounds of tripartite talks on the subject of separate state of Bodoland from times of renouncing armed struggle however, after many rounds of negotiation BLT landed up with autonomous accord under the Sixth Schedule of Indian Constitution. As a result on December 6, 2003, about 2,641 Bodo Liberation Tiger (BLT) cadres renounced violence and surrendered along with arms and ammunition at Kokrajhar, marking an end to seven years of armed struggle. They ended their struggle with the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Accord 2003. Since then most of the surrendered cadres have been actively involving in council is local governance.

Demystification of BTC

Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) is an outcome of several rounds of three partite negotiations, led to sign the Memorandum of Settlement between the Assam and the Union government, and the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT) on February 10, 2003, New Delhi. The BTC jurisdiction extends over 3,082 villages and has legislative powers over 40 subjects. The accord provides for an Executive Council comprising of a maximum of 12 Executive Members, including a Chief and a Deputy Chief, with adequate representation to the non-tribal population. To govern this council Kokrajhar head quarter of existing Kokrajhar district was fixed to be as head quarter of BTC.[3]

The accord is making concerted efforts to fulfil the aspirations of the Bodos relating to their cultural identity, language, education, and economic development. It is an Autonomous self-governing body

within the State of Assam and provides constitutional protection under Sixth Schedule to the Autonomous Body. The council works to fulfil economic, educational and linguistic aspirations and the preservation of land-rights, socio-cultural and ethnic identity of the Bodos; and speed up the infrastructure development in BTC. The forty identified subjects for council to its exercise are given table below:

Table 1: Subjects entrusted to the BTC

1. Small, Cottage and Rural Industry	2. Animal Husbandry & Veterinary
3. Forest	4. Agriculture
5. PWD	6. Sericulture
7. Education: Primary Education, Higher Secondary including vocational training, Adult Education, College Education (General).	8. Cultural Affairs
9. Soil Conservation	10. Co-operation
11. Fisheries	12. Panchayat and Rural Development
13. Handloom and Textile	14. Health & Family Welfare
15. Public Health Engineering	16. Irrigation
17. Social Welfare	18. Flood Control
19. Sports & Youth Welfare	20. Weights and Measures
21. Library Services	22. Museum & Archaeology
23. Urban Development – Town and Country Planning	24. Tribal Research Institute
25. Land & Revenue	26. Publicity/Public Relations
27. Printing & Stationery	28. Tourism
29. Transport	30. Planning and Development
31. Municipal Corporation, Improvement Trust, District Boards and other local authorities	32. Welfare of Plan Tribes and Backward Classes
33. Markets and fairs	34. Lotteries, Theatres, Dramatic performance and cinema
35. Statistics	36. Food and Civil supply
37. Intoxicating liquors, opium and derivatives etc.	38. Labour and employment
39. Relief and Rehabilitation	40. Registration of Births and Deaths

Source: http://cdpsindia.org/btc_accord.asp#top

Considering subjects mentioned in table 1, the council elected government inducts require executive members and allocate portfolios to deliver governance for five years term. The council completed first term of its government with 12 executive members. And second term of council government is ongoing with 13 executive members which will be completing by April 2015.

Council Assembly

Council assembly is governed by the elected members of affiliated party within the council jurisdiction. Period of administration of council is for five years which follows the same structure of the state assembly. Speaker is head of the council assembly followed by deputy speaker, chief and deputy chief, executive members and members of councils. Council provides equal power and status of six nominated members of which two members are supposed to be women. Following pie diagram reveals category-wise seats distribution of the council:

Fig:

Seats for representatives of Council Assembly

■ Reserved for STs ■ Unreserved ■ Reserved for Non-STs ■ Nominated seats
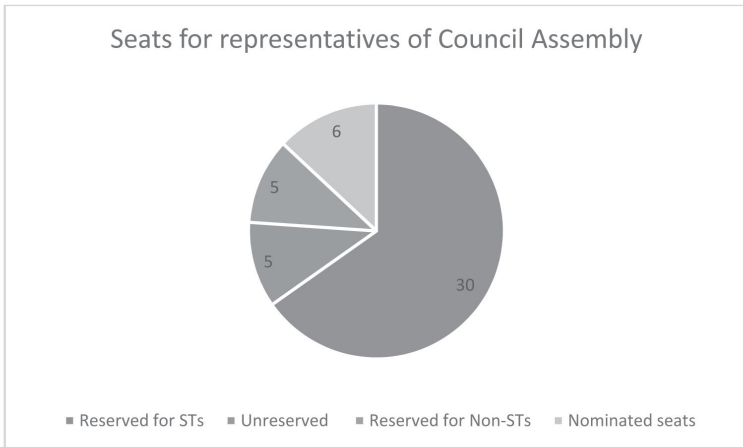
The chart given above reveals four categories of seats constitutionally made for council assembly to represents the mixed communities of the council. The chart reveals that reserved seats for STs has the largest seats of its total seat strength. It also indicates 5 unreserved seats may allure any majority community to contest. Considering the figure of

STs, which speaks majority has also equal right to contest election in unreserved seats, and indeed STs have highly chances of adding more seats from it.

BTC covers 8,970 Sq. KM. area including 2,865 Sq. KM. of reserve forest area, covering newly organized four districts namely Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri.[4] District-wise areas' and number of village included in BTC is given table below:

Table 2: District-wise areas and no. of villages of BTC (2011 census)

Name of District	Area in sq. km.	No. of Villages	Percentage
Kokrajhar	3165	1068	35
Chirang	1975	508	17
Baksa	2007	690	23
Udalguri	1674	800	26
Total	8821	3066	100

Table 2 presents the latest 2011 census's enumerated areas of BTC, of four each districts and total, number of villages of each districts, and total villages. It also indicates Kokrajhar district is the biggest district with 35 per cent areas and is only one original existing district of the council. Apart from Kokrajhar district, three other districts are newly created and all four districts are the outcome of reorganisation of eight existing districts such as Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Kamrup, Darang, and Sonitpur. BTC comprises with 3,066 villages that include more than an equal fifty per cent Schedule Tribe inhabitant villages.

Demography

BTC is land of mixed population and among the mixed population Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities are the majority with 52 per cent (2001 census). Among the STs- Bodos are the largest population (around 90%), followed by Ravas, Garos, Mishings, etc., of aboriginal tribal community of Assam. The other main communities are Adivasis such as Santal, Uraon, Munda, etc., Koch Rajbongshis, Assamese speaking

Assamese such as Kalitas, Kayatas, Jogi, etc., Bengali speaking Muslims and Bengali Brahmins, Baroi, Sutradhar, Namasudra, etc., Nepalis, and Hindi speaking Marowaris and Biharis, are inhabitants of four reorganized districts of BTC. The category-wise population distribution of four district of council is given table below:

Table 3: Population of BTC (2001 census)

District	ST	SC	General	Total population
Kokrajhar	528774 (59%)	32609 (4%)	337608 (38%)	898991
Chirang	169811 (49%)	30035 (9%)	143780 (42%)	343626
Baksa	338630 (47%)	45967 (6%)	333045 (46%)	717642
Udalguri	317412 (47%)	28923 (4%)	324685 (48%)	671020
Total	1354627 (51%)	137534 (5%)	1139118 (43%)	2631279

Source: OSD, Kokrajhar, BTC.

Table 3 presents the population variation of four each districts with three categories such as Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste, and General- this table clarifies the population of what community comprises of how much in four each district. Kokrajhar district is the largest home of Scheduled Tribe with 59 per cent; Chirang is second largest with 49 per cent, and Baksa and Udalguri shares equal with 47 per cent- overall STs population stands 51 per cent in BTC. There is lesser Scheduled Caste population in four each districts- only 5 per cent overall is being found in BTC. General population as mentioned table above signifies the second largest population- each district has significant population, 43 per cent is enumerated in 2001 census. This table is presented primarily to provide overview of the heterogeneous population of BTC, which is not been recorded in 2011 census. Similarly population variation and density (2011 census) of four districts are given below:

Table 4: District-wise population of BTC (2011 census)

Name of districts	Total population	Rural	Urban	Density
Kokrajhar	886999	832249	54750	280
Chirang	481818	446290	35528	244
Baksa	953773	941600	12173	475
Udalguri	832769	795191	37578	497
Total	3155359	3015330	140029	

Source: http://ecostatassam.nic.in/

Table 4 provides an overview of slightly increasing population of one decade in BTC. Table 3 of 2001 census indicates 2631279 populations which has increased to 3155359 in 2011- it means 524080 increased between 2001 and 2011. Table 4 is also provide population distribution of rural and urban, and density of each districts of BTC region. It is noted to be known that 2011 census does not provide category-wise population distribution. Nonetheless STs Population still stands more than 50 per cent in BTC.

Administrative demography

BTC is divided into four districts for administration purposes and Kokrajhar town which is headquarter of existing Kokrajhar district is also served as headquarter of the council. Council jurisdiction is subdivided into eight Civil Sub-Division and forty Development Blocks, some of them are located partly in BTC area and some are partly outside of it. Thus, the citizens often face difficulties in pursuing official works due to puzzle administrative boundaries and scattered institutional set up. Very often the residents within the BTC area of which Development Blocks are located outside the BTC have to face double burden to getting done the official work, same with the non-BTC residents. Therefore, opportunity of corruption and official anomalies of government officials including politicians are significantly high.

Bodoland People's Front (BPF)

BPF is a state political party, which originated in the name of Bodo People's Progressive Front (BPPF) on April 12, 2005 and of its aim was to actively engage in council (BTC), state assembly, and national parliamentarian elections. Unfortunately in a short period of time, party (BPPF) suffered a vertical split into BPPF(R) and BPPF (H). BPPF (R) remained controlled of the president of undivided BPPF Rabiram Narzary and BPPF (H) stuck under the leadership of Ex-BLT supremo Hagrama Mohiliary. Eventually BPPF (H) was rechristened to Bodoland People's Front (BPF). Similarly, BPPF (R) maintained original name in short BPPF after rechristening its rival group. First BTC election, BPF selected 35 members of its own choice to contest for 30 reserved and 5 unreserved seats. However BPF failed to win the enough number of seats, All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) and BPPF (R) supported independent candidates had own equally more than the BPF and desirability of forming first council government of BPF under the leadership of Hagrama Mohiliary was too high thus he, by hook or crook convinced all independent candidates and assimilated into his party and formed the government.

BPF at Bodoland Territorial Council

Right after signing memorandum of settlement, Union Government of India gave power to the Governor of Assam to form an interim council for six month to administer the council. In pursuance of order, Governor formed the 'interim council' on December 2003, with 12 executive members of council provisionally. First interim council was formed with Ex-BLT surrendered leaders and signatories whereby the former chief of BLT, was inducted as a chief of the council body and rest of the executives members were inducted as his choice. The interim council normally continues only for six months thereafter election has to be conducted to form the elected government however, for BTC, continued two terms.

Two terms later of interim council, 13th May 2005 conducted council election and subsequently bye election in November 2005, whereby 40 members were successfully elected through the adult franchise and later these elected members formed the council government. The first

council elected government comprised with 12 executive members including 6 nominated members by the Governor of Assam from unrepresented communities of the council area. For the first time elected council government was governed under the leadership of Hagrama Mohiliary as a chief of council through the BPF party. First term council government ended in 2010 and followed to second term of election wherein BPF won 38 out of 40 seats. BPPF and United Democratic Peoples' Front (UDPF)[5] own one each.

Experienced of first term council government believed to teach political strategy to the BPF thus, it succeeded to assimilate Non-STs Population into BPF and which resulted winning 38 seats out of 40 seats in second term. Category-wise elected representatives of 2010-15 Council Assembly is given below:

Table 5: Elected members of 2010-15 Council Assembly

Category	No. of elected	Percentage
ST	30+3=33	72
Non-STs	5	11
Unreserved	2	4
Nominated	6	13
Total member	46	100

Source: http://bodoland.in/jaores/

As it already mentioned that Council Assembly is consist of 40 constituencies of which 5 constituencies are unreserved and therefore table 5 indicates 33 members are from STs. This means the STs own 3 additional seats from the 5 unreserved seats which sufficed to 30 reserved and has become 33 in year 2010 -2015 Council Assembly, which comprises 72 per cent of 46 seats including 6 nominated members of current council government. Noticeably, first government and ongoing government of council have been functioning without opposition party. It means no party has able to obtain enough members to form the opposition and thus BPF has been succeeding to rule the council government without oppositional pressure.

Village Council Development Committee (VCDC)

In continuation of council government, BPF as a ruling party looked to implement the provision laid on memorandum of settlement under the Sixth Schedule, and which led to Panchayati Raj institution of Assam to be ceased in forcing in the council area- all power and function of the former institution has been vested to the council, henceforth the Council replaced the Panchayati Raj system with the Village Council Development Committee within the framework of former system. The district-wise numbers of functioning VCDCs are given below:
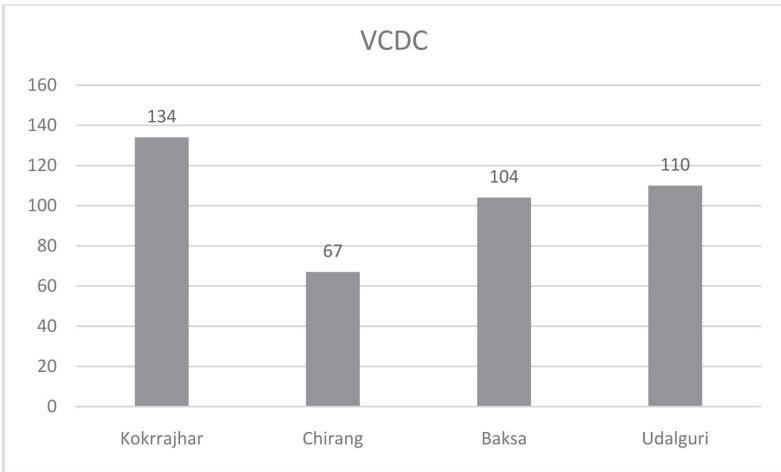
Village Council Development Committee

Chart above provides the existing number of VCDCs in four each districts of BTC, it also clarifies variation of VCDCs of each district that are made on the basis of population with the framework of Panchayat Raj system.

This (VCDC) institutions emerged significantly strong force and active part of BPF party, which has been enabling to penetrate the presence of BPF at grassroot levels, as a result BPF succeeded electing the council, the state legislative assembly, and the parliamentarian members of its own choice with excellent people's support. To elect the VCDC member, council supposed to conduct election but elected

members of the council of each constituencies nominate as their own choice. Hence the very concept of local governance and rights of people to select their own choice is seemed to miss out in VCDC institutions. Very often members of VCDCs, is seen to be nominated by the party leaders those who have close relation and have some historical evidences of involving in movement. Majority members of VCDCs is seen to be Ex-BLTs in Bodo dominated villages and Non-Bodo majority villages have Non-Bodo member. Five years is the term for VCDC members and they have equal role and responsibilities to address the problems and grievances of the villagers of own VCDC jurisdction.

BPF at State Legislative Assembly of Assam

State legislative assembly consists of 126 constituencies, is divided into three categories, i.e., General, Scheduled Caste (SC), and Scheduled Tribe (ST). The details constituency distribution based on category is given below:

No. of Constituencies of State Assembly

■ General   ■ SC   ■ ST

Source: http://www.assamassembly.nic.in/mla-all-list.html
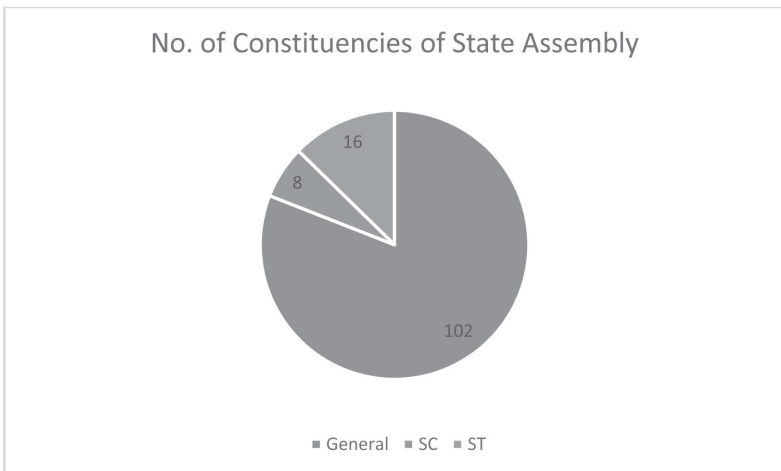
Chart mentioned above reveals constituencies of General is 102, STs is 16, and SCs is 8 and all together is 126. BTC is made in such a way whereby State Assembly and General Parliamentarian constituencies

were kept unchanged as a result both State Assembly and General Parliamentarian constituencies partly fall into BTC and partly outside of it. It also consists of both General and STs Constituencies in BTC. There are 6 STs Assembly constituencies' falls in BTC and other 6 General (unreserved) constituencies' falls partly in BTC and partly outside of it.

