ABSTRACT

Panchayati Raj institution as integral, both to democratic self-governance and democratic decentralisation in grass root level in India. Pandit Nehru was of the view that India will progress only, when the people living in village become politically conscious. So, it was decided to introduce democratic decentralisation at grass root level which is known as Panchayati Raj. 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 in the Constitution of India came into force to provide constitutional status to the PRI’s. To endow powers, authority and responsibilities upon Panchayat, implies the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice and implementation of scheme for economic development and social justice. For the self governance of the tribal communities at the grass root level, there is provision for enactment of separate laws for the tribal areas under the constitution which known as 5th and 6th schedule.

Keywords: Tribal Development, Panchayati Raj

1. INTRODUCTION

The tribal people are the original inhabitants of the country known as the “sons of the soil”. India has the second largest tribal population in the world next to Africa. Different terms are used viz. Advises or indigenous peoples to refer to the tribal’s. Scheduled tribe is an administrative term used for the purpose of “administering” certain specific constitutional privileges, protection and benefits for tribal people, historically considered disadvantaged and backwards. The essential characteristics, first laid down by the Lokur Committee, for a community to be identified as Scheduled Tribe, are a) primitive traits b) distinctive culture c) shyness of contact with the community at large d) geographical isolation e) backwardness- social and economic. Tribal communities live in about 15% of the country’s areas, in various ecological and geo-climatic conditions ranging from plains, forest, hills and inaccessible areas. Tribal groups are at different stages of social, economic and educational development. Certain groups that were identified for the first time in 1975-76 and thereafter in 1993-94, were regarded as the marginalised among the STs. These were included in a new category called Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) for the purpose of administering special schemes to them. There are 75 Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), who are spread over 17 states and one UT, and characterised by a) a pre-agriculture level of technology b) a stagnant or declining population c) extremely low literacy and d) a subsistence level of economy.

1.1 Profile of scheduled tribes

The tribal population of the country as per the 2011 census, is 10.42 crore constituting 8.6 percent of the total population. However, the proportion of STs has been increasing over census periods partly because more tribes are being included in the ST category and partly because of higher fertility rates in this category. The population of tribes had grown at the growth rate of 23.7% during the period 2001-2011.
More than half the STs inhabit the central or the mid-Indian region and they form the overwhelming majority of the population in some of the North-eastern States. The proportion of STs to the total population in states/UTs was highest in Lakshadweep (94.8%), Mizoram (94.4%), followed by Nagaland (86.5%), Meghalaya (86.1%) and Arunachal Pradesh (68.8%). Among major states, Chhattisgarh (30.6%) had the highest percentage followed by Jharkhand (26.2%) and Orissa (22.8%). Of the 28 states and 7 UTs, STs are notified in all the states except Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, Delhi and Pondicherry though they are not evenly distributed among the remaining states. There are over 533 (with many overlapping communities in more than one state) tribes as notified under Article 342 of the Constitution of India, of which 62 are located in the state of Orissa.

The Planning Commission of India observed in its Eleventh Five Year Plan 2007-2012 that the Scheduled Tribes are mainly landless poor forest dwellers and shifting cultivators, small farmers and pastoral and nomadic herders. 81.56% of the total ST workers, both rural and urban taken together, are engaged in the primary sector, of whom 44.71% are cultivators as compared to 31.65% of the general population, and 36.85% are agricultural labourers as compared to 26.55% of the general population. This indicates that STs are essentially dependent on agriculture. The incidence of poverty amongst STs continues to be very high at 47.30% in rural areas and 33.30% in urban areas, compared to 28.3% and 25.70% respectively in respect to the total population in 2004-2005. In Orissa almost 75% of ST household fell below poverty line. A large number of STs who are living below the poverty line are landless, with no productive assets and no access to sustainable employment and minimum wages. The women belonging to these groups suffer even more because of the added disadvantages of being denied equal and minimum wages.

