DECENTRALISATION, PANCHAYAT SAMITI AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF TRIPURA

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

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Statement of the Problem

With the introduction of the Constitution (Seventy-Third Amendment) Act, 1992 a uniform system has been established all over India in regard to rural local self-government. The Act empowers the state legislature to make laws for the organisation of Panchayat at the village level as well as at the higher levels of block and district as local government.

On November 07, 1993, The Tripura Panchayat Act 1993 conforming to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1993, has been enacted and brought into force. According to Tripura Panchayat Act, each block throughout the state will certainly have a Panchayat Samiti.

Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs), the grassroot units of rural local self-governments has been proclaimed as the vehicle of socio-economic transformation in rural areas. In Tripura, the implementation of rural development schemes is done by the PRIs with the help and cooperation of the local level bureaucracy. The success of Panchayat Raj Institutions and implementation of development planning mostly depends on people’s participation in planning and development activities. But in Tripura it has been noticed that people in general are found to be apathetic towards participation.

Awareness of common people has not increased much and most of the people are still not aware of the purpose of Panchayat Raj Institutions. Lack of awareness is one of the basic reasons for not being able to fully achieve the goal of decentralisation in Tripura. Lack of awareness of the elected representatives results in lack of interest which creates the hurdles in the way of smooth development. There exist many other problems that stand in the way of development of decentralised planning in the state, i.e lack of technical knowledge of financial management, lack of consciousness among the people, insufficient financial resources, under qualification of the elected representatives and empowerment of women etc.

Again due to inadequate financial resources the PRIs mainly depend upon the grant from the state government in Tripura. In the light of the above situation, this research work has been directed towards a holistic resolution of the existing problems vis-à-vis balanced decentralisation and development planning across the Panchayat Samities in Tripura.
Review of Literature

Following literatures were reviewed for getting answer of the above mentioned statement of the problem:

*Panchayati Raj and Rural Development* (Roy, 2008)\(^1\) discussed the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in rural development in West Bengal. His book is an attempt at understanding the kind of changes brought about in the villages of West Bengal by the institution of state panchayats with political parties contesting with one another for control over them. Here different indicators of democratic decentralisation used for developmental activities being pursued, actual participation of elected representatives as well as villagers in the decision making process and the extent of control exercised by political parties in the decision making activities of Gram Panchayats have been studied. An important message of this book is that after coming to power in 1977 the then Left Front regime in West Bengal, took the decision to hold the panchayat elections in the state on the basis of universal adult franchise. Therefore the Left Government implemented the West Bengal Panchayat Act passed in 1973 to ensure people’s participation, their engagement in the rural development programmes and to remove the domination of the traditional rural elites through the creation of a new type of leadership from amongst the lower section of the society. According to the author, the goal of the leftist ideology is to institute a system that would effectively ensure distributive justice in the rural areas. In his book, the author, tried to examine how far the above goal has been achieved.

*Tripuray Panchayat Raj* (Saha, 2007)\(^2\) has focused on the evolution of Panchayat Raj System in India in general and Tripura in particular. The author has discussed the various features and provisions of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act as well as the Tripura Panchayat Act 1993. He analysed the composition and structure of different PRIs in Tripura and also reviewed the existing structure of panchayat finance in the state. The book emphasised on the various development schemes of the Panchayat Raj Institutions and the implementation of the same in the state of Tripura. The book also showed the basics of village planning, ways of human resource development and cited many instances which depict the achievements of the PRIs in the state of Tripura.

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Grassroot Democracy and Panchayati Raj in Tripura (Das, 2012)² put forwarded a detailed analysis of the theoretical concept of local self government in the western and Indian viewpoint, evolution and development of Panchayat Raj system in Tripura. Dr. Das also examined the election and voting pattern in the Panchayat in Tripura for the period of 1994 to 2004. The author has highlighted the socio-economic profile and the general awareness level of the emerging political leadership in the panchayat institutions in the state of Tripura based on the Panchayat Election of 2004 on the basis of findings drawn from four Gram Panchayats namely Laxmipur, Debichara, Mekhipara and Barabhaiya – each in turn taken from one of four Panchayat Samitis. The book also gives a picture of the general problems faced by the panchayats in Tripura and some recommendations for their possible solution have been outlined.