BPF as a strong political entity of council, contested in 12th Assam Legislative Assembly election of 2006, and own 12 seats. Interestingly Assam Pradesh Congress Committee felt shorts to form the government despite being holding largest seats. And BPF emerged as a second largest party as a result, Congress needed to invite BPF to form the government in 2006. Indeed it was the first history that people of Assam experienced the Congress led coalition government in the state after independence. BPF by being alliance of Congress was succeeded to bargaining three cabinet ministerial seats in the 12th Assam Legislative Assembly. Subsequently in 13th Assam Legislative Assembly election- for 2011-16 sessions in 2011, BPF and Congress agreed to continue coalition and hence both the party shared the seats as per their convenience and strength. Eventually, Congress abstained filling its candidate in BTC and BPF filled all the constituencies whichever fully and partly come under BTC administration. As a result this time also BPF won 12 seats but surprisingly Congress also own more than enough seats. Congress had strength to form its own government without seeking alliance for its second term government however, Congress decided to continue alliance with BPF. Though the BPF formed coalition government in 13th Assam Legislative Assembly yet, could not retain more than one cabinet minister. Gradually arguments and counter arguments, and blaming between Congress and BPF on the issue of ethnic conflicts of 2012 in BTC, emerged significantly and some of the members of both the parties resented for various reasons, and these differences led to the end of Congress-BPF alliances after 8 years.

BPF at Indian Parliament

Ever since BPF occupied the power of the council, looking to filled its own candidate in Kokrajhar parliamentarian constituency, which is one of the 14th Lok Sabha constituencies of Northeast state of Assam. This constituency is numbered 5 of 14th Lok Sabha constituencies, reserved for the Scheduled Tribes (ST), and is located in Kokrajhar district of Assam. This constituency, mostly, has been represented by the Bodo Tribe from the time of independence of India- as the matter of fact by being the largest tribe in the constituency. In this constituency, Sansuma Kungur Bwiswmuthiary in supports of All Bodo Student Union (ABSU) had been elected as an independent candidate from 1998 to 2009. Ironically, in 2009 general election of 15th Lok Sabha, BPF chose him its candidate and again got re-elected for the fourth term by defeating its rival candidate. It was a huge turning point of the BPF which went of self-proclaiming itself as the guardian of BTC. Subsequently, just a year ahead of 15th Lok Sabha general election, i.e., 2008 BPF in supports of state congress succeeded to elect its own choice of one member of Rajya Sabha. Eventually BPF emerged as a powerful state party and succeeded to re-intact one Rajya Sabha seat for second term in 2014 however, it miserably failed to re-intact seat in the 16th Lok Sabha from prestigious Kokrajhar constituency due to emergence of many rival candidates and resentment of people against the party.

Debate and Contest on BTC

During memorandum of settlement, BTC was extended to 3,082 villages and Government of India (GOI) gave power to the delimitation committee to include and exclude some villages through the study. GOI had also mentioned minimum or more than fifty per cent tribal population inhabited villages shall be included in BTC. But in 2011 census (see Table 2) one can find only 3,066 villages, then what happened to 16 villages? Are these 16 villages excluded from BTC? Or not exist? I failed to find this answer from any sources. BTC was not created

without oppositions, there were number of protest and agitations from Non-Bodos, whereby one of the congress MP Shri Madhab Rajbangshi (Mangaldoi) debated on parliament session claiming "only 28 per cent tribal people are there whereas 72 per cent people are non-tribals, according to the State Government census report, in proposed BTC." For me, this debate itself is contested, why because, Central Government had found 52 per cent tribal population in proposed BTC from the Central Government census report thus readied to create BTC how can Assam census report be so different? Another MP Shri Abdul Hamid (Dhubri) went on claiming that since about a lakh of Adivasis and people of minority community has been staying refugee camps from the time of ethnic conflict between Adivasis and Bodos, and Bodos and Minority community since 1996 how can they dare to go back their home when BTC is created. In similar vein, many Non-Bodo organisations' ideology and differences have triggered to the Non-Bodos to create Bodo vs Non-Bodos discord on BTC.

One side, Bodos constitute the largest tribal community out of a total of 34 tribal communities in Assam. Yet, Bodos realized seeing the changing demographics of the BTC and the consequent land alienation may become a minority in their own state and in hitherto Bodo-dominated areas. On the other hand, non Bodos under the banner of Sanmilita Janagosthiya Samiti (SISS), Oboro Suraksa Samiti (OSS), and Asomiya Aikya Mancha (AAM), agitating justifying Bodos constitute a meagre twenty five per cent of the total population in the BTC area how could they rule over the other three-fourths. Even it emerged that number of villages with minority Bodo population were included in the BTC to make it a contiguous area. Thus non-Bodos want such villages to be scraped out of BTC to show their majority syndrome.

Non-tribal communities of BTC area have begun demanding to scrape their villages from it, and sought different model of autonomous. These discontents made it apparent that there is no any

concrete political mechanism, which can address aspirations and grievances of all communities at one point. Short-term political arrangement only bears short-term peace, for a long-term peace there has to be different model of political arrangement in order to address issues of heterogeneous communities. Therefore one can seek the probable solutions or means, on what sort of political mechanism would fit to resolve contiguous political issue? Why one solution is a success for one community is not a success of other? What is the problem with decentralisation mechanism of local governance? These questions could be raise with experience of autonomous councils.

Contrastingly, The BTC Accord seeks to protect the land rights of the indigenous Bodos while allowing non-tribal unlike the other sixth scheduled which ceased the land rights of non-tribal. Taking advantage of allowing land rights it emerged that Bangladeshi migrants easily sneak in the area, illegally procure relevant documents like ration cards to become Indian nationality.

It emerged the provisions of the BTC Act have blessed to the migrants to procuring land in the BTC, which only adds to the woes of indigenous Bodos. Both sides are demanding the review / revocation of BTC act because on one hand, Bodos feel their rights are not protected and on the other hand, Non-Bodos feel that Bodos are getting way too many benefits.

Conclusion

Recently, Oboro Suraksa Samiti convened a public gathering in Chirang district where they seek support to legal battle to exclude 864 villages from BTC and filed a suit in Gauhati High Court. This organisation justifies that 864 villages have 3,052 non-Bodo population and 399 ST populations (2011 census).[6] Such move may bear only counter moves, nothing else. These organisations failed to realise how much Bodos had to sacrifice to achieve BTC. Other side, it also important to note why and what forces have inclined the Non-Bodo villagers to seek exclusion of their villages from the BTC. Is it really

common Non-Bodo people want to be excluded their villages from BTC or is it only politically motivated goal of a section of privileged people? Or is it really BTC authorities have gone against the wish of Non-Bodos as a result they felt vulnerable? In my understanding all counter movements against the Bodos is politically motivated goal of a few section of privileged people, it has nothing to do with larger or poor Non-Bodos.

Since a couple of few years, there have been mushrooming anti-Bodo movements spearheaded by Rajbongshi and Muslim community, have succeeded uniting all non-tribal community for which they successfully abled to disintegrate non-tribal votes and succeeded to elect anti-Bodo member in 16th Lok Sabha election from Kokrajhar constituency. Today, BPF ruling party of the council is demanding separate finance and home department for BTC justifying inability to take immediate action at the time of conflict and natural disaster in BTC. BTC blames state government releases funds lately which delay on their work plan and also whenever ethnic conflict and natural disaster such as flood happened in BTC, council government has to seek and wait support from the state however council government is viewed as inability. These kinds of constitutional lacking and mushrooming ethnic discord and tangible emergence of corruption have killed the very concept of local governance in BTC. Thus, power has to shift and all community needs to work together for prosperity and development of the area. All community must be given equal opportunities to select and elect their leaders and must be included in decision making. External forces such as Non-BTC entity organisations which are communal in nature should be thrown out by the people to revive trust and integrity with all communities.

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Footnotes

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[5] http://www.assamtribune.com/scripts/detailsnew.asp?id=mar1611/state06

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Gandhian Philosophy and Women Development in India

Ms. Prabhavathi Prabhakaran

The objective of the paper is to look into the areas where systematic or persistent discrimination targets women and to understand whether Gandhian philosophy could provide an answer to this issue. Many institutions and organizations representing women's rights have a high visibility in the cosmopolitan arena and have effectively expressed their concerns. Not only that, their members have decisively moved far ahead of Gandhi's vision of fearless women. Alert, active and bold, they engage in constant discussion and introspection for genuine equality. However it is a fact that even today the majority of women face a marginal existence even in their homes as social exclusion relates to the experiences of certain women being segregated from participation in the social, economic and political life of the mainstream society. It involves economic forms of injustices at one end to socio – cultural forms at the other. Economic injustices deal with exploitation of labour, marginalization from means of livelihood and deprivation from adequate standard of living. This paper has tried to incorporate studies which corroborate the information garnered from various sources

that depict the mindset of the society.The process of alienation of women from the political arena in the current scenario and the role of proxy political participation by the males is also put forth.

Is Gandhiji Still Relevant?

In the present scenario, Gandhiji is not the fountainhead of modern India's political selfhood but seems to have become a mere icon or sadly reduced to a formula and a cliché. But like any other thinker of such enormous and lasting influence, Gandhiji's repertoire of ideas turns out to be more surprising and more resilient than we might realize after many decades of having him be a part of our default social and political furniture. Gandhi was totally opposed to gender discrimination. And tried to combat Indian society's preference for a boy and a general neglect of a girl child. The birth of a girl, so goes a popular Hindu saying, is akin to the arrival of Lakshmi - the four-armed goddess of wealth, often depicted holding lotus flowers and an overflowing pot of gold.That should assure pride of place for women in Indian society, especially now the country is growing both in global influence and affluence. In reality, India's women are discriminated against, abused and even killed on a scale unparalleled in the top 19 economies of the world, according to a new poll by the Thomson Reuters Foundation[1].

As a child, she faces abuse, rape and early marriage and even when she marries, she is embarrassed for dowry. If she survives all of this, as a widow she is discriminated against and given no rights over inheritance or property. Many of the crimes against women are due to a deep-rooted mindset that women are inferior and must be restricted to being homemakers and child bearers. In addition, age-old customs such as payment of hefty dowries at the time of marriage and beliefs linking a female's sexual behaviour to family honour have made girls seem a burden. In fact, in most cases she is not allowed to be born. If born, her survival is not ensured. If somehow she survives she is subjected to neglect. She does not get respect and the status she deserves equal to that of a boy. Gandhiji described discrimination against women as incongruous to the concept of being humane. He stated that he failed to see any reason for jubilation over the birth of a son and for mourning over the birth of a daughter as it is evident that both are

God's gifts and they have an equal right to live and are equally necessary to keep the world going. He further stated that a daughter's share must be equal to that of a son. Morevoer he affirmed that the husband's earnings are a joint property of husband and wife as he makes money by her assistance. However, Gandhiji concluded that at some point there was inherent bifurcation in the form and biological function of men and women. There were vital differences between the two. He wrote, "The duty of motherhood which the vast majority of women will always undertake, requires quality which men need not possess. The art of bringing up the infant of the race is her special role and prerogative. Without her care the race must become extinct. In my opinion, it is degrading both for man and woman that woman should be called upon or induced to forsake the hearth and shoulder the rifle for the protection of the hearth. It is reversion to barbarity and the beginning of the end."[2] Gandhiji called women as the noble sex and said that if she is weak in striking, she is strong in suffering. Gandhi also described woman as the embodiment of sacrifice and ahimsa.

Woman as the Harbinger of Change

Empowerment means moving from enforced powerlessness to a position of power. Education is an essential means of empowering women with the knowledge, skills and self-confidence necessary to fully participate in the development process. Sustainable development is only possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential.

Women and girls experience multiple and intersecting inequalities. Structural barriers in the economic, social, political and environmental spheres produce and reinforce these inequalities. Obstacles to women's economic and political empowerment, and violence against women and girls, are barriers to sustainable development and the achievement of human rights, gender equality, justice and peace. Across much of the world, either by law or custom, women are still denied the right to, attend school, are significantly under-represented in decision-making at all levels. While the economic benefits of educating girls are similar to those of educating boys, recent findings suggest the social benefits are greater. Women have the potential to change their own economic status and that of their communities and countries in which they live

yet usually women's economic contributions are unrecognized, their work undervalued and their promise undernourished. Unequal opportunities between women and men hamper women's ability to lift themselves from poverty and secure improved options to improve their lives. Education is the most powerful instrument for changing women's position in society. Investing in women's and girls' education is one of the most effective ways to reduce poverty.

Gandhiji stated that "as for illiteracy among the women, its cause is not mere laziness and inertia as in the case of men. A more potent cause is the status of inferiority with which an immemorial tradition has, unjustly branded her. Man has converted her into a domestic drudge and an instrument of his pleasure, instead of regarding her as his helpmate and 'better half'! The result is a semi-paralysis of our society. Woman has rightly been called the mother of the race. We owe it to her and to ourselves to undo the great wrong that we have done her."[3] Gandhi's idea on education is a novel one. His idea of vocational education was unique which even now-a-days is being promoted by the government. Gandhi was a critic of traditional education and viewed that education, should be an all-round drawing of the best in child and man in body, mind and spirit.

Gandhi was a protagonist of women education. He advocated that there should be no distinction in equality of status between men and women in society. He vehemently opposed seclusion of women in the name of customs and widowhood. He wanted to free women from social serfdom. So, the number of girl students considerably rose in various educational institutions inside the country. Thus, Gandhi emphasized the need of women education to improve the lot of society.

Women in India still suffer from gender based inequality because of the lack of gender sensitization on the part of males. Many of us blame that degradation of values and ethics in the society is the root cause of such problems. These problems are directly or indirectly related to the lack of gender sensitivity be it the case of eve-teasing, domestic violence or the case of brutal rape. The blunt truth is whatever has percolated in the minds of the members of the society has finally

been given to them by their socio-cultural environment which mainly includes their family, school and peers.

A major part of the responsibility for developing gender sensitization rests on the shoulders of family members and educators. They are the one who can kindle the feeling of gender equality in young girls and boys and develop the empathy for each other. In the present scenario, even females seem to lose their gender sensitivity towards males. Working on many fronts at the same time, getting no care and appreciation in return, frustrated from earning no respect in family and society, their outburst comes in the form of separations, broken families or as live-in relationships searching for complete freedom for oneself. It is disturbing fact that even girls believe that as they are physically weaker than boys, they would never be able to fight in any manner against them.

Gandhiji understood that this realization comes from how the boy has learnt to treat a female from his surroundings at home and at school. At home, he has been observing throughout his life, a mother following the instructions of a dominating father, a sister being scolded for not looking after him properly or not carrying out the household jobs properly in her mother's absence. It was to transform this dogmatic perspective that Gandhi prepared a primer for the children for a primary school. This primer or Balpothi[4] is in the form of a mother teaching the child. The last chapter of the book on 'House Work' merits serious attention. It conveyed the notion of gender equality right within the frontier of family. Through an imaginary dialogue among sister, brother and mother within the household, he tried to teach children that house work is a joint responsibility of both men and women and boy and girl who stay together under one roof and share unbreakable kinship. This book containing the chapter on 'House Work' is of enormous significance for 21st century world marked by women's struggle for achieving gender justice and their empowerment.

Gandhiji preached and practiced sharing of housework by both men and women of the family. He encouraged women to do intellectual work and men to help in cooking, cleaning and caring, conventionally 'women's chores'.Gandhi expounds this theme further. More often

than not a women's time is taken up not by the performance of essential domestic duties, but in catering for the egoistic pleasure of her lord and master. This domestic slavery of woman is the symbol of our barbarism. It is high time that our womankind was freed from this attitude. Domestic work ought not to take the whole of women's time. His policy of empowerment was that man must participate in the housework and reduce the drudgery of women's home work.