Literacy rates among the Scheduled Tribes has increased from 29.62% to 47.10% during the periods from 1991-2001. The literacy rate among ST male increased from 40.65% to 59.20% and the ST female literacy increased from 18.20% to 34.80% during the period from 1991-2001. The ST female literacy is lower by approximately 20% as compared to the overall female literacy of the general population.

2. PANCHAYATI RAJ

Panchayats have been the backbone of the Indian villages since the beginning of recorded history. Mahatma Gandhi had envisaged the vision of self-sustained and self-sufficient village republics, capable of managing their own affairs. The Panchayat Raj as postulated by Mahatma Gandhi, was given a place in article 40 of the Indian Constitution under the heading “Directive Principles of State Policy”. This was really an integral part of the concept of “Poorna Swaraj” and “Gram Swaraj” as being two integrally inter-related concepts. His concept of Poorna Swaraj meant several levels of autonomous development of local community. It also meant that there has to be growth and development of the individual of the local community in every walk of life. Mahatma Gandhi said:

“The government of the village will be conducted by a Panchayat of five persons annually elected by the adult villagers, males and females, possessing the minimum prescribed qualifications. It will have all the authority and jurisdictions in the accepted sense. This Panchayat will be legislative, judiciary, and executive combined to operate for its year of office.”
As an effect of the implementation of recommendation of Balvantray Mehta study team, the scheme of democratic decentralisation, popularly known as the Panchayati Raj was inaugurated at Nagur in Rajasthan by the Prime Minister of India Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru on October 2, 1959. He therefore, thought of Panchayati Raj Institution as integral, both to democratic self-governance and to democratic development at the grassroots and this is how it was conceived. Pandit Nehru was of the view that India will progress only, when the people living in village become politically conscious. “The progress of our country is bound up with progress of our villages. If our villages make progress, India will become a strong nation and nobody will be able to stop its onward march. If you flinch from your determination and get involved in mutual quarrels and petty factions, you will not be able to succeed in your mission”

At the invitation of the first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, most of the states adopted the Panchayati Raj Act in their respective states. While Balvantray Mehta pattern was generally followed in most of the states, there were some local variations also. The most significant was the primacy given to the district in Maharashtra and Gujarat by having strong Zilla Parishads with considerable administrative powers. Whatever be the local variant, there was general acceptance of the need to decentralised political and administrative power structure.

For the self-governance of the tribal communities at the grass-root level, there is provision for enactment of separate laws for the tribal areas under the Constitution which known as 5th and 6th schedule. The basic spirit of these special provisions is that even in relation to the formal system, which may be adopted for the tribal areas, the tradition of the tribal society should be accepted as basic so that the tribal people have the opportunity of moving ahead entirely in accordance with their own understanding about the situation and no outside system is forced on tribal society which may be beyond the comprehension of the tribal population. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had formulated some basic principles for the tribal development known as Panchasheel. According to the Panchasheel:

1. The tribal people should move ahead in accordance with their spirit and understanding.
2. Their rights over land and forests should be honoured
3. Working teams should be trained from among the tribal people themselves
4. The administration in these areas should not become heavy and there should be no surfeit of programme
5. The results of development in these areas should not be assessed in terms of statistics or estimates of expenditure but they should be in terms of the development of the quality of human character.

2.1 Constitutional status to Panchayat

73rd Amendment Act, 1992 in the Constitution came into force to provide constitutional status to the PRIs. The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution hence had been welcomed as focussing the attention of the nation on the political structures and processes of rural India. The Act provides the basis for the deepening and strengthening of democracy at the grass roots level by returning power from centralised state structures to local unit of decision making. Powers were vested in elected representatives enabling them to determine the needs and priorities, to initiate socio-economic and political development and to build a society based on democratic principles. This was the starting point for the revolution in the field of decentralisation and recognition of the principle of poverty
reduction through rural development programmes. Following are the main features of the constitution:

