

**Memorandum on Empowerment of Panchayati Raj Institutions for ensuring  
better Disaster Management at grassroots level**  
*(adopted at a Meeting of Civil Society Groups held at KSS, Mahavir Para,  
Bhawani Patana, Kalahandi on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2006)*

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**1. Panchayat to be the key agency in Disaster Management:**

The Government of Orissa has brought out a State Disaster Management Policy-2005, which has given real authority in decision-making and resource-use to the administration, especially the Revenue Department, while relegating the PRIs to the status of obedient agencies of the administration. But needless to say, it is the villagers who become the first victims and also the first respondents of any calamity. But as the matters stand now, the GP is endowed neither with power nor with resources necessary to meet and mitigate the situation of a disaster. So the State Disaster Management Policy should be reformulated so as to recognize and incorporate the following operational principles:

- i) The Gram Panchayat to be entrusted with the power and resources to conduct the disaster risk management training programmes on a regular basis;*
- ii) The Gram Panchayat to be entrusted with the power and authority to conduct surveys of damage caused by a disaster to houses, crops and common property resources in the locality;*
- iii) The Gram Panchayat to be entrusted with the task of conducting all short-term relief and long-term rehabilitation programmes in the wake of a disaster;*
- iv) The Gram Panchayat to be entrusted with the job of preparing the contingency plan for disaster management and of its periodical updation;*
- v) The Gram Panchayat should be vested with the power to requisition emergency equipments and accessories like boats and automobile etc. necessary to cope with the felt needs in the context of a disaster;*
- vi) The Gram Panchayat should be authorized to maintain an Emergency Fund to cater to the immediate needs of the people and the areas affected in a disaster; and*
- vii) The GP should be entrusted with the task of proper management including renovation and use of all water resources including traditional water harvesting structures.*

**2. Definition of Calamity to be widened to include chronic scarcity of minor forest produce and millets:**

As is well-known, a massive chunk of population in Western and Southern Orissa, especially belonging to ST and SC classes heavily depend upon minor forest produce and a variety of millets for their bare survival. And these produces are either available freely in the hills or forests or grown by the people with little effort in the natural terrains. It so happens that in some years, due to various reasons there takes place lingering scarcity of minor forest produce and millets in this region. As a result, the overwhelming majority of people in this region, who are not as such accustomed to switching over to other food crops or cash horticulture as an alternative source of livelihood, do suffer miserably for months on end. But as is well-known, the scarcity of minor forest produce and millets doesn't fall under the category of 'calamity' as such within the meaning of Para-4 (Classification of Natural Calamities) of Orissa Relief Code 1980. The Code mentions 'drought, flood, cyclone and tidal disasters, earthquakes, volcanic eruption etc.' as instances of calamity having some sort of 'fairly widespread' impact on the land and population.

It seems the existing Orissa Relief Code which had its origin in the colonial Famine Code that dates back to 1901, gave recognition only to those conditions of distress that affected the mainstream populations in the coastal tracts of Orissa while ignoring the other, equally disastrous conditions that affected the most backward and marginalized sections of population in the State i.e. the tribes and hills-men. Due to this skewed perception of calamity dominating the official thinking, there is no Governmental provision for any relief or rehabilitation measures addressed specially to meeting the scarcity of minor forest produce or edible millets, even though such a state of scarcity puts the life of a vast mass of people in Southern and Western Orissa out of gear for months on end.

*Under the circumstances, while there is an ongoing effort to replace the age-old Relief Code by a new, comprehensive Policy for Disaster Management, it is just warranted that the definition of disaster or calamity be made inclusive enough to cover the persistent scarcity of minor forest produce and edible millets as found in the Southern and Western regions of Orissa within its ambit, and the Central Government and State Government formulate appropriate kinds of relief, rehabilitation and restoration schemes to manage it.*

**3) GP in stead of Block to form the unit for the disaster mangement:**  
Under the current practice as sanctioned under the Section 18 of Orissa Relief Code 1980, the Block is taken as unit of Relief Organisation, and consequently even if the whole of a GP is affected by a disaster, it is not declared so and is thus deprived of any assistance from the Government in terms of relief and rehabilitation purposes.