Rural Development of North East India (Ao, 2011)⁴ has thrown light on the human agricultural & social development in north-east India. He discussed about the dynamics and determinants of the rural non-farm economy. The book has examined women’s work in India and how huge numbers of women are devoted only to unremunerated work. He has also made an attempt to put forward details of rural development policy and tribal society of north – east India.

Communities Panchayats and Governance at Grassroots (Palanithurai and V. Ragupathy, 2008)⁵ showed that there are opportunities, challenges and hurdles in operationalising the Panchayati Raj System. He has made an attempt to present the institutional pluralism at the grassroots and discussed how it affects the functioning of Panchayati Raj System. This book focused on the constitutional institutions created at the grassroot level and argued that these should be made vibrant and they have to shed their present character of unresponsiveness to the demands of the people. The author remarked that a constant drive should be maintained from the upper level governments to strengthen the constitutional structures and the elected

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⁴ Imotemso Ao, Rural Development of North East India. New Delhi: Jnanada Prakashan (P & D), 2011.

leaders also have to be equipped to carry out the roles and the responsibilities of the grassroot institutions. Again the traditional institutions have to be democratised and they are to be integrated with constitutional panchayats. According to Ragupathy, panchayats have opened up opportunities for empowerment at the grassroot and for effective use of these opportunities a powerful social movement is required.

Conceptual Framework

Decentralisation

The meaning of the term decentralisation is different to different group of people. The basis of the concept of the decentralisation is that the human activities, programmes and institutions can be so devised that it is possible to delineate their various parts, to plan and implement various programmes. It is believed that the smaller the units of decentralisation, the better and more direct is the participation of those who are directly affected by it.

Development Planning

Development planning refers to the process of planning, policies and actions that promotes the concept of development in a particular area. In other words, development planning means the preparation of the development plans and various policies which creates the base for decision making and development.

Research Questions

The research problem has been dealt to seek answer to the following research questions:

I. Why the PRIs remain financially weak in spite of the fiscal decentralisation under Tripura Panchayat Act, 1993?

II. Will the background and awareness of the elected representatives ensure better planning and execution?

III. How effective and successful have the PRIs, especially the Panchayat Samitis been in planning and execution of the socio-economic development programmes?
Objectives

The research work has been undertaken with some cardinal objectives which can be discussed in the following ways:

I. This research work seeks to examine the process of decentralisation in Tripura and to show how Panchayat Samiti has become a significant part of the local planning in Tripura.

II. The present study aims at exploring the background and awareness of the elected representatives of the Panchayat Samiti.

III. The study intends to recommend some meaningful and practical steps for strengthening and visualising the Panchayati Raj Institutions in Tripura in general and Panchayat Samiti in particular.

Significance

This research work attempts to explore the importance and utility of Panchayat Samiti which is very much important for local self-government in Tripura. The socio-economic and developmental study of Panchayat Samitis (the intermediate level of the three tier panchayat system) has its utility as panchayat samiti is the true essence of rural local self-government. This work highlighted the condition and position of the common people under PRIs and made an attempt to enhance their consciousness about democracy.

The significance of the study has been dealt in three domains: Local, Regional and National. Till now no systematic and serious study has been made on Panchayat Samiti in the state of Tripura, except some casual attempts. Thus this research work focused on the structure and functioning of the Panchayat Samiti in the state. This work is important in the sense also that central government, state governments and other local self government institutions may also trigger themselves to several development programmes by observing the particular study. This study is also significant as it tries to assess the awareness level of rural people and elected representatives, for without awareness people cannot actively
participate in planning and developmental activities of Panchayat Samitis and other local self-governmental institutions. All these constitute a quite attractive panorama of study.

**Location of the Study**

Out of all the districts, the development achievements of Dhalai district of Tripura have been comparatively lagging behind. This fact has been corroborated by a number of governmental findings and documents. There are many reasons of limited success of developmental planning in Dhalai district. Insurgency is one of the main reasons. However, to have a better understanding of the factors responsible for limited success of development planning in Dhalai district a thorough empirical research work is needed. Hence, Dhalai district of Tripura has been selected as the focus or area of study for this particular research work.