1. Constitutional status to the Panchayats by making the three-tier system
2. Seats are reserved for SCs and STs and women
3. Constitution of District Planning Committees (DPCs) through election from and amongst the elected member of the district Panchayat and municipalities
4. Devolution of power and responsibilities by the state in preparation and implementation of schemes relating to the subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the act.
5. State legislature authorised the Panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate suitable local taxes. The government can make grants-in-aid to the Panchayats from the consolidated fund of concerned state.
6. Review of the financial position of the Panchayats will be undertaken by a finance commission, which shall be constituted every five years.
7. State election commission shall be constituted to ensure free and fair election to the Panchayats.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act provides a three tier structure to these institutions across the country viz. Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samitee at intermediate level, Zilla Parishad at the district level. Presently in India rural local government comprise 2,32,278 Panchayat at village level, 6,022 Panchayat at intermediate level and 535 Panchayat at district level manned by about 29.2 lakh elected representatives.

The Panchayats are mainly entrusted with the implementation of different centrally sponsored schemes. Thus, decentralization of the decision making processes means that Panchayats are in a better position to identify the local preference and priorities for infrastructure services. Panchayati Raj institution could be a promising institutional link to combat poverty in terms of efficient designing and effective targeting. The need for revitalizing Panchayati Raj institutions has, therefore, been recognized as an instrument for participated planning and implementation of various development programme at grass-root level. The government is constantly endeavouring to empower the Panchayati Raj institutions in terms of functions, powers and finance.

2.2 Scheduled Areas

Two schedules- Fifth and Sixth Schedules – to the Constitution of India provide special arrangements for areas inhabited by STs. A large number of areas predominantly inhabited by Adivasis had been declared to the excluded/ partially excluded areas during the British period. These areas came under the purview of the Scheduled District Act of 1874 and the Government of India order 1936. Following Independence, these areas were brought under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules, respectively. They are now referred to as Scheduled Areas. Subsequently, some other predominantly Adivasi areas were declared to be Scheduled Areas by the President.

2.3 The Fifth Schedule

Under the provisions of this Schedule to the Constitution, special powers and responsibilities are conferred upon the Governors of the States. The governor is the constitutional head of state in a State Government and is appointed by the Central Government. Under Article 163 of the Constitution, the Governor is bound to exercise his/her powers with the “aid and advice” of the
Council of Ministers, i.e., the Cabinet of the elected State Government. In practice he/she is bound by Cabinet decisions and the policy of the elected government. There has been considerable debate as well as litigation on whether or not the powers conferred upon the Governor by the Fifth and Sixth Schedules can be exercised without explicit sanction from the State Government. The Fifth Schedule defines “Scheduled Areas” to be such areas as the President, by order, may declare to be Scheduled Areas after consultation with the Governor of that state and in consultation with the State Government. The President can alter, increase, decrease, incorporate new areas, or revised any orders relating to “Scheduled Areas”.

There are certain distinct provisions in the Scheduled Areas to protect and benefit tribals:

a. The Governor of a state having Scheduled Areas is empowered to make regulations in respect of the following
   i. Prohibit or restrict transfer of land from tribal’s
   ii. Regulate the business of money lending to the members of STs
   iii. In making any such regulation, the Governor may repeal or amend any Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State, which is applicable to the area in question

b. The Governor may by public notification direct that any particular Act of Parliament or of the Legislature of the State shall not apply to Scheduled Areas or any part thereof in the State or shall apply to such area subject to such exceptions and modifications as he may specify.

c. The Governor of the State having Scheduled Areas, shall annually, or whenever so required by the President of India, make a report to the President regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas in the state. The Schedule also provides that the Union may give direction to the State Government as to the administration of the said area.

d. Tribal Advisory Councils (TAC) is to be established in states having Scheduled Areas. A TAC may also be established in any state not having Scheduled Areas but having STs, on the direction of the President of India. The TAC should consist of not more than twenty members of whom three-fourth should from the representatives of STs in the Legislative Assembly of the states. The role of TAC is to advise the State Government on matters pertaining to the welfare and advancement of the STs in the state.

e. The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act 1996 under which the provisions pertaining to Panchayats (elected village councils), extended to Scheduled Areas also contains special provisions for benefit of STs.