*Under the circumstances, the Orissa Disaster Management Policy 2005, which otherwise requires a comprehensive revision in the interest of empowering the PRI system, should inter alia provide for a GP to be considered as an administrative unit for the purpose disaster management.*

**4) MP and MLA LAD Funds to be used under the aegis of GP:**  
Presently the MPs and MLAs, who are provided each with Rs.2 crore and Rs.50 lakh respectively per year under the head 'Local Area Development Fund' are supposed to spend such amounts in areas which fall under Gram Panchayats and urban local bodies. But neither a GP nor an urban local body has any say or control over the manner in which such amounts are being spent. As a result, quite often such amounts are spent for the purposes which may not be the priorities of the concerned villagers or the concerned GP. Due to lack of supervision by the GP, the LAD money is also spent in an arbitrary manner and gets misappropriated too.

*In order to ensure Panchayat control over all developmental works taking place within its jurisdiction and to ensure transparency and accountability in fund utilization, the LAD Funds should be implemented through Panchayats.*

**5) The Resource base of a Gram Panchayat to be vastly widened by way of implementing the licensing and taxing powers provided under OGP Act 1965 :**  
One of the chief reasons, adduced quite often and justifiably too, for the lacklustre performance of the PRIs is their perpetual shortage of resources and consequent dependence on the Government above for doing any damn thing in their respective locality. Whatever money is sanctioned to Panchayats from the Centre or State under different schemes, the Panchayat has no discretion to use it for any other purpose, since each Scheme comes along with an inviolable condition that the said money shall be utilized for earmarked purposes only. Thus the Gram

Panchayat is left with little money to spend after any welfare or development project, which may be decided upon in a Palli Sabha or Gram Sabha meeting. But on a close scrutiny, it is found that such a resource-starved state of the Panchayats has been caused precisely due to the non-implementation of the licensing and taxing powers given to Panchayat under the OGP Act 1965. The Section 55 has entrusted the Panchayat with power to license 24 categories of industries and factories including dangerous and offensive trades, and collect the fees against each license issued. Similarly, the Section 83 empowers the Panchayat to tax 14 nos. of items. But in ground reality, except a few minor items, the Panchayat is not given the actual power to license or tax as per the OGP Act. Moreover, the Article 243-I(1) of the Constitution enjoins upon a State Legislature to set up a Finance Commission once every five years, whose one of the mandates shall be 'to recommend measures needed to improve the financial position of the Panchayats'. Meanwhile two State Finance Commissions were constituted in Orissa and have submitted their respective Reports. But the 'Action Taken Reports' submitted by the State Government thereon reflect the old phenomenon of reluctance of the State to surrender power to Panchayats.

*Thus to enable the Panchayats to develop their own resource base adequate enough to implement the developmental activities as decided by the Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha, the licensing and taxing powers of the GP as mentioned under Sections 55 and 83 respectively, along with the constitutionally ordained transfer of financial powers by the State to Panchayats should be given effect to.*

**6) Proactive role of Gram Panchayat in checking involuntary migration:**

It is being observed that the villagers male and female being faced with distressful conditions, especially in Southern and Western Orissa are migrating in increasing numbers to far-off places in and outside the State in search of a bare livelihood. Quite often they leave behind old parents and young children to languish in a state of utter starvation and destitution. The Panchayats are unable to provide these migrants with some job or the other, nor are they able to take care of the aged and young, left behind in the village. Moreover, out of their bitter experience over the years, the people in the villages have lost all faith in the capacity of the Panchayats to cater to their bare needs of life and livelihood. But as a matter of fact, the Section 45 of OGP Act 1965, which describes 25 nos. of discretionary functions of a Gram Panchayat ( i.e. as and when GP likes to exercise), mentions at its Point (m) 'establishment and maintenance of works for providing employment in time of scarcity and establishment of granaries'. Again the Point (y) mentions 'any measure not hereinbefore specifically mentioned which is likely to promote public safety, health, convenience or general welfare', as a discretionary function of the GP. But in ground reality, the power and resources to initiate any scheme for job creation or for general welfare of any kind are only available with the Central and State Governments. And in naked justification of such usurpation of power by the Government, the Section 46 of OGP Act says, 'Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to impose any duty or confer any power on the Gram Panchayat with respect to any matter which is under the direct administrative control of any other local authority or of any department of the Central or State Government, unless, such duty or power has been transferred or delegated to the Gram Panchayat by the order of the local authority of the Central or State Government, as the case may be'. Owing to such contradictory provisions in the OGP Act 1965, the Gram Panchayat feels really handicapped to take any decision on its own for undertaking any scheme, be it for employment generation or for any matter concerning general welfare.