Women Empowerment And The Panchayati Raj

There is a radical difference in Gandhi's perception of women as compared to other reformers. He was not the first to address women's issues in India; the great cultural renaissance, as also the ferment of political agitations for freedom had already reached a high peak in the late nineteenth century. Before the advent of Gandhi on the scene, the attitude to women, though sympathetic, was patronizing; leaders and social reform groups thought in language that made women look helpless. They wanted to protect, uplift, and bring relief to women. The stance taken by other social reformers and leaders, prior to Gandhi created a helpless image of the Indian women. With Gandhi, a new conception of women gradually gained currency.

For Gandhi, women were not mere toys in the hands of men, neither their competitors. Men and women are essentially endowed with the same spirit and therefore have similar problems. Women are at par with men, one complementing the other. To Gandhi, education for women was the need of the hour that would ensure their moral development and make them capable of occupying the same platform as that of men. The capability of enduring endless suffering can be witnessed only in women, according to the Mahatma.

The doctrine of ahimsa as preached by Gandhi incorporates the virtue of suffering as is evident in the women. Therefore, Gandhi envisaged a critical role for women in establishing non-violence. Women have equal mental abilities as that of men an an equal right to freedom. To sum up in Gandhi's words; "The wife is not the husband's slave but his companion and his help-mate and an equal partner in all his joys and sorrows - as free as the husband to choose her own path."

What is significant here is Gandhiji's image of woman and his hope for her, so radically different from that of any earlier reformer. Yet, with Gandhi a new, unique element emerged. Woman to him was neither man's plaything, nor his competitor, struggling to be like him. What she needed most was education, the recognition of her birthright to be free and equal, to steer her own destiny side by side with man.He argues, "ultimately, woman will have to determine with authority what she needs. My own opinion is that, just as fundamentally men and women are one, their problem must be one in essence. The soul in both is the same. The two live the same life, have the same feelings. Each is a complement of the other. The one cannot live without the other's active help. But somehow or other man has dominated woman from ages past, and so woman has developed an inferiority complex. She has believed in the truth of man's interested teaching that she is inferior to him. But the seers among men have recognised her equal status."

Gandhiji firmly believed that if a husband is unjust to his wife, she has the right to live separately. He averred, "both have equal rights over children. Each would forfeit these rights after they have grown up, and even before that if he or she is unfit for them. In short, I admit no distinction between men and women except such as has been made by nature and can be seen with human eyes."

Empowerment is a multidimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their own communities and in their own society, by acting on issues that they describe as important. Above all, empowerment is a result of participation in decision-making[5]. Women's empowerment refers to the process by which women acquire due recognition on par with men, to participate in the development process of the society through the political institutions as a partner with human dignity[6].

Women as Trustees and Resource Persons

Sarvodaya[7] means 'development of all'. Tribal villages have a system of madait or sangat which literally mean 'cooperation'. Gandhiji's concept of development is Sarvodaya through Antyodaya, implying

the welfare of all through the weakest of the society. Principles of cooperation and collective endeavor are central to society. "Trusteeship" implies that property belongs to all, and the holder manages it and takes care of it only as a socially responsible trustee. The Gandhian model emphasizes decentralization of socio-economic and political systems starting from the village to the highest level. Village life should arouse a sense of cooperation and fellowship.

Gandhiji remarked that "if every woman in India spins, then a silent revolution will certainly be created, of which a Jawaharlal [Nehru] can make full use. Unless steam generated is put to proper use, the engine will not run and the person generating the steam may himself be scalded by it even unto death. We do not to universalize the Charkha through mass production in one place. Our ideal is to make the Charkha and all its accessories in the locality where the spinners live. Therein lies the value of the spinning-wheel. Anything that goes wrong with it should be put right on the spot and the spinners should be taught how to do so."[8]

It is noteworthy that present day conferences on women's issues insist similarly on women's own leadership, initiative, and self-help. For instance, Ela Bhatt, General Secretary of SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) and winner of the prestigious Magsaysay Award for her work with women in India, speaks about the need to utilize women's talents to empower them to change their own lives.

In order to gather an authentic picture and understand a situation well, grassroots women's groups are important and resourceful partners because of the simple fact that they really know what is going on in human settlements. Collective wisdom of the group and peer pressure are valuable collateral substitutes. Grassroots expertise and knowledge wisdom of women is highly dispersed, and so it is difficult for others to obtain this , thus entering the channels of public decision-making very rarely. Grassroots Community and local knowledge is ignored while formulating plans and programmes at grassroots level,.Community Building efforts of women revolve around creating community space for the development of solidarity and joint problem solving These efforts of women need to be promoted at the grassroots democracy level.

The Task Ahead: There is Need

To have systematic attempts and enforce the concept of self reliance as women themselves have to ensure their own participation in the decision making process through adoption of Gandhian Philosophy to create an inclusive environment for women development in India.

Gandhiji was resolute in his opinion that pursuit of power is not the only aim of women empowerment. It should be "total emancipation". No one can doubt the efforts made by Gandhi to empower women. He attracted many millions of not only literate but illiterate women without the power of state, without the modern information technology and offering in return only sweat, toil, and pain, an exceptional feat, indeed! His insistence on Women's education is the first step in right direction. We still have miles to go to achieve our cherished goal to empower women. Gandhiji did not favour sex-based reservation for women in Legislatures, rather he wanted them to realize their innate power through education and take their due place in society without any mercy of any body whatsoever.

This paper advocates that women's self help groups are an answer to these issues and if they become more politically active, and if they develop political awareness and alertness, they can be active participants in leadership and have their voices heared in decision making domains. They can also become mentors for a new generation of women leaders ultimately realizing the dream of a women inclusive model of development that is inspired by Gandhian doctrines. A rural women's S H G enables members to become self-dependent as well as self-reliant and provides a forum for members to exchange ideas. It fosters a spirit of self-help and co-operation among members and gives them strength and confidence to solve their socio-economic problems. This increased consciousness of their rights, as well as the ability to perform their functions more effectively than before, is often the result of capacity – building efforts by women themselves.

The writing on the wall has to be noted by the government, social activists, the academic community and by women, especially in a fragmented democracy like India where political institutions do not tell the whole or the true story of legitimate rule.

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Traditional Governments Among The Scheduled Castes: A Village Study From Manipur

Rakesh S. Khwairakpam

The traditional governments have been in existence in almost all the eight Scheduled Caste Loi villages in Manipur even after adoption ofthe three tier governments (central, state and local) in India. The Scheduled Caste Loi villages are: Andro, Khurkhul, Koutruk, Kotha, Leimaram, Phayeng, Sekmai and Tairenpokpi. They are considered to be the proto-nation predominantly recides inthe foothills of Manipur. The Phamneiba (traditional government) of Sekmai is believed to be one the oldest traditional governments among the Scheduled Caste Loivillages in Manipur. The Phamneibaexistseven after the implementation of 73rd and 74thConstitution Amendment Acts of 1993 of the Indian Constitution. The Phamneiba is represented by 12 elected membersknown as: Khullakpa, Lupllakpa, Khunjamba, Telloihanjaba, Yupanba, Loumirakpa, Hijanglakpa, Ningollakpa, Naharakpa, teloihidang, Loumidang and Naharakpa. The paper will explore the background and functioning of the Phamneiba of SekmaiLoi village.

The traditional government is quite similar with the self-governing people. It is the system of government by which a community, village, town or city was governed. It has ancient roots associated with beliefs, customs, heritage ideas, principles and way of life. It was in existence even before the emergence of the state from one generation to another (Khwairakpam, 2014). In most of the developing countries, there is a desire to break away tradition system of governance and move speedily towards modernity. Moreover a new pattern of leadership has emerged. This has created a considerable gap between the traditional institutions of governance and the modern parliamentary system. However, traditional institutions of governance are still in existence in many of these countries.

In India, the traditional society was stratified into two closed groups with well-defined through circumscribed, roles and relationship. Historically, the authority structure had largely been feudal and vested in certain persons belonging to privileged classes. Thus, leadership pattern were unusually rigid and strictly adhered to the traditional concept of society (Gassah, n.d; pp. 82-83). The traditional governments have been in existence among the indigenous tribes and Scheduled Caste Loi inhabited areas in almost all the eight North-eastern states (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura) excluding Sikkim. The traditional government still play an important role in the administration of the village and community even after adoption of the three tier system governments such as central, state and local governments (Khwairakpam, 2013). In Nepal, the traditional government is known as Local Indigenous Organisation (LOCs). It has been in existence since the Vedic era. The Local Indigenous Organisation is headed by five elders called Panchayat, which means a house of five. They are responsible for managing almost the entire spectrum of social, legal and development activities in their community even after the replacement of new centralised party less Panchayats system of four tier legislatures (Pokhrel& Willet, 1996).

Traditional Governments In North-Eastern States

In Arunachal Pradesh,the traditional village council often acted like sovereign bodies deciding all internal matters. The traditional village council is known by different names by different people. Broadly, there are four types of traditional village councils, viz., theocratic, chieftaincy, oligarchic and democratic types (Modi, 2003).

In Assam, the traditional government system exists among the Karbi tribe of KarbiAnglong district. It has three tiers. At the apex, there is a king of Rongkang and his councils of officers; in the middle,Habais, or administrators, from each of the 12 Longris and at the village level, a traditional village headman called Sarthe (Bordoloi, 2002).

In Meghalaya, the Nokmaship and the village are the two agencies of traditional government among the Garo tribe. The AkingNokma, as the head of the clan and the custodian of the A'kingland, is entrusted with certain administrative and political power. Prior to the advent of the British into the Garo hills, all civil and criminal cases were settled by the Nogmaor his council of ministers. The traditional government exists even today in spite of all the significant political changesduring the British era and the post-Indian independence (Gassah, (n.d).

In Mizoram, among the Kuki ChinMizoin habited areas of Mizoram, the village chief possess executive, legislative and judiciary powers for administration of the village under the traditional government. The village chief decides both civil and criminal cases according to the customarily law of the villages (Khobung, 2012; p. 222).

In Nagaland, the traditional government of the Sumi tribe is autocratic and benevolent. The village chief *Akukau* occupies the important position and is regarded as the guardian of the village. All the major decisions relating to day to day administration are taken by him. Moreover, he also takes the final decision in case of a serious conflict between the two parties. The Akukau is assisted by Kukami, Mishilitha, Chochou, Alojotou, Lupu-u and Kichelapuu (Sema, 2013).

In Tripura, among the Tripuri tribe, each village or a hamlet has one village council under the traditional government. It is headed by Ruwaja and enjoys apex power for administration in the village. He presides over the meeting of the council and court and is assisted by Dabeng, the deputy judge of the village council. In the absence of the Ruwaja, the Dabeng discharges his duties (Jena, 2009).

In Manipur,thetraditionalgovernmentshas been in existence among the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Caste Lois inhabited areas even   after adoption of the   threetierinstitutionsinIndia includingDistrictCouncilsamongtheScheduled Tribeinhabited areas and Panchayats and Nagar Panchayatamongthe Scheduled Caste Loi inhabited areas.

The Traditional Government Among the Scheduled Tribes

The traditional governments of Scheduled Tribes can broadly be divided into three categories:

Authoritarian type: This type of traditional governments is largely prevalent among the Thadau-Kuki and Mizo tribes. Under this type of traditional government, the Chief is all in all in the village affairs. The villagers are expected to obey and respect the king/village chief as long as a villager desires to live in that particular village. It is also practised among the Tangkhul Naga tribe in a more flexible manner that that of the Thadao-Kukis and Mizos. The village chief consults his councillors on serious issues.

Republican type: This type of system is popularly practiced among the Mao, Anal, Aimols, Chothes, Moyon, MonsangsNagas tribes and others. Among the Mao tribe, the villagers elect their representatives to the councils, where the elders, in turn, elect their king or chief. In case of Anal tribe, the villagers nominate their candidates, out of the nominated candidates, the outgoing chief has the power for approval.

Relaxed-Authoritarian and Semi-Republican Types: This type of traditional government is practised by the Zeliangrong Nagas. The head of the village is neither elected, nor is the position strictly hereditary. The succeeding head man is selected from the clan of the chief. Like wise, in the village council, the members of the governing body are neither

elected nor are the positions strictly hereditary. Among the Rongme is, the head manship is conferred on the most suitable person from the same clan. Like wise, the Nammu, who is in charge of the agriculturalrituals, will be succeeded by as uitable person from the former Nammu's clan. These posts are transferable if the village council feels it necessary. Itis also practised among the Marams, Thangals and others (Buangam,1990; pp. 74-78).

The Scheduled Caste Loi villages

In Andro village, the traditional government is called Phamdou. It is believed to be the oldest traditional government in Manipur. The Phamdou is governed by six elected members, who are known as Khullakpa, Lupllakpa, Khunjamba, Yupalba, Khabamlakpa, Pakhanglakpa and Naharakpa(Khwairakpam, 2013a).

The traditional government of Koutruk village is called Phamdou. It is also represented by seven members: Khullakpa, Luplakpa, Khunjahanba, Yupalba, Loumirakpa, Pakhanglakpa and Naharakpa (Khwairakpam, 2012; pp.70-71).

In Phayeng village, the traditional government is called Phamneiba. It is represented by 12 elected members – the Khullakpa, Lupllakpa, Yupalba, Pakhanglakpa, Ningollakpa, Chingsanglakpa, Ngarungba, sarungba, salungba, Loumidang, Khangsenba, and Pandong Ningthous (Khwairakpam, 2013 b).

The traditional government of Tairenpokpi village is governed by thirteen members: Khullakpa, Lupllakpa, Khunjahanba, Yupanba, Teloihanjaba, Teloi-hidang, Heijanglakpa, Pakhanglakpa, Naharakpa, Loumirakpa, Luomidang, Chabol-hanjaba and Laiselungba (Maibam, nd; 54-65).

Manipur: Manipur is one of the North-eastern states of India. It is the gateway to south-east Asia. The total geographical area of Manipur is 22,327 square kilometres, out of this 90 per cent is covered by the hills and 10 per cent is covered by the valley. It was an independent kingdom for about two millennia, ruled by 76 recorded kings as recorded by the royal chronicle called CheitharolKumbaba (Singh, 2009; pp. 64-67). It was   merged to the Indian Union on 15 October, 1949. The

people of Manipur can broadly be divided into five ethnic groups - the Meetei, the Nagas, the Kuki-chins, the MeeteiPangal, the Bamon, the Scheduled Caste and the non-Scheduled Caste Lois.

Study village:Sekmai islocatedatthe northern parts and foothillsofManipur. Itis18kmawayfromthecapitalcityofImphal.The village comes under the Lamsang Sub Division of Imphal West.Presently, the village is divided into 15 Leikais (hamleta/localities) such as AwangLeikai, KhunouMakha, KhunouMathak, SekmaiKanglatongbi, Koujengleima, LaipatLeikai, MakhaLeikai, MayaiLeikai, New Market, New Sekmai, Nongthomband, Parao, Pangantabi, Sekmai Bazar and Yariban. MakhaLeikai is the largest Leikai and Yariban is the smallest Leikai. It is predominantly inhabited by SekmaiLoi ethnic groups of eleven Sagei since the very beginning. The eleven sagei are:Angom, Ayangbam, Chandam, Khwairakpam, Laimayum, Laishangbam, Maharabam, Moirangthem, Thangjam, Usham and Yumlembam. They are believed to be the descendants of Pakhangba, the first recorded king of Manipur, who ruled from 33-134 AD (Khwairakpam, 2013c).

Presently, the Sekmai village is governed by two systems of governments- traditional and modern, including the Sekmai Nagar Panchayat. The two traditional governmentsystems, Phamneiba and Shinglup, have been in existence at Sekmai village even after three significant Socio religious and administrative changes that took place during the kingdom of Manipur such as,mass conversion of Hinduism and Christianity by the valley and hills people in the early 18th and 20th Century, introduction of Chaokidari system during the British rule and establishment of the Democratic Government of Manipur under the Manipur Constitution Act of 1947 and implementation of three tiers governments after the merger to the Indian union. In addition, the unregistered indigenous parliament has also been in existence since 4th May 1977. Out of these three traditional governments,the Phamneiba is the oldest traditional government at Sekmai village.

Phamnaiba of Sekmai: Phamneiba is the combination of two words *pham* and *neiba*. *Pham* means traditional office and *neiba* means member of the traditional assembly. It is also used for traditional high ranking officials. Loishang is the traditional Assembly of the Phamneiba and

villagers of Sekmai village. It is represented by twelve elected members. They are:*Khullakpa, Lupllakpa, Khunjamba, Teloihanjaba, Yupalba, Loumirakpa, Hijanglakpa, Ningolakpa, Naharakpa, Teloihidang, Loumidang* and *Naharakpa.* They are directly elected by the villagers from among the 11 *Sageis*of Sekmai. The election of the Phamneiba is usually held on the 5th day of Wakching (January-Febuary) on the new year of the Sekmai.