The research has been located on the experience of development planning through Panchayat Samitis (Ambassa Panchayat Samiti and Salema Panchayat Samiti) in the Dhalai district of Tripura.

**Methodology**

For pursuing this research work, a combination of historical and analytical methods has been adopted. The rationale behind this eclectic approach lies in the fact that the focus of the research has been embedded in historical perspectives but at the same time the implications are futuristic as well as with bearing on the present happenings.

For collection, compilation and analysis of data, the following resources and techniques have been applied:

The data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected from the elected representatives, electorates, officials or administrators and the influential persons who take interest and play important role in the working of the PRIs. The primary data were collected through interview schedules. Interview schedule was prepared for the elected representatives. The secondary data were collected from books, literatures,
newspapers, journals, and various reports available at the offices of the Block Development Officer, Panchayat Samiti Offices, Office of the Panchayat Officer and Statistics department.

**Chapterisation**

This research work consists of five chapters including introduction and conclusion.

Chapter I
Decentralisation: Concept, Constitutional Provisions and Evolution

Chapter II
Finance: Panchayat Samiti in Tripura

Chapter III
Background and Awareness of the Elected Representatives

Chapter IV
Development Planning in Panchayat Samiti in Tripura: Implementation and Achievements

Chapter V
Conclusion, Findings and Recommendations

**Summary of Chapters**

The **first chapter** dealt with the concept, constitutional provisions and evolution of the institutions of local self-governments (decentralisation) in India with special reference to Tripura. This chapter intended to establish a conceptual framework and discussed the theoretical aspects of decentralisation and development planning. The chapter also highlighted that the idea of local self-government as we find today, did not evolve in a single day, instead it took centuries to reach modern shape of local self-government. In brief, the various stages of evolution of the idea of local self-government in India are highlighted in the chapter.

The **second chapter** dealt with the financial aspect of the Panchayat Samiti in Tripura. It has been found that the finance/income sources at the three levels of Panchayati Raj Institutions are not uniform due to the disparity in taxation and other powers of raising resources as
shown in the Tripura Panchayati Raj Act, 1993. The power of taxation of Panchayat Samiti is very limited, considering the conditions under which these can be exercised. Considerable revenue to Panchayat Samitis comes from the management of the lands and properties of their ownership. The Panchayati Raj Institutions are basically dependent on state subventions i.e. the share of taxes and grants as per the recommendations of the state and the central finance commissions, MPLAD funds and funds to implement the centrally sponsored schemes. It has been seen that the extent of fiscal revenue decentralisation in Tripura is not very large. The study shows that the PRIs mainly spend a civic infrastructure that includes construction and social sector development. Though the taxable revenue was very low, the existing funding pattern and the quantum of funds received was adequate to take up activities assigned to them.

The **third chapter** dealt with the background and awareness of the elected representatives of the Panchayat Samitis and their relationship with the panchayat samiti officials. The success of the decentralised institutions depends on the quality of leadership available at the local level and also on the social, economic and political status of the elected representatives. In this backdrop, the main focus of this chapter is to analyse the socio-economic and political background of the elected representatives and to investigate the political orientation of the elected representatives. Data collected from various sources and after interviewing the elected representatives demonstrates that the introduction of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment act, 1992 and Tripura Panchayat Act, 1993 has brought a positive change in the rural local level leadership in the state of Tripura. The Panchayat Samiti representatives are from various castes, and the representation is not dominated by higher castes. In this context the provisions for reservation of seats for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes in proportion to their population have played the major role. Though education is the major instrument of social change but the scenario of the Panchayat Samiti in Tripura, at the time of the study, much attention was given on caste rather than the education. The data collected from the field shows that due to the policy of reservation and occupational diversification, people from various occupational backgrounds are represented in the Panchayat Samitis. Comparatively young leaders are coming up more in the Panchayat Samiti in particular and PRIs in general, as emerging leaders. Another major finding of the chapter is that in the post 73rd Amendment India, participation of women in PRIs increased significantly in the state of Tripura and at present it is more than fifty per cent. But there exists some obstacles in the way of women representatives. Statistics found demonstrates that people from different economic background have played a leadership role in the PRIs; and people who take part in the Panchayat Raj institutions especially in Panchayat Samiti are economically disadvantaged. Most of the elected representatives under study are literate, but the people with higher
education background are in a significant minority in the leadership of PRIs in Tripura. During the course of field work it has been found that, to some extent, there is party pressure in the implementation of the development plans under PRIs. Sometimes the awareness level of the PRI leaders is good but not satisfactory which to some extent made them dependent on the officials or bureaucrats. Though most of the time both elected representatives and officials work in a cordial environment, it has been found that sometime they have differences of opinion on various issues.