*Under the circumstances, the OGP Act 1965 should be so amended as to remove the statutory handicaps placed on a GP to carry out any programme of general welfare including*

*employment creation with the help of the natural and monetary resources and technical know-how available within the Panchayat itself. The Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution, which came up as a part of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment of 1992 enumerates 29 subjects, which should have by now been transferred to the Panchayats. Steps should therefore be taken at the earliest to endow the Panchayats with the power and resources to tackle any problem and mitigate any crisis on its own as and when it arises.*

**7) Structural streamlining of Palli Sabha necessary:**

Ironically, the Palli Sabha which constitutes for all practical purposes the real, material sub-structure of Gram Sabha has not been provided with either a structure of its own or necessary legal authority to enforce its decisions. The Section 6 of Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1965 (Functions of Palli Sabha) provides under its Sub-Section (6) that ‘Palli Sabha at its annual meeting in February each year’ shall ‘give its recommendations to the Gram Panchayat’ in respect of ‘(a) the development works and programmes that may be taken up during the ensuing year; and (b) the annual budget estimate submitted by the Gram Panchayat ..’. So much for the critical role assigned to the meeting of a Palli Sabha. Again, as per its Sub-section (2), all the adult villagers living in an area covered by a Palli Sabha, who are registered as voters for the purpose of Assembly Election under People’s Representation Act 1950 shall constitute the Palli Sabha. But the Act nowhere provides for the quorum for the meeting of a Palli Sabha. Rather, the Sub-section (5) says inter alia, ‘The members present at any meeting of the Palli Sabha shall form the quorum for such meeting’. Thus primarily due to the absence of a legal compulsion coupled with other vicious factors, the common villagers don’t feel the obligation to attend a meeting of a Palli Sabha, and neither the elected representatives of Gram Panchayat nor the officials associated with the functioning of Palli Sabha/Gram Sabha do feel the obligation to ensure the attendance of as many villagers as possible in the meeting of a Palli Sabha. As a result, very many decisions critically bearing on the life of the villagers and of the village are being taken in an arbitrary manner by a few persons having vested interests and subsequently passed off as the unanimous decisions of Palli Sabha, without the overwhelming bulk of a Palli Sabha membership being at all aware about all this. If the foundational sub-structure of our system of PRIs lacks thus in substance, the latter is bound to collapse sooner or later, and the current chaos and mess that have gripped the PRIs is but a pathological symptom of this unfolding tragedy.

*It is therefore imperative that the Section 6 of Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1965 be so amended as to ensure firstly, a sizable quorum for the attendance in each meeting of Palli Sabha i.e. at least 50% of its total membership, and secondly, the obligation of the Panchayat representatives to see that a Palli Sabha meeting is never postponed due to lack of quorum.*

**8) No tinkering with the Resolution or Micro-plan adopted by Palli Sabha/ Gram Sabha by any bureaucratic authority:**

One of the chief reasons as to why the villagers choose to abstain from the meetings of Palli Sabha or Gram Sabha as the case may be, is a wide array of provisions of the OGP Act 1965 itself that allow the bureaucrats as and when they please to override the resolutions, plans or budgets as adopted by the Palli Sabha or Gram Sabha. The quintessential message that these restrictive provisions convey all the time to the villagers and even to their elected representatives is that whatever may be decided by a Palli Sabha or Gram Sabha, it can be just undone by a non-elected bureaucrat at Block, Sub-divisional or District level. For instance, the Section 109 of the OGP Act says, “Collector or such other officer or person specially authorized in that behalf by the State Government shall exercise general powers of inspection, supervision and control over

the exercise of powers, discharge of duties, performance of functions by the Gram Panchayat'. Another instance of such omnibus control by the non-elective executives over the elected Gram Panchayat is the Section 114(1) of the Act, which says, "The Sub-divisional Officer may, suo motu or on a reference made by the Sarpanch . . . . may rescind, modify or confirm any resolution or orders passed by the Gram Panchayat". There are in fact numerous provisions that stalk through the text of the OGP Act 1965, which do nullify the sanctity of the powers given under the Article 243G of the Constitution to the Panchayats as units of self-government for 'preparation of plans for socio-economic development and social justice' and 'implementation of schemes' made there-under.