Criteria to be the member of Phamneiba:

1) Should belong to the SekmaiLoi community.

2) Should belong to any of the eleven *Sageis* of Sekmai.

3) Should be a literate and legitimately married man.

4) Should attain the minimum age of 26years as per the Sekmai indigenous calendar and be a member of *Shanglen.* However, there is a relaxation of 7 years for Naharakpa.

5) Should not be involved in any crimes under theLoishang.

The Loishang is located at the middle part of the Sekmai village. The Loishang has been divided into two *panas*(divisions) since the beginning, as shown below:

Pana of Loishang

Khullakpa Pana	LupllakpaPana
Khullakpa	Lupllakpa
Khunjamba	Yupalba
Teloihanjaba	Teloihidang
Hijanglakpa	Ningolakpa
Loimilakpa	Loumidang
Pakhanglakpa	Naharakpa

Khullakpa is the head of Khullakpa Pana and Lupllakpa, ofthe Lupllakpa Pana. It is also known as Mapa and Machapana father and son Pana. Almost all the cases ranging from verbal abuses, quarrels, wife beating, family dispute, thief, robbery, assaults, land encroachments,

divorce and adultery are adjudicated at the Loishang. Phamneiba can be removed from the Loishang, if they function against the wishes of the people and against the law of the Loishang. They have to vacate the membership, if they become widowers, as per the customary law.

Functions

Khullakpa is the combination of two words,*khul* and *llakpa.Khul* means village, area and region and *lakpa* means chief controller and administrator. There is no fixed term for Khullakpa. He can remain in service as long as he enjoys the confidence of the people. He has to vacate the office, if he becomes a widower during his tenure. The *Khungi Lai* (senior most male of Sekmai) takes oath of Khullakpain the presence of all the adult villagersincluding women.Khullakpa is the head of the traditional government and Loishang. He is also the head of the *wayengshang*(village court). He heads all the three organs of traditional governance -legislative, executive and judiciary. He presides over all the meeting of the traditional Assembly. He also chairs all the meetings, functions, and festivals, except clan,-sub-clan meetings and their rituals and Shinglup. He approves the appointment of all the other 11 elected members of the Phamneiba, viz., Lupllakpa, Khunjamba, Teloihanjaba, Yupalba, Loumirakpa, Hijanglakpa, Ningolakpa, Naharakpa, Teloihidang, Loumidang and Naharakpa. If there is any vacant post in the Loishang, he has the power to appoint anyone of his choice. He also appoints Maichao (priest) and Maibi (Midwife) of the village with the approval of the Loishang. He assigns the duties to all the others members of the traditional Assembly. He administers oath to all the others members of the Loishang. Khullakpa continues in office as long as he enjoys the confidence of the people.

Lupllakpa: Lupllakpa is a combination of two words *lup* and *lakpa*. Lup means organisation and *lakpa* means controller. He is the chairman of the *Lupllakpa Pana* (division) of the Loishang. He chairs all the meeting of the traditional assembly in the absence of *Khullakpa,* due to illness or some other reason. He continues in office as long as he enjoys the confidence of the people.

Khunjamba: Khunjamba is the finance minister of the traditional government. He frames the yearly budget and collected the dues from

the community. His main duty is to collect the revenue from all the private agricultural land, community agricultural land and forests. He collected the yearly levy from all the agricultural land as per size of the land.

Teloihanjaba: Telloihanjaba is the home minister of the traditional government. His main duty is to train the villagersin the art of using a bow and arrow, spears and hunting. He is the head of the hunting party during the *laisatanba* (hunting of wild animals during Lai Haraoba festival). He is the head of village defence force. He records the name and age of all the youth of Lailoi and Shanglenof the village. His main duty is to protect the village from external aggression. He appointed four powerful youth to protect the fort in all the four directions.

Telloihidang: Telloihidang is the assistant home minister of the traditional government. His main duty is to assist the Telloihanjabain all the matters.He acts as the Yupalba in his absence , due to illness or some other reason.

Yupalba: Yupalba is the minister of yu (distilled local wine) waiyu (special rice beer) and atingba (rice beer). He is also in charge of food. His main duty is to provide yu and food during the meetings of the traditional assemblies. He also provides yu and food to the invitees and the guests. He collects waiyu (special local wine specially prepared for Lai Haraoba) from each household during the Lai Haraoba Festival. He collects some quantities of yu during Yurengphamba (seeling of yu) from each leikai.

Hujanglakp: His main duty is to control the boats of the village. Hetrainsnaharolin the art of making boats and boating. Earlier, he was the controller or woods and fire wood. Presently, he heads the fire wood collection party during the Lai Haraoba festival.

Loumirakpa: He is the controller of agriculturall and. His main duty is to keep a record of the private and community agriculture land. He was responsible for collecting revenue in kind during the kingdom of Manipur. Presently, he collects there venue from *Lai Rou* (community agriculturall and). During the Lai Haraoba festival, he is responsible to deal with all the offerings relating to food grains, fruits and rice.

Loumidang: He is the assistant agriculture minister of the traditional government. His main duty is to assist the Loumidang. He also acts as the Loumidang and Ningollakpa in their absence.

Ningolakpa: He is the controller of the women in the village. His main duties are to control ningol women and girls, irrespective of the age. Women related crimesare dealt by him at the Loishang.

Pakhanglakpa: He is the controller of Pakhang (unmarried youth). His main duty was to train the *pakhang* at the Morung during the kingdom of Manipur. The *pakhanglakpa* looked after the young men's club, for then it was the custom to keep young men's dormitory (Hudson,2007;61).

Naharakpa: Naharakpa isthecontrollerofyoung lads. Naharakpa used to train the youth in art of hunting, martial arts, fishing, agricultural work and customary law. The Naharakpais younger than the Pakhang and has to be an unmarried man. His span of authority extended over the lads(ibid).

Role of Phamneiba during KoubruHaraoba of Sekmai

The Phamneiba has been playing a vital role during the AwangKhubru Lai Haraoba festival since time immemorial. Their seating arranged was made hierarchically; Khullakpa is the head, Lupllakpa next to Khullakpa and Naharakpa at the end. Temple is open with the presence of Phamneiba. They are served with 1st class of Wai-yu (special rice beer) during the Lai Haraoba festival. The village has been celebrating LaiHaraobafestival since timeimmemorial which is known as AwangKoubruLai Haraoba. It is one of the most important Lai Haraobafestivals of Manipur. None of the other four types of Lai Haraobas of 378 villages can be celebrated, until and unless the KoubruHaraoba is celebrated at Sekmai. It begins on the auspicious day of *HumniPanba* (third day) / *NganiPanba* Ma (fifth day) or *TaretniPanba* (seventh day), either on Monday or a Friday just after the Sekmai new year of Sekmai indigenous Calendar. There has been no break in celebration of Lai Haraoba, even during difficult circumstances like, *ChahiTaretKhundakpa* (seven years of devastation, 1819-1826,), conversion war and the Second World War. They worship 12 deities -

such as Koubru, NungnangLeima/Koubru, Loyarakpa, Nungthel Leima, Nongpok Ningthou, Panthoibi, Salairen, IremThoibi, IkopNingthou, Laisna, Tamphalairembi and ImaLeimarelSidabi- during the Lai Haraoba festival. SekmaiKoubru Lai Haraoba Festival consists of retrospective stories of creation of the universe, family life, construction, agriculture, administration, culture and expansion of village.

Phamneiba during the kingdom of Manipur: The nature of government of Phamneiba was like a village republic. All the cases ranging from verbal abuses, quarrels, wife beating, family disputes, thief, robbery, assaults, land encroachments, divorce and adultery was adjudicated by the Phamneiba. However, murder cases were referred to the Cheirap (the court of Manipur). The nature and form of punishment varied according to the nature of the crime. Adultery was considered a serious crime. If a married man or a woman had an illicit relationship with an already married person, the prevalent punishment was known as khongoinaba. There were usually two kinds of punishment, either to banish the couple from the village or tonsuring the head of the woman and parading her in public. For the man, the punishment was to bind the legs and hands together at a public place and flogging for a fixed period of time. In case of theft, the guilty person would be bought to the Loishang and ordered to pay the amount of the stolen materials to the owner.

In case of divorce, both husband and wife would be called to the Loishang. If the wife initiates the cases, she cannot retain her marriage gifts and get any kind wakongba (imposed fine) even if she is pregnant and has a child below three years of age. If the husband initiates the case, he has to pay the *wakongba* fixed by the Loshang. If his wife is pregnant or has a baby, he has to be art he expenditure till the completion of three years. The others cases are considered as minor. The Phamneiba used to control and manage the entire village land. They   recorded the private home stead land, agricultural land and community land. The entire village land was the main source of revenue for Phamneiba. Sometimes, they also collected taxes in kind from the villagers. They undertake all kinds of development programmes in the village. There was a little change in the administration after the

introduction of *choukidari* system from1992 for around three decades unlike the other valley villages.

Phamneiba: Current status

After the implementation of three tier systems government in India, there has been a significant changeat Sekmai. The Sekmai village has been governed by two systems of governance - traditional (Phamneiba) and the modern political system. After the introduction of village Panchayat system in 1965, the Phamneiba was not recognised by the central and state governments. They do not have the power to record private home stead land, agricultural land and are not entitled to collect the revenue. The Phamneiba is nolonger the formal and legal authority to handle or decide on judiciary matters arising in the village. They have been deprived and derecognised by the government institutions. There is also a voice among the young generation particularly women for exclusion of major decision making process.

But still, in most cases, they continue to occupy a prominent position in the socio- religious ceremonies and social gathering. The Lai Haraoba festival, which has been part and parcel of their cultural ethos, cannot be celebrated without the presence of Phamneiba. The decision of the Phamneibais widely accepted like the Gaon-samaj-sabha of Mehdha (Lekha) of Gondtrival village, Gadchiroli district of Maharastra (Tofa&Harilal, n.d). All the villager matter ranging from minor to major has been administered by the Phamneiba including those relating to encroachment of community land lineage relationship. The villagers still prefer their traditional administration government rather than that of the government institutions.They hardly refer cases to the government institutions, except those involving adultery and murder. They still receive peoples' reverence and allegiance.

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Gandhian Mode of Protest: Locating the Movements of Disables in India

Renoj N.K

"The best things and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt within the heart." — **Helen Keller**

Mahatma Gandhi, the great leader, philosopher and visionary, who led the historic movement against the British imperialism had used different strategies and weapons against colonialism. He tried to give an alternative way of life, thinking and principles to fully empower the spiritual and moral life. His ideal is a practical one that of introducing certain reforms in social and political setup. In order to understand his thoughts and ideas on the society and state, it would be beneficial to analyze his speeches and writings.[1] His analysis of socio-political problems are normative and they invariably refer to an ideal of truth and non-violence upon which the entire thought system of Gandhiji is built. In this context, it will be beneficial to locate and analyze the recognition and representation of the disable's movement in India and to know how the disabled communities apply the Gandhian mode of protest in their struggles to achieve their constitutional rights. This paper

examines how far this community succeeded in achieving their basic rights till today.

Gandhi became intensely sensitive to all forms of oppression and exploitation and saw himself as the spokesman and champion of the poor and the oppressed everywhere.[2] He tried to unite people and mobilized against all type of exploitation. He reflected on the nature, causes, consequences and complex relations between different forms of oppression and developed a political theory from the perspective of the victims of the established social order. He picked up the highly complex absolute- relative distinction from Indian philosophy and applied it to his theories of knowledge, morality and action.[3]

Gandhiji had strongly criticized modern western civilization and it's impact on human beings. His critique of modern civilization was far more complex than is generally imagined and quite different from that of such other writers as Rousseau, Carlyle, Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau, by the last three of whom he was deeply influenced.[4] In Gandhi's view modern civilization was grounded in a fatally flawed theory of man. Gandhi's argument was soul- or spirit-centred, but the modern was body-centred and in that sense materialistic.[5]

For Gandhi human body had two basic characteristics; first, it was distinct, self- enclosed and separated from and only capable of preserving its integrity by maintaining its separateness from other bodies.[6] As such it was the ontological basis of the human sense of particularity, and the source of the illusion that each individual was an independent and self-centred ego only externally and contingently related to others and constantly concerned to preserve his identity by keeping the invasive others at a safe distance. Second, the body was the seat of the senses, and thus of wants and desires.[7] By their very nature desires recurred with rhythmic regularity and were never satiated. They were also interrelated and one desire always gave rise to others. Qua sensual and desiring being, man was necessarily propelled by his inherently limitless desires and was always restless and dissatisfied.

A body-centered or materialist view of man, thus, attributed two basic properties to him and regarded them as natural and legitimate, namely 'selfishness' and an 'infinite multiplicity of wants'.[8] A civilization

based on such a flawed view necessarily suffered from several basic and interrelated limitations. First, it lacked moral and spiritual depth. Second, since it had no guiding principles to decide what desires deserved to be satisfied and within what limits, it led to a way of life devoid of meaning and purpose. Third, it de-humanized man and had a profound anti-human bias. Fourth, it perverted the human psyche and was suffused with the spirit of violence. Finally, it reduced wisdom to knowledge and the latter to a form of power only useful as an instrument of control over nature and other men.[9] It thereby not only perverted the pursuit of truth but also lacked a system of knowledge capable of critically evaluating its basic assumptions and objectives.

For Gandhiji modern civilization was propelled by the two interrelated principles of greed and want. Thanks to its restlessness and mindless activism incorrectly equated with dynamism and energy, modern civilization undermined man's unity with his environment and fellow men and destroyed stable and long-established communities.[10] In the absence of natural and social roots and the stable and enduring landmarks which alone gave man a sense of identity and continuity, modern man had become abstract, indeterminate and empty. He was not internally or organically related to others and his relations with them were not grounded in the sentiments of fellow feeling and good will. Everyone was a stranger to everyone else and no one cared for or knew how to behave towards others.

Finally, modern civilization denuded morality of its vital internal dimension or what he called the quality of the soul. Jealousy, hatred, meanness, ill-will, perverse pleasure at another's misfortunes and sordid thoughts and fantasies were moral impurities reflecting an ill-developed soul. Moral growth consisted in overcoming these deficiencies and developing a beautiful and noble soul. Although this had been long cherished by Christianity and modern man felt threatened by it.

Being only concerned to get on in the world and lead a comfortable life, he not only saw no value in the purity of the soul and the quality of his motives but found such concerns a hindrance not an introspective, reflective, self-critical, sensitive and tender-hearted but a tough, aggressive, ambitious and suspicious man was the ideal and the necessary

basis of modern civilization. Without translating them into the military language of conflict, struggle, mastery, subjugation, domination, victory and defeat. For Gandhiji, civilization properly placed man at its centre and measured its greatness in terms of its ability to produce men and women possessing such distinctively human powers as self-determination, autonomy, self-knowledge, self-discipline and social co-operation.[11]

Since humanity is indivisible, men are responsible to and for one another, and it ought to matter to each how others live. Gandhiji rejected the selfishness body pleasure and greed, where we can see Gandhiji always believe the power of soul and he always use soul power or inner power to overcome all inabilities of human beings and society. This technique can well used by disabled community through rejecting the modern consciousness of body, the so called beautiful and the face value. In Gandhism, the inclusion of all community especially disables can be seen in the rejection of body and the Gandhi's embrace of the soul. This can be well understood with the Indian Independence struggle led by Gandhiji by emphasizing on mental strength of the mass rather than physical power. In the same way, movements of disables in the country got molded and regain the Gandhian ways.

