

➤ **Panchayat Strengthening Initiative- Training of Mukhiyas and Ward Representatives on 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> Sep, 2023:**

***DAY I***

A three-day training cum orientation was organized for Mukhiyas, Up- Mukhiyas and Ward Members from 15 Panchayats of Jharkhand. The training focused on how the effectiveness and functioning at Panchayat level can be strengthened. The session started with the introduction by all participants. Following this ground rules were set so that the training goes uninterrupted. Expectations were set out by the participants like how to make the Panchayats functional, Panchayat to be brought on the developmental track, solving people's problems at the Panchayat level, Process of getting funds and its utilization at the Panchayat level, how to make Panchayats ideal in operation and infra structure wise. Others areas where the participants tried to focus were on knowledge about various Governmental schemes related to education, health or infrastructure, hygiene, irrigation etc. and how its convergence is possible at Panchayat level to make it an ideal one. How Government departments can be aligned at Panchayat level and make effective GPC. Following this all participants read out the Preamble to the Indian Constitution. The trainers, Mr. Sukanta Sarkar and Mr. Saurav Dutta



from PRADAN then informed all that in these three days they would also try to explain in detail the Panchayati Raj Act so that its implementation is meaningful.

The next session involved some creativity and participants were provided with chart papers and set out in groups to think, discuss and portray the picture of an ideal Panchayat as perceived by them. All participants drew the same and made a presentation on it.

Group 1- All basic facilities like toilets, Panchayat Bhawan, supply of drinking water etc. were portrayed in the picture.

Group 2- A systems change approach was tried to be depicted with more plantations and greenery all around so that all are able to lead a healthy life.

Group 3- The group focused on creation of adequate infrastructure in their ideal Panchayat.

Group 4- Demanded the presence of security guard in the Panchayat Bhawan premises along with the presence of school and hospital side by side so that the Panchayat serves as the central point for receiving all facilities. Pukka house for all was also dreamt in this ideal Panchayat. Ponds were also thought off so that they would not only meet the agricultural requirements but also people would go fishing and earn more as additional income.

Group 5- The group visualised school with all children coming to it in neat and tidy uniforms. It was also thought that schools would open timely. The other thing portrayed was the presence of a hospital with all minimum basic facilities so that exigencies are met. The hospital to have basic medicines and vaccination facilities. The group also tried to bring to focus that the bad practices that are in presence like the Dian Pratha, considering daughters as burden etc. must be washed out of people's minds and gender discrimination to be checked.

Group 6 and 7- These two groups focused again on the uninterrupted supply of clean water to houses along with provision of hospital with good roads connecting the entire Panchayat so that no one faces difficulty in reaching to the hospitals. Construction of check dams to be given a priority so that water is conserved and later used for irrigation. Also they thought that schools to have boundaries for the safety of one and all. Another thing pointed out by this group was that the youth are getting entrapped in drugs and other types of addiction. This needs to be checked on a serious note.

In the next session Mr. Sukanta Sarkar discussed on the obstacles that deter the effective functioning of the Panchayats. Post lunch they groups reflected on these obstacles and presented their perspective. Some of the major obstacles as articulated by them included:

- Irregularity/ No proper meetings of Gram Sabha and hence no issues are discussed.
- Lack of coordination between members elected at Panchayat level.

- Money constraint.
- Lack of coordination between Panchayats and Govt. line departments.
- No timely payment under schemes like MGNREGA and hence people are reluctant to work.
- Commission demanded at Block level.
- Vested interest of intermediaries.
- Inadequate allocation or improper channelization of funds allotted under XVth FC.
- Plans are inadequately executed at grass root levels.
- Water scarcity at Panchayat level.
- Absence/ inadequate documents to help the needy to avail beneficial schemes.
- Lack of doctors and medicines.
- Lack of irrigation facilities.
- Lack of infrastructure.

The resource persons, Mr. Sukanta and Mr. Saurav then deliberated how Panchayats constitute a form of Local Governance and its apt functioning becomes a necessity. A ppt was presented in this context highlighting the history of Panchayati Raj. The ppt presented vital information as to how the old Panchayats were demolished in the British Era and the entire system was centralized and hence people became weak. The ppt also highlighted the views of Gandhi ji and Ambedkar and how Gandhi ji focused on the fact that power should be vested in the villages. He favored full power to villagers and wanted to revive Panchayats with the same. Ambedkar, on the other hand opposed this idea because he believed that people in the villages are ignorant, narrow minded and communalism prevailed there. Owing to these ideological differences, it was decided to put Panchayati Raj under The Directive Principles of State Policy- Article 40, and not as Fundamental rights. Panchayati Raj thus comes under the jurisdiction of State Govt. The 29 subjects on which the Panchayats are supposed to work was also shown in the ppt. The house was informed how the devolution of funds under the XV FC are now taking place and is going directly to the Panchayats. LSDGs are being adopted and local governance (Panchayats) are receiving due recognition. Stress was put on the fact that in present times there is stress on PRI-CBO Collaboration and even the workshops and

seminars today are involving PRI Representatives. These are indeed a welcoming step towards the new era of Panchayati Raj.