The criteria for declaring any area as a “Scheduled Areas” under the Fifth Schedule are:

- Preponderance of tribal population
- Compactness and reasonable size of the area
- A viable administrative entity such as a district, block or taluk
- Economic backwardness of the area as compared to the neighbouring areas.
2.4 Sixth Schedule  

The Sixth Schedule to the Constitution applies to the administration of certain “tribal areas” in the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. These areas are governed by Autonomous Districts and Autonomous Regions and also have District Councils, Autonomous Councils and Regional Councils. These Councils have wide ranging legislative, judicial and executive powers. They are empowered to make rules, with the approval of the Governor, with regards to matters like primary schools, dispensaries, markets, cattle ponds, ferries, fisheries, roads, road transport and water ways etc. The Autonomous Councils of the North Cachar Hills and Karbi Anglong in Assam have been granted additional powers to make laws with respect to the order matters like secondary education, agriculture, social security and social insurance, public health and sanitation, minor irrigation etc. The councils (except in Bodoland and Tripura) have also been conferred powers under the Civil Procedure Code and Criminal Procedure Code to try certain suits and offences, the powers of a revenue authority to collect revenue and taxes in their area, as well as other powers to regulate and manage the natural resources. However, the Sixth Schedule specifically excludes certain issues from the jurisdiction of the District Councils, such as reserved forests (a particular kind of government forest) and acquisition of land by the State Government. The Supreme Court has also held that these Councils do not have “plenary” legislative powers, i.e. their powers are strictly limited to the subjects specified in the Sixth Schedule, and do not, for instance, include powers over transfer of lands or levying of royalty on non-timber forest products.

2.5 The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996  

In 1996 the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) was enacted by the Parliament to extend these provisions to the Scheduled V Areas. The States with Scheduled Areas were required to enact state legislation within a year of the passage of PESA in the Parliament. Eight of the nine states having Scheduled Areas, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan have amended their existing Panchayat Acts to incorporate to PESA provisions. The newly constituted State of Jharkhand, however enacted a new Panchayat Act in 2001.

Features of the Act as follows:

(1) A state legislation on the Panchayats that may be made shall be in consonance with the customary law, social and religious practices and traditional management practices of community resources  

(2) A village shall ordinarily consist of a habitation or a group of habitations or a hamlet or group of hamlets comprising a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs  

(3) Every village shall have a Gram Sabha consisting of persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls for the Panchayat at the village level  

(4) Every Gram Sabha shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution  

(5) Every Gram Sabha shall i) Approve the plans, programmes and projects for social and economic development before such plans, programmes and projects are taken up for implementation by the Panchayat at the village level, ii) Be responsible for the identification of selection of persons as beneficiaries under the poverty alleviation and other programmes
(6) Every Panchayat at the village level shall be required to obtain from the Gram Sabha a certification of utilization of funds by the Panchayat for the plans, programme and projects.

(7) The reservation of seats in the Scheduled Areas at every Panchayat shall be in proportion to the population of the communities in the Panchayat

Provided that the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes shall not be less than one-half of the total number of seats provided further that all seats of Chairpersons of Panchayats at all levels should be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes

a) The State Government may nominate persons belonging to such Scheduled Tribes as have no representation in the Panchayat at the intermediate level or the Panchayat at the district level. Provided that such nomination shall not exceed one-tenth of the total members to be elected in the Panchayat

b) The Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for the development projects and before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas, the actual planning and implementation of the projects in the Scheduled Areas shall be coordinated at the State level.

c) Planning and management of minor water bodies in the Scheduled Areas shall be entrusted to Panchayats at the appropriate level

d) The recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting license or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas

e) The prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory for grant of concession for exploitation of major minerals by auction

f) While endowing Panchayats in the Scheduled Areas with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government, a State Legislature shall ensure that the Panchayats at the appropriate level and the Gram Sabha are endowed specifically with-