SATYAGRAHA

Gandhiji formulated his weapon sathyagraha by the fusing of Sanskrit words Satya (Truth) and Agraha (Insistence or determined pursuit or holding on to truth[12]. To him "truth and non-violence are identical terms and these both together constitute the sum and substance of Satyagraha". Sathyagraha is to a man in the street or to an unsophisticated villager; Satyagraha is stood for Gandhi's way of fighting, a technique for solving conflict and a method for fighting against evil. "Gandhi was aware that a theoretical emphasis on the value and importance of truth and nonviolence would lead unless a way is shown for the practice of nonviolence that took him to develop a technique to non-violence to which he named satyagraha, which he called love force, soul force and truth force." Gandhiji said, I mean to suggest that truth and nonviolence were not virtues confined to individuals but were practiced by communities. Gandhiji wielded the

moral weapon of Satyagraha to end domestic, social, political, economic, religious and cultural problems and conflicts.[13]

On Disability

For centuries, people with disabilities have been an oppressed and repressed group. They have been isolated, incarcerated, observed, written about, operated on, instructed, implanted, regulated, treated, institutionalized and controlled to a degree probably unequal to that experienced by any other minority group.[14].However, India is home to 60 million disabled people. Of them, 48 percent are visually impaired, 28 percent are movement impaired, 14 percent are mentally disabled and 10 percent have hearing and speech disabilities. These are the findings of 'People with Disabilities in India: From Commitments to Outcomes'; a Report prepared by the World Bank in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. Post colonial India has witnessed different social movements including women's movement, environmental movements and the dalit movements. These movements achieved public recognition and have become matter of discussion in academic sphere. But the disable's movements in the country are being ignored and not gained much recognition in public as well as in academicians. The disable's movement is thus still trying for recognition. An argument by Nilika Malhothra is that the disablity movement didn't get much public recognition as compared to other social movements in India, even though disabled community got many benefits because of this DRM.[15] The passing of Persons with Disable Equal Opportunities, Protecting of Rights and Full Participation Act, 1995 owes much more to international pressure because of lobbying and protests by disability right groups.

The disabled activists in America established the National Federation of the Blind (NFB).[16] This was the first organized blind movement in the world. This self advocacy movement inspired disables at the international level. Here we look at the main facts that had led to the emergence of organized blind movement in India. Uniform Braille code, scholarship for blinds' and establishment of residential school for blinds were some of the main outcomes. The forming of uniform Braille code made people read book and Braille magazine. This

opportunity made blinds to know their fundamental rights and helped them share the ideas. It created link between blinds' in all over India. Most of the blinds' are from economically backward families. The scholarship scheme helped them to come out from economic backwardness and got chance to education. The residential school for blinds plays a very crucial role in the blind movement. Andh Maha Vidyalay in Delhi, the government senior secondary school for blind boys in Delhi and model school for the visually handicapped in Dehradun are some of the major schools.[17]

The Kerala Federation of the Blind (KFB) is the first self advocacy organization of the blinds which was officially registered in India in August, 1967.[18] The leaders who established KFB were Abbul Salam, Joseph Varghese and Georgekutty Kareparampil. The leaders and activists of KFB were influenced by NFB of USA and the Braille magazine called the *Braille Monitor*[19]. This magazine gives the idea of self advocacy in USA and ideologically boosted the organized blind movement in Kerala. KFB is very clear in that service delivery agency would serve only limited purpose and that the blind people need to speak amongst themselves. KFB is the forerunner of the blind movement in India.

In India, the National Level Blind movement started after the establishment of national federation of the blind graduates.[20] The philosophy of NFB is based on self advocacy. The membership of NFBG is limited to graduate blinds only. The main leaders of NFBG are Jawaharlal Kaul, Akhil Kumar Mittal etc. The 1972 Ahmadabad Convention of NFBG had debated on nature and scope of membership of the NFBG. The majority of the members were strongly supportive of widening membership base and opening it to all blind activists. There was a small group of blind who criticized the opening of membership to all the blinds. Finally membership was open to all and graduates were deleted from the name.

The organization was renamed the National Federation of the Blind. After widening membership, the NFB started to voice different issues of blind. The NFB fought against unemployment amongst the educated blinds. In 1973, NFB adopted strategies of shoe polishing, rally and relay hunger strike for achieving job for qualified blinds.[21]

The activist chose the occasion of International Disable Day which was till then celebrated in the month of March to organize the shoe polishing campaign in order to register their protest. This occasion NFB organized a shoe polishing campaign at Teen Murty Bhawan venue. The members of NFB hung their degrees on their chest and they performed the task of shoe polishing in front of the venue. [22]After this, the activists organized a rally and burned copies of their college degrees to symbolize the futility of those degrees. Then NFB organized relay hunger strike. But no concrete response came from the government. Here we can see the Gandhian methods (hunger strike, burning of certificates and rally were used as a strategy for a protest). Burning of certificates is symbolical; we can assume that this technique was taken from Gandhi's idea of burning of foreign goods. Here the idea is clear, the Gandhian mode of protest was used by disable community in India as a strong and powerful weapon against injustice.

In the mid 1970s, the second generation of activities had emerged. They were frustrated with the mild methods of advocacy adopted by the first generation of leadership. Within the NFB ranks, there was power struggle between the first generation and second generation leadership. The Kanpur Conference 1978s of NFB had witnessed the split of the organization.[23] In this Conference, Santosh Rungta[24] was elected General Secretary of NFB and first generation leaders formed a new organization called All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB). After the split of NFB, it changed the nature of the blinds in India and the educated leadership was replaced by mass leaders. This split changed the social base of the organization, methods of advocacy and agenda of the movement.

The post 1978 period had witnessed radical blind movements led by the NFB. The office memorandum of 1977 reserved quota in jobs for blinds. For implementing the memorandum NFB led a vigorous and sustained movement. In March 16, 1980 the NFB organized a rally demanding reservation in jobs, compulsory education for clients and financial assistance to their education institutions.[25] This procession was lathi charged and suppressed by government and 180 blind men were arrested. It had invited criticisms from opposition and other political parties. The NFB organized many hunger strikes, picketing

and blocking of roads and trains in 1980s for implementing various demands of the blinds and during this period, the NFB had adopted a radical step in their action. NFB used Gandhian modes like picketing, hunger strikes for achieving minimal rights to the disables.

The National Blind Youth Association (NBYA) is the second largest self advocacy organization in India. The NBYA initiated an almost five month long movement in Delhi in 1984. The movement was launched on 3 March 1984. They put forth 51 demands which consisted of education for all. The movement began with a rally and picketing in order to draw the attention of the concerned authorities. The activists adopted various tactics like courting arrest, blocking road and picketing the way of foreign dignitaries during their visit to the Raj Ghat. The activists tried to lead the Rashtrapathi Bhawan on Independence Day and they were arrested. This movement ended with a hunger strike. The long five month movement failed to achieve anything concrete.[26]

The blind activists in 1987 again took to the street with two demands; they are creating job opportunities to qualified blinds and enactment of the disability law. The NFB organized parliament march and picketing. The activists reached a historical agreement with the Ministry of Welfare. The government promised to introduce the Disable Law[27]. The NFB demanded comprehensive disable law and they started a continuous struggle for achieving it. They organized a rally and lobbied with the government. The other development was forming a disable right group in 1994. At last, the winter session of the parliament passed "The Persons with Disability Equality Opportunity Protection Of Rights and Full Participation Act 1995".[28]This Act was implemented in 1996 February. Here Gandhian strategy used by the disabled community like picketing ,march and dialogues for unifying and mobilizing the disable community in India and it got much recognition.

The post 1995, witnessed a change in the nature of the blind moments in India. The emergence of visual media, use of internet, influences of UNO are the main factors that changed the nature of the blind movements. The blind activists struggled for implementing the provision of PWD Act and they used court and chief commissioners on disability matters to achieve their demands like the right to housing, access to social security and right to education among others. The

services delivery organization like AICB, NAB also changed their approach and they also started fighting through courts[29] and CCDs.

There was an organized blind movement in most of the Indian states for achieving their rights. The UP branch of NFB launched a vigorous movement in 1981 August. The activists of NFB reached Lucknow, the capital of UP and the group of eleven for five days were sent to jail and there was an arrest of 85 blind youngsters in total. This movement got some positive result; 31 blinds got job amongst them. There were 7 lectures, 14 chair repairers and rest of them were clerks. This decision to employ 31 blind people was a landmark achievement. It encouraged the activists to continue their struggle for employment. The UP branch of NFB organized another movement for job in 1982 and due to this struggle, chief minister VP Singh and his cabinet took the decision to give job to the blinds. Through this decision 213 blinds got job in different departments. The organized blind moments in UP achieved a lot for the blinds.

The origin of organized blind movements in Haryana and struggle for job was started in 1970. In 1971, a group of students in a government run residential school for blind children in Panipat, went to meet the Chief Minister Bansi Lal to discuss issues at the school like food, clothing and housing .[30] The Chief Minister took immediate action and visited the school to analyse the issue. Bansilal was progressive and he appointed 36 qualified blinds. The Haryana Association of the Blind (HAB) organized a 51 day long demonstration for job in 1981. The HAB members picketed the chief minister's house in Haryana, with the help of NFB. The main demand of this movement was employment for the qualified blinds. The outcome of this movement was the founding of a high power committee to look into the issues of employability of qualified blinds. The Haryana branch of NFB organized movement demanding job for blinds during 1987. They started rally, fifteen to twenty people courted arrest every day and 250 persons participated in the rally. The activists were beaten and the movement was called off soon. This is another success story of organized blind in Hariyana. They use the Gandhian methods like picketing, continuous march and politicizing and mobilizing disables

The Kerala Federation of the Blind was the first organization in India which is based in self advocacy philosophy. The structure of KFB is the district units in every district, then students forum, teachers forum and women's forum; all of them have their separate activities. The KFB launched a vigorous movement in 1981, on January 1. They organized a big rally in Trivandrum and they sat on dharna, hunger strike demanding a 3 percent reservation in jobs, enhancement of the stipend, primary education to all the blind students and implementation of the pension scheme.[31] As a result of this movement the government introduced a special pension for the disables. The KFB continuously fights for the rights of blinds in 1984, 1987 and 1991 and the impact of this movement was that the government implemented a 3 percentage reservation in governments jobs and the government appointed blinds to higher posts. Here we can see while using Gandhian mode of protest how a marginalized community is snatching their basic minimum rights.

Observations

When we analyze the disables movements in India, we see that it had achieved much for the community. The benefits of the blinds movement do not reach the villages and the participation of women in the disable movement is poor and organizational capacities to introduce national wide movements in the country are the main defects of blind movement in India.For sensitizing the movements, universities can introduce study centers for the disabled and course related to disability. For strengthening the disability movement in India, unity among disabled community is inexplicable so as to force and pressurize the authorities.

When we analyse the Gandhian mode of protest and movement of disabled in India, we can find in most of the protests of the disabled community are using Gandhian strategies for uplifting the disabled community. Our arguments on Gandhi's criticism of modern civilization, he totally rejected the physical power, body and material life. He totally believed in the power of the soul. In the case of disability of the body, physical powers are directly connected. But Mahatma Gandhi while strongly reject his body consciousness and body power, this is the accommodation and non discrimination of disable body.

The principles of inner power (soul power) is very egalitarian and Gandhian concept includes all the disables in the world. The disabled community always employ Gandhian mode of protest.

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Life and Struggle of Tribal Unwed Mothers: Assessing their Relief Actions in Wayanad, Kerala

Shilujas .M

The tragic life and struggle of tribal unwed mothers of Kerala's Wayanad district had been, for decades, a heated subject of concern on Kerala's development discourse. The hilly region of Wayanad, once the dwelling place of tribal majority, is now home to more than 1600 unwed tribal mothers, who were enticed and left away mostly by non-tribal settlers. Traditional tribal settlement of Thirunelli alone has registered over 350 such unwed tribal single motherhood; all victims of sexual exploitation. Till recent years, a number of cases of children being born out of wedlock kept popping up in the public from time to time. These women continued to live in a state of destitution and neglect; even years after their problems came into public concern.

From 1998 onwards, the governmental and non-governmental agencies kick-started various developmental and relief projects to rehabilitate these women. The Kerala Women's Commission, who fought for their cause, initiated a major campaign to bring the culprits to justice by affirming fatherhood through DNA analysis. The Kerala

Legislative Assembly's Sub Committee on Tribal Welfare also submitted a report to the Government recommending various steps to tackle the problem. Other expert panels too had recommended many steps including reinstating the alienated tribal lands in the district. The state government departments for Women's Welfare, Social Justice, SC-ST Development and Local Administration announced implementation of various projects such as rehabilitation and housing packages, land distribution, monthly pension and distribution of self employment tools and on.

The basic objectives of this study are to explore, to what extent, the governmental policies and non-governmental activities have contributed to change in the living status and health conditions of unwed mothers among tribes of Wayanad with a focus on women empowerment. It probes the efficiency of local governments in implementing the projects. It also examines the current situation of these women and their children through a development perspective.

This is mainly based on the field work done in four Grama Panchayats and one municipality of Wayanad District, namely, Thirunelli, Pulpally, Panamaram and Muttil panchayaths and Mananthavadi municipality. For primary data the researcher conducted few personal interviews with the unwed mothers of Wayanad district, government officials and NGO activists. Secondary data collected from Census of India, 2001 and 2011, newspaper reports and office documents of each Panchayat.

Wayanad: The Land and History

Wayanad is a district in the north-east of the state of Kerala which is almost totally non-urban land with superior ridges interspersed with dense forest, leaves-matted jungles and profound valleys. It is the least populous district in Kerala, and just 3.79% urbanised. Agriculture is the main stay of the economy. In 2006 the Ministry of Panchayati Raj included Wayanad one among the country's 125 most backward districts. As per 2011 Census the district has a population of 8,16,558 with a sex ratio of 1035 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 89.32%. This is the land where tribes lived for centuries in thatched roof, mud, bamboo and brick houses set in swampy valleys and

plateaus. There are tribal populations in the area who still practice age-old customs and rituals and continue a nomadic life. It is the district with the highest share in the tribes' population i.e. about 36% of state's total population. Wayanad also has a large settler population.

Demographic Transition of Tribal Wayand

Wayanad was once home to majority tribal population with peculiar life style, culture and habits. The region witnessed large scale inward migration of settlers since 13th century. The Jains from Karnataka came in the 13th century. The Hindu Nairs from Kurumbranadu in Kannur district made an entry in the 18th century and established their feudal system. They were followed by Muslims from other parts of Malabar in the early 1940s. Christians came in the 1950s from Travancore region. Until 1930s, tribals constitute 80 per cent of the population of Wayanad. It dwindled to 70 per cent in 1940s, to 60 in 1950s and further decreased to below half mark in 1970s. In the last few decades there was a complete marginalisation of the indigenous people in Wayanad. Tribes in Wayanad can broadly be classified into Paniyas, Adiyas, Kattunayakans and Kurichiyans.

Vast majority of the tribes in Wayanad belong to the Paniya community. The bonded labourers of yester years, the Paniyas were once sold along with plantations by the landlords. They were also employed as professional coffee collectors by higher castes. The name 'Paniyaan' means 'worker' as they were supposed to have been the workers of non - tribes. In marriage, bride price is practiced like many other tribal communities. Widow remarriage is allowed. They do not practice pre-puberty marriage.

The Kurichiyans are basically an agricultural tribal community. Decades ago, untouchability had been widely practiced by these tribals. They have clean food habits and keep their houses, premises and dress always clean. They are matrilineal and live in joint families, under the control of their chieftain called 'Pittan'. The members of the extended family work together and put their earnings in the same purse. The Kurichiyans prefer cross-cousin marriage to any other marriage alliances.

The Adiyas, like the Paniya, is one of the slave sects in Kerala. In the Adiya tribal family the husband is the head of the house. Bride price is

given to the parents of the bride by the groom. Divorce, widow marriage etc., are permitted. No punitive measure like ostracizing of the sex offender, as one can see among Kurichias, is prevalent among the Adiyas for sex offences. The Kattunayakan are also called Cholanaickan, were the kings of the jungle regions engaged in the collection and gathering of forest produces.

The Location

The location of this study, four panchayaths and one municipality, are with peculiar characteristic relevant to the subject. Thirunelli is the largest revenue village in Wayanad district with a population of 29,000, largely consisting of tribes from 120 settlements. Though official figures put the number of the unwed mothers in Thirunelli at 109, surveys conducted by NGOs and other social workers estimate the number at least three times as high. Many of the ravaged women would not dare to complain against the men who exploited them. Government statistics say that the Adiaya tops the list of the victims with 73 cases followed by the Paniyas with 11, the Kattu Naikars with seven, the Kurumars with six and the Kurichiars with two. As many as 69 of the unwed mothers have a single child while 26 have two children.

Pulpalli is also a viilage that witnessed tribal insurgence in 1960s and 70s against feudal oppression. The village was the centre of Christian migration from Travancore in 1950s. Pulpally has been traced out as the most sensitive area of the unwed mothers . As a bordering village to Karnataka, the tribal girls are recruited to Karnataka for farm labour.. These girls are exploited at the work area. Some of the girls are even missing. Those who come back tells the hard stories that they had faced and even given evidence of the death of their co-workers. Since the tribals are less in number and do not have any public support they keeps these stories within themselves. Muttil is a panchayath in Wayand where Muslim settlers are concentrated after their migration in 1940s. Panamaram panchayath and Mananthavadi municipality are two adjacent areas to Thirunelli.