*Under the circumstances, the OGP Act 1965 should be comprehensively revised in order to remove all manners of control by the non-elective bureaucratic bodies over the powers and functions of Gram Panchayat, which, as aptly envisaged under the Constitution, is supposed to act as a self-governing unit of the country's overall polity.*

**9) Bureaucrats shouldn't be the disciplinary authorities over Panchayats:**

As is well-known, prior to the commencement of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment of 1992, a Panchayat used to be superseded and even dissolved or its functionaries suspended and dismissed arbitrarily by the district administration and State Government and when they liked. But the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment provided for a statutory period of 5 years for every Panchayat (vide Article 243E of Constitution). However, the Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1965 contains very many provisions which militate against this constitutional mandate by way of providing arbitrary handle to the bureaucrats at various levels even to supersede and dissolve a Panchayat along with suspension and dismissal of its elected functionaries. The Section 115(1) of OGP Act gives power to District Collector to suspend the Sarpanch or a Naib-Sarpanch from office. Its sub-section (2) gives power to the State Government to remove him altogether. The sub-section 6(a) gives power also to Collector to remove from office not only Sarpanch or Naib-Sarpanch but also any member of Panchayat. Under the said sub-section the Collector may declare a member of Panchayat ineligible even to contest the election. Again, as per Section 116(1) the State Government can suo motu dissolve a Gram Panchayat as and when they like. And as per Section 117(1), the State Government may supersede a Panchayat altogether. So long these provisions giving discretionary power to the bureaucrats to take any sort of disciplinary action against Panchayats and their functionaries exist in OGP Act 1965, the Panchayats can't be expected to grow into self-governing institutions as contemplated under Article 40 of the Constitution or under 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitution Amendment. Any disciplinary action, if at all needed to be taken against a Panchayat or any of its functionaries should have its sanction in the Resolutions of Palli Sabha or Gram Sabha. And any disciplinary action so needed should be executed by the Panchayats at higher level i.e Panchayat Samiti or Zilla Parishad, not by the bureaucrats as happening at present.

*Under the circumstances, to enable the Panchayats to grow into self-governing institutions as contemplated by the Constitution and 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment, the OGP Act 1965 should be drastically amended so as to withdraw all disciplinary and penal powers from the bureaucrats of any level, vest the Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha with the right to recall the defaulter functionaries and make the upper tiers of Panchayatiraj the executors of the disciplinary and penal action against a Panchayat or its functionaries.*

**10) Entire system of PRIs to remain free from partisan politics:**

It has been observed that the current provision and practice of fighting Panchayat elections by

the candidates on party tickets and party symbols, as applicable to Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti, have severely and adversely affected the day-to-day functioning of Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha and Palli Sabha too. As a result, the decisions of Gram Sabha or Palli Sabha and all manners of implementation thereof have taken on partisan complexion and become a frequent and fertile source of conflict and discrimination along the partisan lines, pushing thereby the common people who are interested in the overall development of the village itself out from the ken of Panchayat activities. But a Panchayat body being a unit of self-government, as defined under Article 40 and Article 243G of the Constitution, is required to function in a holistic manner i.e. by way of involving the entire population of a village irrespective of their caste and religion, gender or status, creed or conviction in its decision-making and activity processes. Thus the provision for contest on Party lines with the use of party tickets and party symbols in the Panchayat elections pollutes the whole milieu of Panchayati Raj with obnoxious, partisan spirit which lingers and thickens all through in the aftermath of the elections and thereby defeats the very wholesome philosophy of Panchayati Raj. Sooner such a provision for party politics goes, the better for the health of the Panchayati Raj as a whole.