- The power to enforce prohibition or to regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant
- The ownership of minor forest products
- The power to prevent alienation of land in the Scheduled Areas and to take appropriate action to restore any unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled Tribe.
- The power to manage the village markets
- The power to exercise control over money lending to the Scheduled Tribes
- The power to exercise controls over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors
- The power to control over local plans and resources for such plans including tribals sub-plans

g) The State legislations that may endow Panchayats with powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government shall contain safeguards to ensure that Panchayats at the higher level do not assume the powers and authority of any Panchayat at the lower level or of the Gram Sabha

h) The State Legislature shall endeavour to follow the pattern of the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution while designing the administrative arrangements in the Panchayats at district levels in the Scheduled Areas.
3. PANCHAYATI RAJ AND RURAL AND TRIBAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Rural and tribal development is concerned with economic growth and social justice, improvement in the living standard of the rural and tribal people by providing adequate and quality social services and minimum basic needs become essential. It is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional concept, and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities, village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities and above all, human resources.

Decentralisation is linked to rural and tribal development in many ways. Thus, decentralisation of the decision-making process means that Panchayats are in better position to identify local preferences and priorities for infrastructure services. Panchayati Raj institutions could be a promising institutional link to combat poverty in terms of efficient designing and effective targeting. With increasing importance of Panchayats, there is need to utilise their services for rural and tribal development. The Panchayats are mainly entrusted with the implementation of different centrally sponsored developmental programmes such as MGNREGS, RGGVY, PMGSY, IAY, TSE, NRHM, CRSP, ARWSP, SSA, Mid Day Meal etc administered by the various Ministries of Government of India.

3.1 Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY): On the recommendations of the committee, Government of India has launched a nationwide programme called PMGSY, on 25th December 2000. The total requirement of the funds was estimated at Rs 60,000 crore. However, according to latest figures made available by the state government under a survey to identify Core network as part of the PMGSY programme, about 1.72 lakh unconnected habitations need to be taken up under the PMGSY. Based on the core network survey conducted after launching the programme and the experience of the first three years with the average cost of construction of PMGSY roads, the cost of the programme has been revised to Rs. 1,32,000 crore.

3.2 Bharat Nirman: The Finance Minister, in his Budget Speech on 28th February, 2005, identified Rural Roads as one of the six components of Bharat Nirman and set a goal to provide connectivity to all villages with a population of 1000 (500 in the case of hilly and tribal areas) with an altogether roads by the year 2009. A total of 66,802 habitations are proposed to be provided new connectivity under Bharat Nirman. This would involve construction of 1, 46,185 kms of rural roads. In addition to new connectivity, Bharat Nirman envisages up gradation/renewal of 1, 94,130 kms of existing rural roads. This comprises 60 percent up gradation and 40 percent renewal of surface cost. The requirement of funds for Bhart Nirman is estimated Rs. 48,000 crore.

3.3 Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY): The Government of India is implementing IAY since the year 1985-86 to provide financial assistance for construction/up gradation of dwelling units to the below poverty line (BPL) rural households belonging to the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and freed bonded labours categories. Under the scheme, financial resources are shared between the centre and the states on 75:25 bases. Since, reduction of shelterlessness is the primary objectives, 75 percent weightage is given to housing shortage and 25 percent to the poverty ratios prescribed by Planning Commission for state level allocation. For district level allocation, 75 percent weightage is given again to housing shortage and 25 percent to SC/ST population of concerned districts.

On the basis of allocations made and target fixed, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA/Zilla Parisad decide Panchayat wise number of houses to be constructed under IAY and intimate
the same to the concerned Gram Panchayat. Thereafter, the Gram Sabha selects the beneficiaries, restricting its number to the target allotted, from the list of eligible households from the permanent IAY waitlist. No further approval of the higher authority is required. The sanitary latrine and smokeless chullah and proper drainage are required for each IAY house.