The Problem of Unwed Motherhood

The tragic living conditions of a new class of women called unwed mothers came to public attention right from early 1980s. A number

of cases of children being born out of wedlock keep popping up in the public from time to time. The main source of the information is the admission registers of the tribal pre-schools in Wayanad. Most of their mothers are victims of seduction or one-night love affairs. In most cases, non-tribal men entice them with false promises of marriage. Tribal girls recruited as casual laborers in tea and coffee estates are sexually abused by their masters and fellow workers. Once they get pregnant, they are left in the lurch. Tribal women succumb to the wiles of the non-tribal youths as their own men have become lazy and lost interest in their women. In some tribes of Wayanad, a girl who is pregnant before marriage is an outcast. There are a few tribal communities where a man and woman are allowed to leave together before they tie the knot, just to make sure they are compatible. But no tribal community accepts a woman who bears the children of non-tribal men. Ostracized by the society, most of them end up as targets for sexual exploitation.

Cases of children born out of wedlock have been regularly reported from remote and isolated areas of Wayanad district ever since the late-1960s. At the time, Thirunelli and Pulppalli were major centres for Naxalite activists. The anti-Naxal squads of Kerala police and the CRPF ruthlessly suppressed the tribal armed insurgency. The police force later came under strong allegation that they let loose a reign of terror, ravaging hamlets, pillaging tribal habitats and raping tribal women. It was widely alleged that the policemen deployed to check radical activities were chiefly responsible for creating a new class of unwed tribal mothers and their children. In the years that followed, it was the turn of government officials from Revenue, Rural Development, Education, Excise and Forest departments to exploit tribal girls. All of them had been deputed to undertake various welfare measures for the tribal community as part of the efforts to wean them away from Naxallites. Two consecutive decades from 1971 to 1990, that witnessed anti-Naxal activities in Wayanad reported the highest rate of incidents of unwed motherhood in the district, prominently in Thirunelli and Pulppalli. A KWC survey conducted in 1999 had found 32 per cent involved the cases of unwed mothers' dispute were local

government officials and policemen. Tribal girls recruited as casual laborers in the neighboring tea and coffee estates also started being sexually abused by their masters and fellow workers in the 1960s. Many settlers and traders also turned predators, making Thirunelli and Pulpalli village panchayats infamous for having the largest number of unwed mothers. This state of affairs continued till last decade. Once the girls become pregnant, they are left to fend for themselves. Many are forced into prostitution for the sake of survival.

Premature deaths of tribal woman and, mostly on the abortionist's table, were not uncommon in Wayanad during those years. Several crude and inhuman methods were employed to eliminate such infants even after the birth. Thirunelli Police has registered 18 cases of infant deaths in the past. In some cases, cruel methods were employed by to eliminate such children soon after birth. One brutal practice was to put some grain of rice before husking into the mouth of the newly born. As the grain would block breath, the death of the child will be instantaneous.

The Reporting of the Police Cases

There is a visible shift that touched the highest point in 1970s in the reporting of police cases related unwed motherhood and subsequent abandoning of tribal women in Wayand. The first case of fatherhood dispute of tribal woman's child was registered in 1952 in Pulpally area. In nine years between 1952 and 1960, 10 cases of such unwed motherhood arose from across Wayanad. It increased to 23 in ten years from 1961 to 1970. During the crucial decade from 1971 to 1980, when Wayanad witnessed radical Naxallite movement among tribals and resultant police oppression, the number of reported unwed motherhood came upto 190, the highest decade average. It came down to 60 between 1981 and 90 and further declined to 22 between 1991 and 2000. In the last decade, between 2001 and 2010 only nine cases were reported. In the past five years after 2010, just two of such disputes were registered in the police records.

**Table.1.Tribal Unwed Mothers Wayanad
Reporting of Police Cases since 1952**

1952-1960	10
1961-1970	23
1971- 1980	190
1981- 1990	60
1991-2000	22
2001-2010	9
2011-2015	2

The Relief Actions and Results

Ever since the sad plight of unwed mothers of Wayand came to public attention as a result of media coverage, a number of governmental agencies took up the issue and came for legal and economic reddressal. The Kerala Women's Commission, which had been tracking down unwed mothers over the past few decades and fighting for their cause, made some headway in bringing justice to the sad women of Wayanad. Upto 2012 end the Commission had received 278 complaints — 207 tribal women and 70 women from backward Dalit groups – from these five panchayaths. Thirunelli registered 104, Pulpalli 78, Muttil 28, Panamaram 35 and Mananthavadi 33 cases. After initial evaluation of the complaints the Commission launched a DNA analysis drive in a certain number of disputes. DNA tests were done to establish the paternity of the children. Of the 76 cases it had taken up, 35 of the alleged fathers who were summoned for blood tests have owned up their paternity even without going in for the tests. Of them, 29 agreed to marry the victims while the rest, who were already married, were willing to pay a monthly allowance. The Women's Commission was able to go for DNA analysis in limited cases. Of total eighteen cases it recommended for tests, 10 were successful to establish the fatherhood. In six tests the results proved negative. In two cases the results are unknown. Other than DNA analysis drive, the Women's Commission initiated police inquiries into 71 cases in recent

years in the selected panchayaths. Over 40 cases were settled out of court before prosecution and the rest are either being tried before courts or enquiries are on.

Table.2. Tribal Unwed Mothers of Wayanad
Petitions before Kerala Women's Commission

Thirunelli Panchayath	104
Pulpally panchayath	78
Muttil Panchayath	28
Panamaram Panchayath	35
Mananthavadi Muncipality	33
Total Complaints	278

The most notable achievement of KWC is that, it had made the concerned government departments some more accountable and answerable in the question related to tribal women's development. According to the KWC statistics, most unwed mothers were at 13 to 20 years old at the time of first sexual exploitation. One curious fact that saved the culprits from legal consequences was that the women who are exploited never blame the person who caused their misery, largely due to their style of living . Majority of tribal women who were interviewed for this research viewed that the most effective action came in their favor was from the part   Women's Commission because the potential perpetrators were afraid of police cases .

Tribal Land Restoration

Much of the problem seems to stem from the increasing alienation of their land and shrinking the traditional sources of income leaving them at the mercy of the greedy settlers from outside. Their tribal heritage does not equip tribal groups to resist exploitation by outsiders. Over the decades, they have been swarmed by hordes of settlers who addicted them to alcohol, dispossessed them of their lands and sexually abused their women. The mushrooming number of tourist resorts in Wayanad is a matter of concern. Adivasis, once a majority in the hilly Wayanad region, have shrunk to a minority, and now constitute only

17 percent of the total population of the district. Their habitat lies invaded, their lifestyle irrevocably disturbed. Since the first settlers arrived in Wayanad in the 1940s, there has been a steady inflow of settlers who grabbed our lands by fair and foul means. In 1976, a sub-committee appointed by the state assembly visited Wayanad for a survey of the extent to which people were alienated from their land. Of the 300 cases presented before the committee, 71 were those in which land had been grabbed from the tribals by force. Sixty seven families had been paid meagre sums in compensation while 14 others had been duped into marking their thumb impressions on blank papers.

The government has passed several laws to restore their lands but none of these have been implemented. According to the 1972 Kerala Private Forests (Vesting and Assignment) Act, 50 per cent of the private forests acquired by the government is meant for distribution among tribals. But so far, not much of the 3,773 ha of land acquired in Wayanad district has been transferred to the adivasis. Similarly, the Kerala Scheduled Tribes Act of 1975 was passed with retrospective effect from 1960. The Act deemed all transactions concerning tribal lands invalid and ordered the restoration of the land to our people. Tribals filed 2,127 petitions in court. Even in the 103 cases where the court has upheld their rights, the settlers refuse to vacate the lands they have occupied and the law enforcement agencies are reluctant to implement the court's orders.

A committee of Kerala Legislative Assembly that studied the problem of unwed mothers' submitted its report recommending various steps to tackle the problem including restoration of alienated land of tribals and fresh distribution of land in women's ownership. The state government in 2002 announced a relief package for unwed mothers consisting of a one-acre plot, a house and a monthly pension of Rs.1000.

A first hand preview of revenue documents in the surveyed four panchayaths and one municipality reveals not much headway is recorded in land distribution for tribal unwed mothers. Departments of tribal welfare, social welfare, local governance and revenue coordinated the implementation of the rehabilitation package. The

officials received 256 applications for land distribution, but only 14 women were allotted plots under the package in these areas. In Thirunelli, 8 women were allotted land plots, four women in Muttil and two in Manathavadi. Pulpalli and and Panamaram recorded zero achievement in this regard.

Table.3. Tribal Unwed Mothers of Wayanad
Land distribution to victims

Location	Total applications	No. of Women received Land
Thirunelli	92	8
Muttil	58	4
Panamaram	28	0
Pulpally	42	0
Mananthavadi	36	2
Total	256	14

Housing and Vocational Rehabilitation

Majority of the unwed mothers are living with their parents and they have no identity or independence. The tribal girls who bear a child before marriage are considered as outcast. They are neglected from the family and living by their own. During such situations the outsiders make use of it. To prevent such situation, in 2000, the state government decided to set up a power-loom project at Thrissilleri near Thirunelli to rehabilitate the unwed mothers of Wayanad. An additional fund of Rs 2.25 crore was sanctioned in 2008 for starting a handloom unit in the project as part of expanding the rehabilitation for 200 Adivasi women. A sum of 29 lakh was sanctioned in the initial stage in 2008 for imparting training to the women. This entire fund has already been utilised but the project has not come to full swing. The rehabilitation project for unwed tribal mothers is in association with the Wayanad Handloom, Powerloom and Multipurpose Industrial Cooperative .The concept was to convert the project area of 13.40 acres to a self-reliant village for tribal destitute women.

Cuurently, just 28 women are employed in the project, and 11 women are living there with their children. The state government decided to set up a scheme of monthly pension of Rs. 1000 for unwed tribal mothers in Kerala. The concerned authorities in the five pachayaths received 344 applications as part of the scheme. But the tribal department evaluated them and decided only 19 eligible for the scheme. 9 women in Thirunelli and three each in Muttil. Pulpalli and Manathavadi and one woman in Panamaram receive the pension.

Findings / suggestions

It can be concluded that the developmental projects and relief activities as well as law enforcement measures have resulted in bringing down the number of cases related to unwed tribal mothers. Fresh reporting of the abandoned mothers and children born out of wedlock has almost come to a cease. Initiatives by Kerala Women's Commission and Human Rights Commission to prosecute the accused men have generated a sense of fear among the perpetrators and feel of safety among the victims. Impact of other activities are partial and relative to individual cases and locational area. The need of a coordinated efforts to make the projects and activities more useful and productive. Other findings and suggestion are summarised below:

- Alienation of tribal land is the most crucial issue faced by tribes in Wayanad and elsewhere in Kerala. A comprehensive plan for restoration the dispossessed land is of foremost importance.

- A comprehensive rehabilitation package that does not uproot tribal womwn from their habitual surroundings should be formulated.

- An inter-departmental coordination must be in the place for proper implementation of the development projects.

- Life without fathers is tragic situation that young children of unwed mothers face in the community. A separate scheme for their schooling and education will be preferable.

- Insensitivity of police and other officials regarding the rights of tribals women is a grave problem that worsens the situation. Sensitizing the law enforcers is a requirement.

Other than prosecution procedures and DNA analysis drive initiated by the KWC , all other relief activities targeting unwed motherhood were conducted or implemented through decentralized local bodies such as grama panchayaths or block panchayaths. The efficiency of pachayath administration and officials were there for critical in the success of the projects. It has to be noted that Thirunelli and Muttil panchayaths who performed comparatively better in the distribution of land for tribal women (Table.3), had special task force for tribal women's development. A separate Standing Committee for Destitute Tribal Women in each panchayaths predominant tribal population can be proposed for better implementation of the relief projects.

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Local Democracy and the Marginalized: Scheduled Tribes in Kerala

Surjith.M

In their quest for responsive, responsible and accountable public governance, a large number of countries have recently taken steps to reexamine the roles of their various levels of government. This reexamination has resulted in a silent revolution that is slowly but gradually bringing about re arrangements that embody diverse forms of supra nationalization, centralization and decentralization (Shah, 2006:1). However, decentralization of the authorities (functional and financial) of the State to lower tiers of elected local bodies contributes major share in this shift. This particular model of decentralization had been largely suggested as an important panacea for bringing about change in local democracy and governance by involving the local community. As for India is concerned democratic decentralization legislated through the 73rd amendments to the Constitution in 1993 was really a turning point in the history of local democracy and local governance of this country. It provided extra ordinary possibilities for building a new nation with the effective participation of every citizen in rural India. The new legislation mandated state governments to

establish panchayats at three levels, Gram, Block and District. It also mandates to hold direct election to all these bodies every five years; to reserve seats and offices for women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. As a society that remains fractured by discrimination based on castes and gender, however bleak in its process and impact, it has been still argued as a possible solution for non-discrimination against the disadvantaged sections particularly the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in village India.

Democratic Decentralization in Kerala

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, (CAA) 1993 set the stage for creation of a newly decentralized system of local governance in rural Kerala. Based upon the CAA 1993, the State legislature passed an Act,"The Kerala Panchayat Raj Act 1994", to introduce the new system of rural local governance in Kerala. The new Act envisaged the transfer of a large number of powers and functions of the state governments to Panchayat raj institutions that are working independently as well as complimentarily at three levels, Gram, Block and District. Presently, unlike almost all other States, most of the means and forces that improve the lives and livelihood of tens of millions of rural people are under the possession of rural local governments of Kerala.As once opined by Namboothiripad, (2002:69) the movement that started since mid-1990s to strengthen and stabilize the decentralization has been got equal prominence in Kerala politics as that of the radical movement for the land reforms. It has been further attested by Jain (2005:3) in the words that Kerala had taken the longest stride than any other State in putting Panchayati Raj in the ground and more importantly in the hands of the people (Jain, 2005:3).

Decentralization and scheduled Tribes in Kerala

Anthropologically, a tribe is a social group, the members of which lives in a common territory, have a common dialect, uniform social organization and possess cultural homogeneity having common ancestor, political organization and religious pattern (Chaudhuri, 1992).The Scheduled Tribes are the ethnic minority groups in Kerala, constitute around 1.45 percent (Census, 2011) of the total population with a number close to five lakhs .There are 36 Scheduled Tribe

Communities, presently living in different parts of the State. Out of this, five groups have been categorized as Particularly Vulnerable Tribes (PVT). Each of the Scheduled Tribe has a distinct identity in Kerala society. The Western Ghats and its peripheries form their main abode in Kerala. Though they are found in all the districts of the State, the intensity of their distribution is not uniform (Jancy, 2007: p-153) as two third of the tribal population in the State is concentrated in the erstwhile Malabar region of Kerala. Wayanad District is their heartland followed by Idukki and Palakkad.

In socio-economic terms, the tribal people constitute the most underprivileged section in Kerala society. The long years of interventions by the State have had marginal impact on their socioeconomic conditions, despite various welfare measures and constitutional protection. Indeed, they are living in the outskirts of so-called 'Kerala model' of development achievements in social field. No doubt, they are the most disadvantaged section among the major outlier and marginalized Communities in Kerala. The major problems of Kerala Tribes since long back have been acute poverty, denial of human rights, alienation from the land and development activities, lack of socio-political and economic empowerment, impoverishment of indigenous knowledge, lack of common facilities, etc. Tribes and their problems had been a major conundrum for development planners and administrators of Kerala for long time. Increasing dissatisfaction with the effectiveness and equity effects of government programmes has led both the political heads and development planners in the State to revisit the strategy for tribal development. Low performance of macro level programs convinced them that the new strategy ought to give an important role to local democratic institutions.

In the beginning of Ninth Plan (1996-97), State Government took a major policy decision to transfer one- half of the resources earmarked in the State budget under the head of Tribal Sub Plan to Local Self-Government Institutions for preparing the local development plan by adhering the precepts of participatory planning methodology. Since then, not less than two per cent of the State budget is set apart exclusively for tribal development under the head of TSP every year. During the past three Five-Year Plans (Ninth to Eleventh), it was accounted that

the State government had allotted more than 22000 crore rupees to local self-government institutions for preparing Local Development Plan. Of this, more than one thousand crore rupees were earmarked solely for making development plan that directly benefit the deprived segments of Kerala society under the heading of Tribal Sub Plan (GOK, 1997-98 to2011-12). The underlying motive for this change in approach, and transferring of relatively huge amount was to empower the Tribes in the socio-political and economic field by increasing their participation in the process of decision-making at all levels.