The **fourth chapter** has been dealt with the development planning in Panchayat Samiti in Tripura, their implementation and achievements. Devolution of power at the grass root level is done by the government in the State of Tripura. But not all the subject mentioned in the 73rd constitutional Amendment Act. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 envisages transfer of functions, funds and functionaries relating to 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of Indian Constitution, to Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs). But the government of Tripura has devolved only five subjects out of 29 subjects that are listed on the Eleventh Schedule. These five subjects are: Water Resources, Primary School, Adult and Non-Formal Education, Social Welfare including Welfare of the Handicapped and Mentally Retarded and Women and Child Development. Devolution of power between three tiers in Village, Block and District level made the local level planning easier and effective. But in many cases the plans initiated were not got full success and few areas funds were available which could not be utilised. It has been found that three tiers of the PRIs works with cooperation. But the process of planning made it clear that the PRIs in general and Panchayat Samiti in particular are not free from the control of the Central Government and State Government. The planning starts from the Village level institution of PRI, that is Village Panchayat and then it comes to Panchayat Samiti. After the planning at the Panchayat Samiti level is over, it goes to Zilla Parishad. But the PRIs cannot implement the plans unless it is over at the three levels of PRI. After that it requires the approval and formulation in the State level and at Centre. So the State and Centre plays a vital role in the planning and implementation of plans in the PRIs. It has been found that PRIs are not free enough (from centre and state control) regarding formulation and implementation of plans. The need for planning is indispensable for accelerating development as for realisation of the felt needs of the people. However, any effective plan requires to be built up through active participation of the people whose development the plan seeks to undertake. Unless the problems of people and their basic demands are reflected in the plans, meaningful development cannot take place.
The fifth chapter dealt with the conclusion, findings and recommendations. The chapter focuses on the following findings:

- The first chapter outlines the concept, constitutional provisions and evolution of the institutions of local self-governments through the process of decentralisation in India with special reference to Tripura. The chapter highlighted that the idea of local self-government as we find today, did not evolve overnight, instead it took long time to reach the current modern shape of local self-government. The major finding of the chapter is that the implementation of the Panchayat Raj Act 1993 has brought considerable achievements in Tripura, but in some areas there exist a gap between the expectations and reality. It was found that only 5 subjects out of 29 subjects as mentioned in XI Schedule of the Constitution of India. As the devolutions were incomplete, the authority and role of PRIs in general and Panchayat Samiti in particular have been limited at best to beneficiary selection.

- The finance/income sources at the three levels of Panchayati Raj Institutions are not uniform due to the disparity in taxation and other powers of raising resources as shown in the Tripura Panchayati Raj Act, 1993. The power of taxation of Panchayat Samiti is very limited. Panchayat Raj Institutions in Tripura have various sources of income among which State Government Grants (PDF), Central Finance Commission Grants (FC) and own sources are the major sources of income. Own sources of income is very less in comparison to the other sources. This makes PRIs financially weak in spite of the fiscal decentralisation.

- The Panchayati Raj Institutions are essentially dependent on state subventions i.e. the share of taxes and grants as per the recommendations of the State (Panchayat Development Fund) and the Central Finance Commissions, MPLAD funds and funds to implement the centrally sponsored schemes.

- The extent of fiscal revenue decentralisation in Tripura is small. The analysis of the fund flow mechanism showed that funds flow to the PRIs from government largely through line departments rather than being directly given to the PRIs for spending.
The study shows that the PRIs in general and Panchayat Samiti in particular, generally spend on civic infrastructure that includes construction and social sector development. Though the taxable revenue were very low, the existing funding pattern and the quantum of funds received were adequate to take up activities assigned to them. In some cases it has been found that PRIs could not spend the funds that were available to them over a financial year.