It was informed to the house that in Jharkhand in the present times, the Govt. is directly transferring Rs. 15,000 to Panchayats. To ease the processes at Panchayat level, Panchayat Sachiv are being recruited. Communication service centers are being established and a MoU has also been signed with KILA in this regard. New initiatives like Panchayat Gyan Kendra (library) are being set up too facilitate studies at grass root level. Also quality and timely trainings are now being organized for PRI members along with exposure for PRI members, SHG and Federation representatives. Summing up the session and the day it was strongly said that **Panchayats are not only a development agency but also a political institution.**

## **DAY II**

The day began with a brief recap session. Mr. Saurav Dutta then initiated the session by informing the participants as to how the money received at the Panchayat level can be used for the development of their respective Panchayats. The money could be used for either for painting of Panchayat Bhawan, wall writing, toilet construction and upkeep, provision of one cleaner's fee, broom etc. Even registers, fan, bulbs, information boards can be purchased with the money allocated at Panchayats.

The participants also praised the consolidated efforts that PRADAN is putting continuously to help them upgrade their Panchayats. It was informed that Mukhiyas are now are in a better position to plan out their developmental agenda and it came as a good news that Pragya Kendra will now be operational as the hiring and recruitment is almost done for these Kendras.

Next session involved discussion around the payment of PRI representatives. This payment is in the hands of the State Govt. Previously; it was Rs. 1,000 but now increased to Rs. 2,500 (letter in this context issued in May, 2023). Participants were motivated and informed about the modus operandi to receive the same and claim their entitlements willfully. They were asked to file applications for the same.

In the next session a game was played to show the unity and strength of a team and how difficult tasks can be accomplished in a team. The game also stressed on the activeness of the GPCC, GPEC and Standing Committee. The crux of the game was to take up

challenges at the Panchayat and work harmoniously and in a team with accuracy and coordination. In the next session, Mr. Dheeraj from PRADAN talked on the functionalities of the various committees operational at the Panchayat. The Permanent Committees, Executive and Coordination Committees and their functions were discussed. He also shed light on the structure of Gram Panchayat. Participants shared their experiences of Coordination Committee Meetings and how they conducted it. The ppt also focused on aspects and importance of Coordination Committee. After this session, participants played a game where they were asked to describe a situation where they acted as a hero and what qualities led to success in that situation. In due course of deliberation leadership varieties were explained and how a leader could be Revolutionary, Democratic, like a slave etc. were shown and explained to the participants. Most of the participants kept their leaders in the democratic category. The reason was that these leaders work in coordination with others and also listen to others. The characteristics of a good leader included:

- ✓ True in character and nature
- ✓ Works for upliftment of weaker sections/ needy
- ✓ Successful
- ✓ Organized
- ✓ Cooperative
- ✓ Conscious
- ✓ Hard working
- ✓ Leader leading by example
- ✓ Listens to all
- ✓ Educated
- ✓ Confident
- ✓ Works for women
- ✓ Helps others
- ✓ Helpful and cooperative
- ✓ Local to context
- ✓ Courageous
- ✓ Motivational
- ✓ Charismatic
- ✓ Has personal reflections



Mr. Sukanta Sarkar focused on the fact that our leadership should be such that weak should not be oppressed in the long run. A movie was then shown on the leadership skills. People reflected that leadership and mutual cooperation can help accomplish difficult tasks. We need to move ahead on central values and leaders who lead by values will have no self-interest and move ahead with progressive thoughts.

In the next session, Mr. Saurav Dutta try to motivate participants through the medium of movies as to how funds/ OSR can be generate at the Panchayat level. The OSR incurred can change the facet of villages. Through these taxes villagers are now able to access various facilities in their respective villages. In the next exercise sub-groups were formed to discuss on the various sources of OSR. Focus was to levy service tax by Panchayats on local people to help them avail basic services. It was stressed that people's participation is a must and mandatory step for adequate generation of OSR. This will generate trust within the community. For generating OSR, the basic services must be targeted that are required for the people. The participants presented their views as to how they can generate funds (OSR). Some of the points included:

Chatarpur (Hulsum) and (Hutugdag)

- Plan and prioritize developmental agenda.
- Take loan from bank and carry out development activities.
- Employ 10-15 didi who will work in this direction.

Patamda (Bidra) and Itki (Chinaro Puniya)

- Dig wells and ponds for irrigation.
- Make provision of fresh and clean drinking water for all and levy charges on it.
- Take tax from vendors who sell in haat or local markets.

Tundi (Maniadih) and Patamda (Patamda)

- Set up fodder machine for production of animal fodder.
- Employ women self-help groups to produce incense sticks and other such items.
- Provision of filtered water for all.
- Digging ponds and rearing fish in the same.
- Goat rearing.

- Take tax from vendors who sell in haat or local markets.