The experiment of decentralizing political authorities and development responsibilities to the local tiers of elected governments are closing towards two decades. In this instance, an effort assumes great significance as to understand the extent to which the objective of the new initiative (decentralization) has been realized particularly in the lives Tribes, the most deprived and least powerful section of Kerala polity.

Rationale of the Study

There is a great deal of literatures pertaining to the manifold aspects of decentralization in rural Kerala. However, literatures that touches on topics related to decentralization and local governance, and its manifold impacts on tribal lives were almost an alien theme for many who are sincerely involved with the theory and practice of democratic decentralization even now. This backdrop provides special urge to indulge in the study of this nature. Tribal people have been considered as the most outlier sections in Kerala's social fabric. A great divide exists between Tribes and the rest of the population on several indicators of developmental and political inclusion. Equally important is that, there is wider disparity within and between different tribal groups. Two separate sections can be found among them(super and subordinates).In this context, how far the process of decentralization empowered them to lead a meaningful life by capturing the new opportunities provided them and actively taking part in the deliberative decision making bodies remains a serious questions to be explored.

The present paper looks at what the decentralization 'experiments' actually produced in the ideals of the inclusion of tribal people, the

most marginalized and the least powerful section in the social fabric of Kerala. The study chiefly tries to identify the tribal inclusion in local government in the light of the experience of past two decades in rural Kerala. It is argued as decentralization entails chiefly two values; both intrinsic as well as instrumental values. The major argument in favor of democratic decentralization has been that it enhances the quality of citizenship and building capabilities in people to participate. Equally significant was its instrumental importance for freedom and development. However, neither the neither the theoretical studies nor empirical analysis provided absolute evidences that decentralization process always enhances the quality of life, building capacity to participate effectively, and leads to development and freedom particularly in the case of marginalized sections like Scheduled Tribes in the case of this study. This necessitates further empirical explorations to testify the above arguments with *de facto* evidences, and hence, the objectives of this study are set into that direction.

Objectives of the Study

The present paper has intended to explore largely the extent of political inclusion of the culturally distinct tribal communities in the **localdemocratic institutions** of rural Kerala giving special focus on the inclusion of numerically predominant two tribal groups in Northern Kerala namely the *Paniyan* and the *Kurichiyan*. The study was undertaken with the following specific objectives:

The Specific Objectives:

1. To analyze how far did the Decentralization process ensure the inclusion of different ethnic tribal groups at least at the local democratic institutions at grass root level, i.e., Village Panchayat level.

2. To examine whether decentralization process did any way successful in ensuring the principles of equity in the inclusion of least powerful sections among different ethnic tribal groups in Kerala.

3. To identify the process of 'elite capturing' among Scheduled Tribes, and to examine who was cornered the larger opportunities created by the Democratic Decentralization process over the years

Methodology

The insights for the present paper were mainly emanated from the findings of the author's doctoral research in Anthropology titled 'Democratic Decentralization and Tribal Development: An anthropological Study of the Process and Impact of Local Governance on two Culturally Divergent Tribal groups of Kannur district in Kerala', which was carried out during 2008 and 2013 periods. The present study is essentially a cross-cultural comparative study based on the epistemological tradition of anthropology. The main task of the researcher was to make inclusion/exclusion dimension of the process of democratic decentralization visible by gathering data disaggregated by different tribal groups. To make the generalization the study more applicable to the wider context, special efforts were made to collect data at micro level and macro level, and to testify the micro findings against the proscenium of macro level data. The study was mainly conducted using in-depth field research using more open-ended methods like participant observation in its quasi form. In addition to this, qualitative methods including Case studies, FGDs and Textual Analysis were largely employed for collecting data.

Focus of the Study

As already pointed out, this paper tries to explore the positive outcomes in creating 'inclusionary ideals' of democratic decentralization in the lives of tribal population of Kerala. To assess how far tribal people are empowered by democratic decentralization process, participation possibilities of two tribal groups in the local democratic institutions over the past several years, after the enactment of Kerala Panchayat raj Act, 1994, have been taken into account for detailed analysis. For analytical purpose, their participation in Village Panchayat Councils has been mainly included for the present analysis. As Kerala is concerned, an entry into the Village Panchayat Council as an elected member provide them (Tribes) tremendous possibilities for negotiating with the rural local governments and rural power structure.

Universe of the study

It has to be stated at the outset that the present study was solely limited to capture insights about the inclusionary effects of

decentralization in the context of the Village Panchayats (Gram Panchayats), the cutting edge democratic institutions in rural Kerala. The study was mainly carried out in the village Panchayats of two districts in northern Kerala. To get a rich and deeper understanding on the process and impact of decentralization between two tribal groups, efforts were made to elicit the story of a single tribal Village Panchayat namely Kanichar, which is situated in the eastern highlands of Kannur district of northern Kerala**.** The selection of the Panchayat was purely purposive following the two factors outlined below.

Firstly, it is here that the population of both the two tribal groups (Kurichiyan and Paniyan) is reported to have relatively equal representation (59 and 41 percent respectively). Secondly, even though seats for tribal representatives were reserved in twenty-village Panchayats of Kannur district, the presidential post for tribal people were reserved in single village Panchayat, and the Kanichar got this rare opportunity.

Even though the analysis has been done based on the experiences of the single Village Panchayat, a modest attempt was also made to extend the study to much wider areas.

The People Studied

As already pointed out, the present study was mainly centered on two culturally divergent tribal groups in Kerala namely the Paniyan and the Kurichiyan. An explanation is indeed essential about why the study was confined to two cultural groups under the umbrella term "Scheduled Tribes". It was mainly because of two reasons. Firstly, the study involved these two groups mainly because of the reason that these two are the first two largest tribal groups in the State. The socio economic and cultural life of the different tribal groups in Kerala varies from tribe to tribe and region to region. They belong to different ethnic stocks, have different pattern of economy, technology and belief system and practices. These differences are applicable in every sense, to the life of the Kurichiyan and of the Paniyan. It has also to be pointed out that both are placed at two extremes, in terms of socio- economic development indicators. The Paniyan are placed on the lowest rung whereas the Kurichiyan on the highest rung among the Scheduled Tribes

of Kerala. The great keenness to know how decentralization works among different segments of population among Scheduled Tribes moved this study into that direction involving these two groups in question.

The Paniyan: The Paniyan are the Kerala's largest tribe, claiming more than 90 thousand populations. According to 2001 Census, they share 22 percent of the total tribal population in the State. They live over a wide area of erstwhile Malabar regions, particularly in three districts, Wayanad, Kannur and Malappuram. They are one of the earliest inhabitants of the highlands of northern Kerala. The etymological meaning of the term *'Paniyan'* indicates that they used to earn their livelihood from labor. Traditionally they were engaged in bonded labor under the local chieftains and land-lords .Today, the Paniyan are primarily laborers except for a few families who possess some land holding. They still stand at the lowest level of socio economic and educational development. In the words of Panoor (1999:71)

"All Tribes are misfortunate. However, Paniyan is the misfortunate among the misfortunate"

Their condition has not been changed much even now. Though they are the largest tribal community, they do not have adequate representation even in the local self-government institutions; they still stand as the least powerful section in Kerala polity.

The Kurichiyan: The Kurichiyan, the second largest tribal groups in Kerala are mainly found in three northern districts of Kerala, Wayanad, Kannur and Calicut. According to the Census, 2001, their total population is 32746 and they constitute about 9 percent of the total tribal population in the State. Traditionally, the Kurichiyanwere a hunting gathering group. However, nowadays they are mostly settled agriculturists and agricultural laborers. Agriculture has become the backbone of their existence. According to Aiyappan (1990:1), they were the first agricultural tribe to have settled in Wayanad district of Kerala. The Kurichiyan claim an aristocratic social status among the tribal people of Kerala. They are having a superior status like Brahmins

and until recently, they practiced untouchability with almost all other social groups except Brahmins. A Paniyan had polluted a Kurichiyan even at a distance of 30 feet, and physically and culturally, they differed from Paniyan. Unlike the Paniyan, political awareness has been well marked among them. Many of the members are actively involved in local party politics. They have relatively better representation in almost all decision-making bodies near to their surroundings including local self-government institutions in Kerala. Their community members have been elected to State legislature and have berth into the State cabinet.

Decentralization and Reservation for the Tribes in Panchayats

The most revolutionary provision of 73rd Constitutional amendment was the reservation of one third of the seats for woman in local bodies, along with reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their population at micro levels. However, Kerala moved a step ahead since 2010 by making a historic pro woman decision to enhance the minimum number of seats and offices for woman from one third to fifty percent. By this act, woman belongs to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes also get the opportunity to represent fifty percent of total seats and offices reserved for the community in local governments.

As per the status (2010 15) 289 seats have been reserved for STs, and it constitutes 1.33 percent of total seats (21682) in local governments. Similarly, 16 Presidential posts have been reserved for STs, and it constitutes 1.3 per cent of total local self government institutions (1209) in Kerala. The above data show that, they have a share a little above their respective population percentage (1.14) in the State in 2001 Census.

Reservation for Tribes in Kanichar Village Panchayat

In Kanichar, Scheduled Tribes constitute eleven per cent of the total village population. As they have sizeable number in population, a minimum of one seat was reserved for Scheduled Tribes in every Panchayat election since 1995.

Table1. Tribal Representation in Village Panchayat by Community (in the Last Four Elections)

Term	Total Wards	Seats Reserved for STs	Actual Representation	Participation between Two Tribes	
				Kurichiyan	Paniyan
1995- 2000	8	1	1	1	0
2000 - 05	10	1	1	1	0
2005 - 10	12	1	1	1	0
2010- 15	13	1	3	3	0

Source: Gram Panchayat Records

The Table 1 shows the details of reservation of seats in Kanichar Village Panchayat between 1995 and 2010. Accordingly, four rounds of election were held so far, and on all occasions, the tribal people had their representatives in the Panchayat Councils. However, field data conspicuously revealed that since the first general election in 1995, a single tribal community got the opportunity to represent in Village Panchayat Council. In the present case study, it was none other than the Kurichiyan tribe of this Village. While distilling the empirical evidences, it has been confirmed that, the other major tribe Paniyan did never have a chance to participate in Village Panchayat Council of the study Panchayat. The Panchayat records reveal that not a single tribal member from the Paniyan Community ever contested in the election. The present study also throws light on the fact that dominant political parties, neither the Congress nor the Communist parties, had ever taken any sincere efforts to field a candidate from the Paniyan community. In addition, not a single Paniyan from this village showed any interest to come forward and take part in the election contest independently.

Tribal Inclusion: Moving Beyond the Evidences of Single Village

The study pertaining to the study village reveals that there is a chasm of disparity existing in the inclusion of two ethnic tribal groups in the Panchayat councils on all occasions ever since the onset of democratic decentralization process started in 1995. However, it cannot be

presumed that the findings emanated from this single Case Study reflect the general trend prevailing in matters related to the disparity in political representation between the two study groups. Hence, to get better and deeper insights about the general trend, it was essential to testify the present findings with the data collected from a much wider universe. For this purpose, the study was further extended to district levels. Efforts were made to collect data from two adjoining districts in northern Kerala, Wayanad and Kannur. These two are the main abode of both the study groups in Kerala. The data pertaining to the tribal representation in Village Panchayat Councils of these two districts were collected through secondary sources mainly from the village Panchayat records.

Tribal Inclusion in Village Panchayat Councils: The Case of Kannur District

There are total eighty-one Village Panchayats in Kannur district. Based on the delimitation records of 2010 maintained by the State election Commission of Kerala, seats for STs had been reserved in twenty Village Panchayats. As per the official records, total twenty-three seats were reserved for STs in the district and out of this, three seats were reserved for ST woman candidates.

Table 2: Tribal Representation in Village Panchayats of Kannur District by Tribal Community (2010 - 15)

Total Number of Seatsreserved	Actual ST Representation	Elected Members (Tribe wise)			
		Paniyan	Kurichiyan	Karimpalan	Mavilan
23	26	4	11	9	2
% against Total ST PRI Members in the District		15.4	42.3	34.6	7.7
% against Total ST Population in the District		33.24	23.96	26.56	12.21

Source: Field Notes

Note: Population is based on the Tribal Survey Report 2011of Kannur District

According to the data presented in the Table 2, the Kurichiyan now holds maximum number of elected representatives in the village Panchayat councils of Kannur district. Out of the total 26 tribal PRI members, eleven belongs to this single community; their share in district tribal population is about 24 percent (Tribal Survey Report, 2011) where as they hold 42 per cent of total elected tribal members from the village Panchayat councils of the district. Next to Kurichiyan comes Karimpalan tribe, and they represent 35 per cent of total tribal PRI members in the district; their share in district tribal population comes close to 27 per cent.

The Paniyan stands in third position with a share of 15 per cent of total tribal elected members from the district; however, they are the largest tribal groups in the district with population of more than 33 per cent of total tribal population in the district. The Table 2 displays that except the Paniyan, all other major tribal groups in the district claim more or relatively equal (in the case of Mavilan tribe) number of elected members as compared to their respective share in population of the district. It is evident from the data that, the numerical strength of the population is not the always the main decisive factor to get a berth in Village Panchayat Councils of Kerala; otherwise the Paniyan should have been more elected members. Instead, multiples of factors worked beneath and they are to be explored in detail.

Tribal Inclusion at Village Panchayat Councils: The Case of Wayanad District

Wayanad mountainous district is located adjoined to the eastern part of Kannur district. It is essentially rural and the heart land of eleven ethnic tribal groups in the State. The district claims the highest tribal concentration in the State. According to the recent data ((Tribal survey Report, 20110) tribal population constitutes close to1.5 lakhs. There are altogether twenty-five Village Panchayats in the district, and all these institutions have tribal elected members.

Table 3: Tribal Representation in Village Panchayats of Wayanad District by Tribal Community (2010 - 15)

Total Number of Seats reserved	Actual ST Representation	Elected Members (Tribe wise)					
		Paniyan	Kurichiyan	Kuruman	Adiyan	Kattunaikkan	Other STs
84	92	9	41	37	3	3	2
% against Total ST PRI Members in the District		10.0	45,0	37.0	3.0	3.0	2.0
% against Total ST Population in the District		45.0	16.0	16.0	7.0	11.0	5.0

Source: Field Notes

Note: Population is based on the Tribal survey Report 2010 of Wayanad District

The Table 3 points that, though 84 seats had been reserved for STs in the district, after the general election, the actual representation of Tribes in the village Panchayat Councils increased to 92; and this figure constitutes around twenty percent of the total PRI members in the district. It indicates that, in certain Panchayats, they could gain the opportunity to contest from general constituencies and be elected.

The tribe- wise data reveal that, more than eight per cent of the tribal PRI members belong to two tribal groups, the Kurichiyan and the Kuruman. Among them Kurichiyan constitute 45 per cent and the Kuruman 37 per cent. Both these Tribes share 16 per cent of tribal population of the district respectively. In the case of Kurichiyan they hold three times representation compared to their population in the district. The Paniyan are the numerically predominant tribal groups in the district with a share of 45 per cent of the district tribal population. However, they claim only ten per cent of the total tribal elected members in the district. The data exemplify that, the situation in Wayanad is not

much different from Kannur district. It reiterates the early observations that, in the case of Tribes, numerical strength in population alone is not the main decisive factor to get a berth in Village Panchayat Councils of Kerala.