3.4 Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP): A national water supply programme was introduced in the social sector in 1954. The government of India provided assistance to the states establishing special investigation division in the Fourth Five Year Plan to carry out identification of drinking water problem of villages. Taking into account the magnitude of the problem, and in order to accelerate the pace of coverage of problem villages, the Central Government has introduced the ARWSP i 19-72-73 to assist the state and Union Territories with 100 percent grant-in-aid to implement drinking water supply scheme in such villages. The entire programme called the National Drinking Water Mission (NDWM) was introduced as one of the five Mission in the social sector in 1986. NDWM was renamed as Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission in 1991 and Department of Drinking Water Supply was created in year 1999.

3.5 Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC): The Total Sanitation Campaign follows a community-led and people-centred approach. The programme gives emphasis on Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) for demand generation for sanitation facilities. It also gives emphasis on school sanitation and hygiene education for changing the behaviour of the people from a young age and seeks to attain Millennium Developmental Goal by 2010 and Sanitation for all by 2012. The components of TSC include start up activities, IEC, individual household latrine, community sanitary complex, school sanitation and hygienic education, Anganwadi toilets and alternate delivery mechanism, in the form of rural sanitary marts and production centres. The component of solid/ liquid waste disposal in villages was included in TSC projects in 2006, providing 10 percent of each district project cost.

3.6 Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act(MGNREGA): NREGS, which was launched on February 2, 2006, in 200 most backward Districts in the first phase, has been expanded to 330 Districts in the second phase and remaining 266 Districts have been notified on September 28,2008 where the scheme will come in to effect from April 1, 2008. It is the flagship programme of the Government that directly touches lives of the poor and promotes inclusive growth. The scheme aims at enhancing livelihood security of households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in a financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual works.

3.7 Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY): The SGSY was launched in April 1999 restructuring in to National Rural Livelihood Mission. It is the only the self employment programme currently being implemented for the rural poor. The objectives of the SGSY are to bring the assisted swarozgaris above the poverty line by providing them income generating assets through bank credit and Government subsidy. A sum of Rs3915crores has been allocated for NRLM.

3.8 Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY): The SGRY was launched on September, 2001. The objectives of the programme is to provide additional wage employment in the rural areas as also food security, alongside creation of durable community, social and economic infrastructure in the rural areas.
3.9 National Rural Health Mission (NRHM): The NRHM was launched on April 12, 2005, to provide accessible, affordable and accountable quality health services to the poorest households in the remotest regions. Allocation increased to Rs. 9.947 crore in 2007-08 from Rs. 8.207 crore in the previous year.

3.10 Mid Day Meal Scheme: This scheme, which was launched in August 1995, is intended to give boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance while contributing to the nutrition of students in primary classes, the allocation has been enhanced to Rs. 7,324 crore in 2007 from Rs. 5,348 crore in 2006-2007.

3.11 Sarva Shikha Abhiyan (SSA): The SSA is being implemented in partnership with states to address the needs of children in age group of 6-14 years. The achievement under SSA up to September, 2009 include construction of 2,40,888 school buildings, construction of 110,20,831 additional classrooms, 1,84,652 drinking water facilities, construction of 2,86,862 toilets, supply of free textbook to 9.05 crore children and appointment of 10,11 lakh teachers besides opening of 2,88,155 new schools. About 21.79 lakh teachers received in service training each year. Central allocation for SSA in 2007-2008 was Rs. 10,671 crores. With significant success in enrolling children in schools, the SSA’s thrust areas are on reduction of dropouts and improving quality of students learning.

4. CONCLUSION

The founding fathers of the Indian Constitution were aware of the problems of the Tribals. Therefore, they made special provisions for their protection and development. The main safeguards include promotion of educational and economic interest and their protection from social injustices and all forms of exploitation. Special economic development of the Scheduled Tribes and protection against their exploitation has been an important agenda of the Government. To ensure that the constitutional mandates listed above are translated into various policies and programmes and put into effective action, high priority for the welfare and development of Scheduled Tribes right from the beginning of the First Five Year Plans (1952-57) is being accorded. Recognising the special problems the principles of Panchsheel have been adopted in the welfare and development of these communities so as to ensure an understanding of their culture and traditions and an appreciation of the social, psychological and economic problems with which they are faced.

REFERENCES