*Therefore, all the three principal laws concerning Panchayati Raj in our State, namely Orissa Gram Panchayat Act 1965, Orissa Panchayat Samiti Act 1959 and Orissa Zilla Parishad Act 1991 stand in need of amendment so as to ensure the electoral process for formation of either of these grassroots bodies to remain free from all manners of partisan politics.*

## **For proper implementation of Provisions for Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act 1996**

Long ten years have elapsed since the PESA Act was introduced with the objective of strengthening Panchayati Raj in 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule areas of the country. The Government of Orissa also introduced a separate Act for adopting PESA in the selected areas of the State mostly inhabited by tribes and indigenous groups. The PESA Act is essentially meant to enable these vulnerable populations to participate in mainstream developmental processes while maintaining their own socio-cultural identity. But a critical look into the actual state of affairs in areas under PESA presents a dismal scenario about the operation of this unique law. Under the circumstances, the following important principles need to be complied with for a proper implementation of PESA Act in Orissa.

### **1) Ownership of Minor Forest Produce:**

The Section 4 (m) of PESA Act 1996 entrusts the ownership of minor forest produce with Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat. But in ground reality, such ownership exists only on paper. The real control over collection, processing and marketing of minor forest produce still remains with the Forest Department, with whose permission the traders coming from outside have established their firm grip over the marketing of minor forest produce. *So immediate steps should be taken to hand over the ownership and complete control of minor forest produce to Gram Panchayat in areas under PESA Act.*

### **2) Consultation with Gram Sabha in matters concerning land acquisition and resettlement and rehabilitation:**

As per the Section 4(j) of PESA Act, prior consultation with Gram Sabha before acquisition of land and before finalization of R and R Policy is obligatory. But it is being noticed that the Government is indiscriminately acquiring land in scheduled areas without undertaking proper consultation with the Gram Sabha. And the Gram Sabha is also not consulted in respect of the R and R package, the result being rising discontent all over among the tribals and dalits against the Government's ill-thought policy of industrialization. *Under the circumstances, the Government should ensure that no land should be acquired or no so-called resettlement and rehabilitation package be implemented without the full-scale consent of the concerned Gram Sabhas in 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas.*

### **3) Prior Approval of Gram Sabha necessary for mining projects:**

As per Section 4(k and l) of PESA Act, the prior approval of Gram Sabha is mandatory in respect of license for prospecting, extraction or processing of minor minerals. But it has been found that such mining activities are being undertaken in scheduled areas bypassing the approval from Gram Sabha. As a result, the discontentment among the tribals and indigenous groups is growing day by day. *Under the circumstances, the State Government must ensure that no mining activity whatsoever is conducted in the scheduled areas without obtaining full-scale consent of the local inhabitants.*

### **4) Extension of principles of 6<sup>th</sup> Schedule areas to 5<sup>th</sup> Schedule areas:**

As per Section 4(o), the State legislature should take steps to ensure that the kind of administrative autonomy prevailing in 6<sup>th</sup> schedule areas upto the district level should be gradually extended to the 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas. From the point of self-governance, the pattern followed in the 6<sup>th</sup> schedule areas is definitely richer than that which is allowed under PESA Act for 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas. But ironically enough, the Government of Orissa, by their actual practice at ground level is not honouring at all whatever minimum features of autonomy guaranteed under PESA Act for 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas. *Under the circumstances, the Government of Orissa should first of all implement all the provisions of PESA Act in the 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas and simultaneously invite a popular debate among the concerned sections of population as regards the feasibility and modus operandi of the application of 6<sup>th</sup> schedule principles to 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas.*

### **5) Control of Gram Sabha over organizations and functionaries:**

As per Section 4(m-6) of PESA Act, the State legislature should endow the Panchayats in 5<sup>th</sup> schedule areas with control over all agencies and their functionaries operating in social sector. But what is being observed presently is contrary to this contemplation. The Gram Sabha or Gram Panchayat has been made to function in a subservient manner before all administrative offices, and is showing complete dependence upon them for any damn thing required by the villagers. The villagers in stead of exercising any control over the administrative personnel have become their virtual servants. Such an unhappy phenomenon runs counter to the letter and spirit of PESA Act. *Under the circumstances, in order to realize the vision underlying the PESA Act, necessary legal and administrative reforms should be undertaken so that all the agencies in social sector, Governmental or non-Governmental operating in the scheduled areas along with their personnel are brought under the real control of the Panchayat at the respective level.*