Disparity in Tribal Inclusion: Major Findings

Based on the micro-macro field realities in the context of rural local governance it can be said that the process of democratization efforts in rural Kerala, in no way, created a niche for equity in political representation among the tribal groups in rural Kerala. The study reveals that there was no equity in capturing newly opened political opportunities by different ethnic groups in Kerala under the umbrella term '**Scheduled Tribes'**. It has been observed that, certain Communities captured inordinate representation in the name of tribal reservation. In this case, Kurichiyan comes first particularly in the context of Kannur and Wayanad Districts, Karimpalan, and Kuruman hold second in the context of Kannur and Wayanad respectively. There is a wide disparity between the Kurichiyan and the Paniyan Communities, in the participation of decision-making bodies in the rural Kerala. The eighteen years of democratization efforts has not succeeded any more to include the hapless and voiceless sections among the tribal groups. The widely used nomenclature *'elite capturing'* in the literatures of democratic decentralisation assumes importance in this context. Some sort of *elite capturing* continues in the name of **'Scheduled Tribes'** by a handful section of socio-economically and politically elite tribal groups within them. In the light of the present enquiry, it can be summed up that the new opportunities created by the local democratic institutions had in no way enabled the least powerful sections like the Paniyan to be included in the rural power structure. The present study affirms with the explorations of Shah (1998: 289-93) that in situation of sharp inequalities, decentralisation sometimes heightens the concentration of power, and discourages rather than fosters participation among the underprivileged. The present findings also corroborate with the observations made by Vijayalakshmi (2001). Reservation of seats for tribal Communities has in principle ensured equality in political opportunities. However, despite institutional changes, which were intended to facilitate political equality, the outcome for different tribal

groups has not met expectations. Opportunities of political inclusion alone are not a solution to the earlier exclusion of different sections of tribal population from politics and local governance.

Policy Conclusion: Revisit the Basics of Reservation of Seats for Tribes

As a society of multi- ethnic people and cultures, recognition of multiple cultures and their identities shall have paramount importance; and the process of decentralization should inexorably uphold these values. The study empirically proves that, even though there is a high positive correlation between reservation of seats for Tribes and their inclusion in rural local government, and in turn, to rural power structure, it has been unequal between culturally divergent tribal groups in Kerala. In the present study, other less numerically dominant Tribes like the Kurichiyan surpassed the Paniyan. In this context, to set the democratization process at right, the present study suggests a rethinking on reservation policy itself. While reserving seats for Tribes, a further aspect of positive discrimination should be added with it. To ensure the participation of socio-economically and politically powerless sections in local governments, a certain number of seats should be set apart for this section at least at the Village Panchayat levels, according to their numerical strength. For example, if the Paniyan constitute twenty percent of the total tribal population in the Panchayat, at least twenty percent of the total tribal reserved seats (electoral Wards) shall be sub-reserved for the Paniyan. The same strategy shall be applied to other deprived tribal groups as well. This idea of policy suggestion derives its strength from the provisions of PESA Act, 1996. Section 4 (h) of PESA Act gives authority to State governments for nominating persons belonging to such Scheduled Tribes who have no representation in the Panchayat at the intermediate or in the Panchayat at the District level to an extent of not exceeding one-tenth of total numbers to be elected in that Panchayat. In the backdrop of the dismal rate of political inclusion of Tribes at Village Panchayat councils, the present study strongly suggests that, there should be a strong political will to think along this direction by taking care to the particular situation in the State and to bring about necessary legislation for ensuring better participation of peripheral groups among the Tribes. It is certain that legislation along this line

would definitely reduce the prevailing democratic deficit faced by the least powerful segments among tribal population of Kerala.

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Gandhian View on Good Governance

K.Yadagiri

Today, in the era of capitalist innovation, market laws have developed a tendency to exclude a large number of people and even threatened to dominate our natural environment. We are increasingly linked to the global market, thus the need of the hour is to have a decentralized process of planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme and projects. Public Policy and practice should not have a gap and be seen in isolation with each other.

In today's world there are a number of problems that need to be met with,like,eg. divisive tendencies, extremism, unemployment, regionalism, illiteracy, corruption and nepotism, etc. To combat them there is need for empowerment of people and participative development. Good governance is the foundation of participatory development. Social inclusion through Panchayati Raj Institutions, Local Urban Bodies, labor centric decentralized participatory planning, compulsory education laws, work site facilities, employment generation for poor and above all accountability and control through social audits, civil societies and right to information are unique and unprecedented

efforts in strengthening the pillars of democracy and grass root development ensuring good governance.

Mahatma Gandhi defined Good Governance in his own inimitable simple way. He said, "Do the policies help the poorest and weakest man? If yes, that is Good Governance." Endorsing the same idea, Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Mahatma by his stress on the underprivileged and poverty stricken, forced all of us to think in terms of social justice". In his epoch making 'tryst with destiny' speech, Pandit Nehru set the agenda for the nation as 'the ending of poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality of opportunities'. The Constituent Assembly deliberated and debated the concept of Good Governance at great length and depth.

Governance and Good Governance

The term government and governance appear synonymous. Government refers to formal and institutional processes which operate at the level of nation state to maintain public order and facilitate collective action. It is a formal institution of the state with their monopoly of legitimacy and coercive power. It refers to various forms of political system or the manner in which state exercises its power in utilizing socio- economic resources. Governance signifies new process of governing or changed conditions of ordered rule of new method by which, society is governed.

The Commission on Global Governance defines "governance is the sum of many ways individuals and institutions, public and private manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting and diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action taken. Governance is the creation of structure or an order, which cannot be extremely imposed but is the result of the interaction of multiplicity of governing and each other's influencing actors."The Human Development Report, 2002 has given a new perspective to governance by terming it as democratic governance, which is essential for better human development.This includes the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions. Now days the term 'Good Governance' is very much in vogue.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) takes a broader view of good governance as comprising mechanisms and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their legal obligations, and mediate their difference. The Economic and Social council for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) has identified eight salient features of good governance participatory in nature, consensual in orientation, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, rule of law.

Origin and Development

The idea of good governance owes much to the intellectual resurrection of the state as a positive "player" in economic and political development. The state, of course, had long been at the center of development practice; from mercantilism in 16th century Europe to import substitution in the mid-20th century. In late developing countries, the state was a center of investment decisions and policies to spur growth. Similarly, academic literatures of the 1950s-1970s recognized the important role of states in the development process. Economists argued, that in poor countries, the state needed to provide investments that would stimulate economic development and political scientists found that centralized states were important for nation building and political modernization.

Despite this long history, and also because of it, by the mid-1970s, academic researchers began to raise a series of questions about state-led growth and state dominated political societies. Their concerns mirrored increased awareness of the potential for states to fail in their developmental responsibilities. By the early-1980s, questioning the positive contributions of the state to development had turned into a profound critique of theory and practice and generated a watershed of anti-statist research and commentary in the development literature. With increasing regularity, the virtues of free markets were found to be far superior to the vices of statism and highly centralized states were held to account for quashing local communities and the associational life that is essential to democracy and limited government.

In practice and theory this anti statist perspective was relatively short lived even though skepticism about the state continued to characterize research and practice. In the 1990s, specialists in development economists had became more interested in the role of institutions in the life of market economies. In practice, the fall of the Soviet Union, followed by a very rapid transition to a market economy in Russia—chaotically and with devastating consequences for the vast majority of the population—underscored the role of institutions such as property rights, contract law, and regulatory rules for a properly functioning market.

On the more academic front, Douglass North published his most widely-read work, Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance, in 1990.This work, along with an increasing interest in the "New Institutional Economics," focused new attention on the long term evolution of "rules of the game" and how they shape development trajectories.Simultaneously, a lively literature on the East Asian "tigers" generated two important findings: the state had assumed an extremely important role in the emergence of some of them—underlining the positive role that states could play in development—and their vibrant economies did not rely on similar kinds of state action—suggesting that countries could pursue distinct strategies with regard to the role of the State in their development. Increasingly, researchers claimed that it was not the size of the state that mattered; more important was its quality, and quality was a function of state institutions and their credibility.

Discussions of politics demonstrated the same intertwining of theory and practice. Transitions to democracy in the 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in Latin America and Eastern Europe, encouraged political scientists to pay more attention to the institutional infrastructure characterizing different kinds of regimes. Similarly, efforts to explain lack of development in a number of African countries, along with increasing concern about autocratic and brutal governments, focused research attention on the role of institutions in political development.

Components of Good Governance

A broad conceptual framework for good governance, whether in political or economic decision-making includes eight components. They include,

1. Participation: Participation by both men and women is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation could be either direct or through legitimate intermediate institutions or representatives.

2. Rule of law:Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially. It also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities.

3. Transparency: Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible.

4. Responsiveness: Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe

5. Consensus oriented: Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus in society on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

6. Equity and inclusiveness: A society's well-being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires all groups, but particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being.

7. Effectiveness and efficiency: The processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal.

8. Accountability: Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders.

Need for Good Governance:-

It promotes community confidence: People are more likely to have confidence in their local government if decisions are made in a transparent and accountable way.

Encourages elected members: Elected members and council officers will feel better about their involvement in local government when good governance is practiced.

Leads to better decisions: Decisions that are informed by good information and data, by stakeholder views, and by open and honest debate will generally reflect the broad interests of the community.

Helps local governments: If decision-making is open and able to be followed by observers, it is more likely that local governments will comply with the relevant legal requirements.

Supports ethical decision making: Good governance creates an environment where elected members and council officers ask themselves 'what is the right thing to do?' when making decisions. Making choices and having to account for them in an open and transparent way encourages honest consideration of the choices facing those in the governance process.

India & Good Governance

The idea of Good Governance was very much prevalent even in ancient India. The National Freedom Movement was based upon the principle of nationalism, democracy, secularism, non-alignment, and free mixed economy. Mahatma Gandhi advocated the concept 'Ram Rajya' for India basing upon the principles of good governance which necessarily meant for dreaming India as a welfare state where the necessities of the down-trodden, the welfare of the commoner and their progress through indigenous industries would become the hallmark.After independence, the Indian Constitution has also been framed for securing justice, liberty, equality and empowering weaker sections including women, youth and poor, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes through making special provisions in the Indian Constitution. India's experiences during the past six decades have clearly established that good governance in India aims at expansion of social

and economic opportunities, removal of poverty and efficient delivery of services at the grassroots.

Building upon a long tradition of local government structures in India, the 73rd and

74th Amendments (April 20, 1993) constituted a new chapter in the process of democratic decentralization in the local administrative structure of the country. The Amendments were a culmination of over four decades of discussion and the work of two national committees- the BalwantraiMehta committee in 1957, and the Asoka Mehta committee in 1977. While the 73rdConstitutional Amendment Act (CAA) deals with rural local bodies, the 74th CAA deals with urban local bodies.

Good Governance & Local Government in India

The 73rd CAA envisaged that the local governments function as institutions of self government with clear mandate and responsibility for the delivery of basic services. In order to achieve this, a multi-tier administrative structure (gram panchayat at the Village/cluster of villages' level, Panchayats Samiti at the intermediate level and Zilla Panchayats at the district level) called Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been created. The PRIs functioning at sub-state level have been given the mandate to function as independent institutions for local governance for the delivery of basic services to the people in the country side. The 73rd Amendment has widened the scope of the functions of Panchayats with the assignment of 29 functions which may be transferred by state governments to the PRIs.

The financial resources generated by PRIs fall far short of their requirements. The local bodies are heavily dependent on Union and State Governments for financial inflows. A major proportion of grants both from the Union as well as the State Governments are specific to schemes and PRIs have limited in creation and flexibility and in incurring expenditure. The overall finances of PRIs (such as resource generation, efficiency of collection, investment, and taxation), devolution of funds and the functioning of State Finance Commissions are areas of challenge for the institutional support framework for PRIs.

Gandhi on Good Governance

Mahatma Gandhi advocated the concept of 'Welfare State' based upon the principles of good governance, which meant a state where the necessities of down-trodden and welfare of a commoner through indigenous industries would become a hallmark. The first and foremost reform, in my view, is to address the Trust Deficit. The colonial administrative systems and procedures seek of lack of trust in the officers who implement the schemes. The powers, administrative and financial, are centralized and the decision making processes are labyrinthine and time consuming. Mahatma Gandhi said "I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. The employees are to be trusted first to channalize their energy and creativity to further goals of the organization.

Gandhi is certainly a staunch supporter of democracy. He believed that state is best which governs least and this is his second best ideal. He held the view that there are certain things which cannot be done without political powers, even though there are numerous other things which do not at all depend upon political power. Gandhi's concept of Swaraj. The attempt to win Swaraj is Swaraj itself. It is a developing ideal and is "better than the best". Gandhi calls it "indefinable". Whatever political institutions Gandhi accepted, he did so as a transitional device, to be transcended by better ones. No institutional device is final. They must involve with the evolution of the individuals.

The state should work in the direction of development- individual, community, social and national levels. Gandhi believes that politics can remain pure and free of corruption only if and so far it is based on ethical principles- ethics which are common to all religions. He stands for the spiritualization and secularization of politics.

Good governance demands respect for human rights, rule of law, strengthening of democracy, promoting transparency and capacity in public administration. The responsiveness of the state and its institutions to the needs and aspirations of the people, and inclusive citizenship are imperative to good governance. Democracy depends upon the equality of all human beings, their right to participate in social and political

transformation and the right to development, to live in dignity. Panchayat Raj is a system and process of good governance. Villages have always been the basic units of administration in India since ancient times. The Gram Sabha can become the cornerstone of the whole Panchayat Raj institutional set-up, thereby to the Indian democratic system.

Gandhi's concept of democratic decentralization bears the stamp of his passionate belief in non-violence, truth and individual freedom. He calls it Panchayati Raj or Village Swaraj. He wants to see each village a little republic, self-sufficient in its vital wants, organically and non-hierarchically linked with the larger spatial bodies and enjoying the maximum freedom of deciding the affairs of the locality. Gandhi wanted political power to be distributed among the villages in India. Gandhi preferred the term 'Swaraj' to describe what he called true democracy. This democracy is based upon freedom. Individual freedom in Gandhi's view could be maintained only in autonomous, self-reliant communities that offer opportunities to the people for fullest participation.

The Gandhian ideas of Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj system can become vehicles for ushering in the much needed social and political change by including all the stakeholders in the process of decision-making and public policy formulation. As Gandhi said, "Panchayat Raj represents true democracy realized. We would regard the humblest and the lowest Indian as being equally the ruler of India with the tallest in the land

India's Decentralised Development History

Mahatma Gandhi advocated Panchayat Raj, a decentralized form of Government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system. The term for such a vision was Gram Swaraj. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee appointed by the Government of India in January 1957 to examine the working of the Community Development Programme (1952) and the National Extension Service (1953) and to suggest measures for their better working. The recommendations of the Committee were approved by NDC in January 1958 and this set the stage for the launching of Panchayat Raj Institutions throughout the country. The Committee

recommended the establishment of the scheme of 'democratic decentralization' which finally came to be known as Panchayat Raj. (i) Establishment of a 3-tier Panchayat Raj system. This system was adopted by state governments during the 1950s and 60s, as laws were passed to establish panchayats in various states. It also found backing in the Indian Constitution, with the 73rd amendment in 1992 to accommodate the idea. The Amendment Act of 1992 contains provision for devolution of powers and responsibilities to the panchayats both for the preparation of economic development plans and social justice, as well as for implementation in relation to 29 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the constitution.

Participatory Development and Good Governance

Participatory development and good governance are related in the following way. Participatory development, with its central focus on raising the quality of participation by local societies and thus better achieving self-reliant and sustainable development and social justice, is one important form of people-oriented development. Good governance is the foundation of participatory development in as much as it provides the government functions needed to promote participation and create the environment in which participatory processes take place.

Yet good governance as a function of government does not refer solely to support for participatory development: as participatory processes evolve, good governance develops into such functioning that supports wider and more mature people's participation. In this sense, participatory development promotes good governance in its turn. The projection of the concept of good governance into the national system - an orientation of a state - then progressively boosts people's trust in their government, inasmuch as, through good governance, government services improve in effectiveness and efficiency. Thus in the long run, good governance evolves into stronger aspirations for further democratization. The strength of a state's desire for democracy also influences the process of formation of political and administrative structures and government's capability to translate this national stance into action. In turn, this, too, influences the evolution

of participatory development. Participatory development and good governance are consequently interrelated, as are the two component elements of good governance, the ideal orientation of the state and the ideal functioning of government.

Conclusion

Here, we would like to reiterate that to deliver better governance, the structures and processes need to be overhauled to infuse element of trust and to precisely define accountability system. Checks should be citizen centered and performance oriented. In order to deepen democracy and to create countervailing institutions that can strengthen civil society and counter bureaucratic influence as well, institutional pluralism needs to be promoted. We need to search for institutional alternatives and accept the idea that arrays of diverse institutional arrangements are possible to take advantage of available opportunities. Cooperatives, joint committees between users and government, user associations are examples that provide opportunities for improved collective decision making. We must build upon the common understanding and the shared experience of people in their particular circumstances. These may require changes in legal and contractual arrangements; explicit codification of rights as well as attendant obligations and these tasks should be high on the agenda of improving governance.

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