Comprehensively young leaders are emerging as leaders in PRIs in general and the Panchayat Samiti in particular. In the two Panchayat Samitis under study, 4.16% elected representatives belong to the age group of below 30, 37.5% belongs to age group ranging from 30-40, 33.33% of the elected representatives belong to the age group of 40-50 and 20.83% of the total elected respondents belong to the age group of above 50.

Following the adoption of the 73rd Amendment India, the participation of women in PRIs increased significantly in the state of Tripura. At present it stands as more than fifty per cent. However there exist obstacles in the way of free working of the women representatives.

The introduction of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1993 and Tripura Panchayat Act of 1993 has brought a positive change in the rural local level leadership in the state of Tripura. The Panchayat Samiti representatives hail from various castes and the representation is not dominated by higher castes. In this context, provisions for the reservation of seats for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes in proportion to their population have played the major role.

Though education is the major instrument of social change, in the Panchayat Samiti in Tripura, during the time of the study, much more attention was given on caste distribution rather than the education. While most of the members of the Panchayat Samitis under study were literate (and indeed there are some members who received higher education) the per centage of members belonging to the higher education is not satisfactory.

People from different economic background have taken on leadership roles in the PRIs. This economic diversity has meant the election of many people to Panchayat Raj
institutions and particularly in Panchayat Samiti who are from economically unsound background. Total 37.5 per cent of the respondents have agriculture as their main occupation, 8.33 per cent were the government employees, 8.33 per cent of the total respondents were from non-governmental services background, 16.66 per cent members had business as their main occupation and 29.16 of the women members were housewives.

- The majority of the respondents with 29.16 per cent of members belonged to income group up to Rs 3,000 per month followed by 25.00 per cent members under the group having income Rs 3,001 to Rs 5,000 per month. There were 20.83 per cent of members having monthly income between Rs 5,001 to Rs 7,000 whereas four of the members, that is 16.66 per cent, showed their monthly income as ranging from Rs 7,001 to Rs 10,000. Among the elected representative only 8.33 per cent were having income Rs. 10,000 and above. The above statistics are indicative of the facts that people who take part in the Panchayat Raj institutions especially in Panchayat Samiti are not from economically very sound background.

- Out of 24 sample respondents of the two Panchayat Samitis under study, 91.66 per cent, i.e., 22 respondents were affiliated to Communist Party of India (Marxist), and only 8.33 per cent, that is, 2 of the respondents were affiliated to Indian National Congress(INC). So it is very clear that the CPIM party was the dominant party in the all the Panchayat Samiti under study.

- To some extent, there is party pressure in the implementation of the development plans under PRIs. Most of the elected representatives are not very aware and conscious about the merits and drawbacks of the development plans being initiated or to be initiated. Because of this, political parties exercise control over many plans on the local level and use them to serve party interests.

- Sometimes the awareness level of the PRI leaders is good but not satisfactory which to some extent made them dependent on the officials or bureaucrats.

- Elected representatives attended training programmes during their tenure. But the organisation of training programmes was not frequent enough. 79.16 per cent expressed that the training programmes were beneficial for them to discharge their
duties as elected representatives of the Panchayat Samiti. On the other hand only 12.5 per cent of the members said that it was not beneficial for them followed by 8.33 per cent people who did not answer the question.

- Though most of the time elected representatives and officials work well together, but evidence suggests that sometimes they have differences of opinion on various issues. 79.31 per cent respondents had satisfactory relationships with the officials and they were getting enough support and co-operation from them. However, 20.68 per cent elected representatives responded negatively and said that the officials, instead of being supportive, tried to control, dictate unnecessarily and manipulate Panchayat Samiti representatives who are not sufficiently educated and are not well-informed about various government guidelines and directives.