## **For Proper Implementation of NREGA 2005 in Orissa**

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 has been in operation in selected States of the country including Orissa with effect from 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2006. But the ground reality tells that the concerned people in Orissa have not by and large availed its benefits till date. So in order to ensure a proper implementation of NREGA in our State, the following principles, as warranted by the Act itself, should be complied with by way of providing appropriate kind of Scheme and Rules by the State Government. Specifically speaking, the State Scheme and Rules under the Act should incorporate the following principles.

### **1) Administration to act as facilitator for the Panchayat:**

As per Section 13 of the NREG Act, the Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad are the principal authorities for the implementation of the Act. *So the corresponding Government agencies starting from Block Office to District Collector should act as facilitators for the corresponding Panchayat bodies in stead of being their controllers or string-pullers.*

### **2) The Action Plan made by the GP shouldn't be interfered with by the administration:**

As per Section 16(1) of NREG Act, Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha is entrusted with the all-important tasks of identification, implementation and supervision of the projects to be undertaken under the Act. *It is therefore necessary that the Action Plan of Projects as prepared by the Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha shouldn't be tinkered with in a substantial way.*

### **3) Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha to supervise the execution of every project:**

As per Section 16(5), at least 50% of all works under the Act must be directly implemented by Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha. Thus the remaining 50% may be entrusted to NGOs, SHGs, Cooperatives and line departments of the Govt etc. However, since the PRIs have been made the principal authorities under the Act [vide Section 16(1)], they have a right and as well a duty to supervise the execution of each work and to ensure that the proclaimed goal of providing employment or unemployment allowance to each intending job-seeker is fulfilled. *The Orissa Scheme should accordingly entrust the power of supervision to the Gram Sabha/Palli Sabha in the matter of every project work, whether implemented by Panchayat or not.*

### **4) Right to Information about NREGA progress and accounts:**

The information on implementation and accounts of NREGA comes under the category of suo motu disclosures by public authorities as required under Section 4 of the RTI Act 2005. The Section 4(4) of RTI Act says that suo motu informations should be made available either free or at print or medium price, which may be prescribed by the appropriated Government. Moreover, Point 16 of Schedule I of NREG Act says that all accounts and records relating to the Scheme shall be made available for public scrutiny, and only when a person desires to take a copy, he/she may have to pay the prescribed fee. *It is therefore required that the State Scheme under NREG Act should provide for free inspection of all documents including accounts, and may prescribe just the copy charges of the documents required by a person at the prevailing market rate.*

### **5) Prompt payment of unemployment allowance and other compensations:**

As per Section 7 of NREG Act, if a registered worker is not given wage-work within 15days of the date of his application for work, he or she entitled an unemployment allowance. Again, as per Point 30 of Schedule II of NREG Act, if a worker is not paid the wages within the given time-period, then he or she shall be entitled to compensation as per the Payment of Wages Act 1936.

Besides there are other types of compensation that a wage-worker is entitled to under the Act. ***In order to ensure that no worker is harassed in the matter of getting his wages and compensations, strict norms of regularity in making all kinds of payments be laid down for compliance by the concerned executives.***

**6) Time-bound Disposal of Grievances and Appeals:**

As per Section 23 of the NREG Act, every complaint made before the Programme Officer (BDO) regarding infringement of any provision of this Act, shall be disposed of within 7 days. Moreover, since there is no independent appellate mechanism to hear the complaints made against BDO or District Collector as the case may be, the Orissa Scheme may provide for the same with a view to ensure a truly corruption-free operationalisation of the Act. ***Under the circumstances, the Orissa Scheme should provide for obligatory disposal of every complaint within 7 days of its submission, along with an independent appellate body, one each at Block and district level, which may consist of PRI leaders and conscious citizens known for their honesty and propriety.***