#### Bero (Ghagra) and Lapung (Danekera)

- Conduct meetings and motivate people on the benefits of OSR in the Panchayat.
- Take tax from vendors who sell in haat or local markets.
- Produce Gobar Gas at Panchayat level and sell the same.
- Provision of irrigation to farmers and setting up of solar panel for lighting.

#### Tundi (Fathepur) and (Machiyara)

- Creation of check dams, irrigation facilities for farmers.
- Setting up of grinding mills of flour to benefit common people.
- Take tax from vendors who sell in haat or local markets.
- Levy tax on sand.
- Creation of infrastructure like community halls and rent them for marriage and other occasions.

#### Mandar (Kanjia) and Tundi (Jeetpur)

- Provision of clean and fresh water for all.
- Irrigation facility to farmers.
- Creation of check dams.
- Provision of electricity.
- Fish rearing by digging out ponds.

#### Chano (Rolle)

- Making optimum utilization of ponds present in the village.
- Provide shed in local markets.
- Provision of electricity through setting up solar plant.
- Tax on crushed stone and quarrying.

The next session was on GPDP GPDP is a process of planning for developmental aspects of Panchayat. Budget for the Panchayat is also planned here. The process involves identifying the needs of the Panchayat and for achieving this adequate work plan is made. It is initiated from 2<sup>nd</sup> October every year with organization of special Gram Sabha and the processes involved are:

1. Problem identification
2. Mitigation process to solve the problem
3. Resources to solve the problem.

Meeting is held in this special Gram Sabha and problems are discussed and plan is made accordingly/ planning process is started. Also oath is taken covering the 9 LSDGs. These LSDGs are:

- No poverty and zero hunger with employment opportunities
- Healthy village
- Clean and green village
- Water sufficient village
- Child friendly village
- Socially secured village
- Good governance
- Female friendly
- Basic infrastructure

In the GPDP the Govt. has asked to select 1 or 2 themes and plan out accordingly. For the effective execution of plans, Gram Panchayat Planning Team is constituted and the plans made are passed by the GPEC. This team interacts with people of various strata in the village and then plans accordingly so that no one is left. VPRP is another plan made at the Panchayat, Further, the plans of VPRP and GPPT are discussed and all plans are integrated as one once approval is sought from the Gram Sabha after discussions. Mahila Sabha and Bal Sabha are also conducted in the Panchayat. They also make their plans so that their issues too are considered. After all these 4 plans are made, 1 priority plan is made and assembled for Panchayat. Fund mobilization is considered and XVth FC, MGNREGA and BRGF are some potential funding sources. With regard to the XVth FC it was stated that 60% (to be used for drinking water and sanitation, water conservation) here is tied fund whereas 40% is untied (not to be used for benefitting a single beneficiary). XVth FC here in Jharkhand allocates fund ranging from Rs. 27 lakhs to Rs. 40 lakhs. If the plans made are not met with the funds from XVth FC, then the respective departments can be met and funds can be mobilized from there. The day finally ended with these fruitful discussions.



### DAY III

Third day also began with a recap session. Mr. Dheeraj from PRADAN discussed on E-Gram Swaraj. It is a portal for Panchayats to see their updated status of schemes applied or even received. It is a step towards digitalization of Panchayats. In this context it was shared that every Gram Panchayat has 3 Id and Password- Admin, Maker and Checker. The last session was on budget by Shri. Hans Raj Singh. He shared with the participants the history and origin of Budget. Budget has been derived from French word **Bougette** meaning a purse. It implied to financial transactions where money comes in and goes out. First budget in India was presented by James Wilson in 1860. India's Father of Budget is P.C. Mahalanobis. Prior to 2017, the budget was presented in the last week of Feb. but since 2018 it is presented in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of Feb. Budget can be either **Balance Budget or Surplus Budget or Deficit Budget**. He also informed the participants that there are certain items that do not require voting like salaries of President, Governor, Lok Sabha Speaker, Judges of High Court and Supreme Court etc.

Commenting further, he shed light on Revenue Budget which implies money used by Govt. for maintenance of Govt. This comes through Income Tax, Corporate Tax, GST or even through Custom Duty. Capital Budget on the other side implies money used for nation building like infrastructure creation. The main budget generally comes in Feb. Supplementary budget is brought in case if any new scheme comes up. Interim budget is generally for -3 months and also known as Vote on Account Budget.



Lastly, the Jharkhand Panchayati Raj Budget, 2017 was discussed in detail. It covers Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Parishad. Details of budget expenditure and its understanding was deliberated before the audience. Different formats and budget were displayed before the participants and its filling was explained to them.

The three-day training came to an end and the participants were contented with the knowledge and resources that they received. They thanked the PRADAN team for the valuable insights that were rendered during these three days. It was an eye opening session for the Mukhiyas and they felt that that this training will definitely add o to improve the working at the ground level. The information and knowledge received here will help pave way for future developmental aspects and help in creation of ideal Panchayats.