- Devolution of power at the grass root level is done by the government in the State of Tripura. But not all the subjects mentioned in the 73rd constitutional Amendment Act. The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992 envisages the transfer of functions, funds and functionaries relating to 29 subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution, to Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs). So far, the government of Tripura has devolved only five subjects out of 29 subjects that are listed on the Eleventh Schedule. These five subjects are: Water Resources, Primary School, Adult and Non-Formal Education, Social Welfare including Welfare of the Handicapped and Mentally Retarded and Women and Child Development. Devolution of power between three tiers in Village, Block and District level has made local level planning easier and effective. But the data available shows that though various plans were initiated for development purpose but achievement level was not 100%. Because of the lack in planning various schemes did not full success and the fund available for those schemes were not utilised fully.

- The PRIs are not free enough (from centre and state control) in their ability to regarding formulate and implement their own plans.

**Recommendations**

For the effective functioning and enhancement of the PRIs in general and Panchayat Samiti in particular, in Tripura, following steps are very crucial:
1) PRIs need to be more empowered by increasing their ability to raise resources at all the three levels (Village, Block and District). Initiatives should be taken to increase the own sources of income of the Panchayat Samiti.

2) At present, the main sources of income of Panchayat Samiti are the Grants from Government of Tripura under PDF, Central Finance Commission Grants and Grants based on various flagship schemes. Measures should be taken to provide these grants to the PRIs in Tripura on a need base formula, it should not be scheme based. Direct flow of funds to the PRIs should be ensured to enable the success of the economic development of the rural areas in Tripura.

3) The Government in both State and Centre should take initiatives to discover the cause behind the under utilisation of funds available to the PRIs and should suggest measures to ensure proper and effective utilisation of funds available at the grassroots level in the State of Tripura.

4) Education is an important aspect of the effective leadership. Currently government initiatives are required to provide more opportunities to the people of rural Tripura to get higher education. This will ensure the participation of the highly educated people in the process of development at all the three levels of PRIs in the State.

5) Elected representatives already attend training programmes during their tenure. But the organisation of these programmes has not been frequent enough. Therefore, more training programmes and awareness seminars should be organised for the elected representatives of the PRIs to ensure capacity building and for making officials more aware of various plans, schemes and functioning of the PRIs in the State of Tripura. There is also need of organizing orientation programmes for the newly elected members in order to make them familiar with the system, functions, functionaries and provisions under which they will be performing their duties as representatives of the people of their respective areas.

6) Efforts should be made to establish better relationships between government officials and the elected representatives of the Panchayat Samiti. Better cooperation and coordination between the officials and elected representatives will produce better development planning
and better implementation which was one of the primary objectives of the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution of India.

7) The government should increase the salaries of the elected representatives of the PRIs so that they do not need to worry about earning their daily bread. This will improve the economic condition of the elected representatives enabling them to give more time for the effective planning and implementation of the various projects of PRIs which will ultimately lead to the development of the rural areas in the State of Tripura.

8) For the success of the PRIs, and for unbiased effective planning, it is very important to decrease the interference of the political parties in the formulation and implementation of the development plan.

9) While the participation of women participating in the politics in the rural areas has increased significantly since the adoption of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. There remain attitudinal problems against the women representatives. Women’s participation in some places is primarily because of reserved seats. Steps should be taken to make women more politically aware through various orientation programmes to enable them to come forward and lead without any hesitation.

10) The government of Tripura has ensured the devolution of only 5 of 29 mentioned in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1993. The State should devolve more items as mentioned in the Act to achieve the goal of democratic decentralisation. More power should be given to the local people to make plans for the development of their areas.

11) PRIs should be free from State and Centre’s (governments) control in regard to formulation and implementation of the plans at the grassroots level.

12) Steps should be taken to improve the cooperation and coordination between the three tiers of Panchayat Raj Institutions. Better linkages will lead to better results in economic development and social justice in rural areas in Tripura.
The chapter concludes that the introduction of the Panchayat Raj System through the Constitution (Seventy Third Amendment) Act, 1992, has brought considerable change in the rural areas of Tripura. It has given power to the local people to participate in governance. There is no doubt that the condition of the rural areas has improved significantly over the last two decades in part as a result of the devolution of power. The participation of the rural population in politics and in development planning has also increased notably and one can notice the change in the village, block and district level. This development on the village level will be much forwarded if the government on all levels, officials, elected representatives and the political parties, work within this structure with full commitment. Increasing the devolution of power will increase people’s participation in the planning process and increase of people’s participation is mandatory for the success of the democratic decentralisation.