It is needless to say that Odisha is a land of villages. So, rural development is the main pillar of Odisha’s development. The objective of rural development is to provide better prospects to the people living in rural areas and to facilitate economic development, employment generation and welfare of SC/ST and other backward classes under different development programmes and welfare schemes through Panchayati Raj Institutions.

To strengthen governance at local level and empowerment of rural village, Odisha is one of the few states in the post-independent period to take up Panchayati Raj as its medium for rural development. Odisha Gram Panchayat Act was enacted in the year 1948 and subsequently in the year 1961, the three-tier system of Panchayati Raj Institutions was introduced in Odisha. Over the past years, Panchayati Raj Institutions have emerged as powerful rural institutions in bringing about rapid and sustainable rural development and economic transformation in Odisha. Currently, Panchayati Raj Institutions are provided with more powers under 73\textsuperscript{rd} Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992. The main objective of 73\textsuperscript{rd} Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 is to provide constitutional status to empower Panchayati Raj Institutions for implementing rural development programmes, since Panchayati Raj Institutions have been assigned with 22 subjects under the aforesaid constitutional amendment.

The 73\textsuperscript{rd} amendment of Constitution also mandates state government to endow the Panchayati Raj Institutions with such powers and authority as may be necessary to act as institutions of local self-government. So, the prime objectives of Panchayati Raj Institutions are to eradicate poverty, uplift standard of living of people living in rural areas and bring about a healthy society by creating awareness for hygiene, sanitation, eradication of illiteracy and to ensure social justice to the rural people. Increasingly, at present, Panchayati Raj Institutions are more concerned about implementation of rural development programmes launched by central and state government in India, rather than administration of local areas.

**Rural Development Programmes:**

Rural Development is a continuous process which aims at improving the socio-economic conditions of people living in the rural areas. For the convenience of this paper on rural development programmes, it has been divided into two categories i.e. rural development programme during pre-independence period and post-independence period. Though there was no such landmark rural development programmes introduced during the pre-independence period for the people, but some programmes were implemented through some individual and institutions.
Rural Development Programme in Pre-Independence Era:

In pre-independence era, a few numbers of attempts were made on a pilot basis for rural reconstruction, insight into which is sought to provide in the upcoming paragraphs:

The first successful attempt for rural development was made in a few villages by Rabindra Nath Tagore in the year 1921 under the stewardship of Elmhurst. The aim of the Sriniketan Institute of Rural Reconstruction established by Tagore, was “to bring back life in its completeness in the villages, making rural folks self reliant and self respectful, acquainted with the cultural tradition of their own country and competent to make an efficient use of modern resources for the improvement of their physical, intellectual and economic conditions”. During that period, Brayne, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurgaon district, in 1920, evolved a new technique known as Gurgaon Scheme of Village Development to improve the living conditions of the poor people. In 1932, under the Maharaja of Baroda, a scheme for rural reconstruction was started. In the pre-independence period, Bombay experiment was the pioneering attempt of rural reconstruction programme launched by the Bombay Government. This experiment was based on Mahatma Gandhiji’s programme of Sarvodaya. It was meant to develop the backward rural economy of India. The main objective of this programme is to inculcate the spirit of self help and cooperation among the rural people. Gandhiji’s idea of constructive programmes laid great stress on self sufficiency in food and cloths. The Gandhian approach to rural development was to improve inner man and morality through self-help.

The efforts made in the pre-independence era for rural development generally failed to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor mainly because these were confined to a single problem and a single institution. Moreover, the benefits of the schemes reached only to very few villages.

Rural Development Programme during Post-Independence Era:

In post independence era, government, voluntary organisations and financial institutions have implemented a large number of rural development programmes for the upliftment of rural people. The following are some of the rural development programmes which were started during the post independence period for the transformation of the rural areas of the country.

The Government of India in March 1950 established the Planning Commission to translate the idea of development of rural villages. The Government of India from the very beginning of its planning era i.e. with the launching of the First Five Year Plan (1950-51) has been emphasizing on the development of rural villages. The First Five Year Plan document stated “agriculture, including irrigation and power must have the top most priority”.

Community Development Programme:

In 1952, the multi-purpose Community Development Programme (CDP) was launched to bring about rural development covering all aspects i.e. agriculture, rural industries, transport and communications, health, education, social welfare and welfare of women and children. The central idea behind this programme was to develop self reliance and self-help both in the individual and the community to achieve the goals. According to the First Five Year Plan “Community Development is the method and rural extension is the agency through which the Five Year Plan seeks to initiate a process of transformation of the social and economic life of the villages”.

Community Development Programme in India started in October 1952 with 55 community development projects under the Indo-US
operational agreement. During the Third Five Year Plan period it was gradually extended to cover the entire country. This programme was helped to set up a network of basic extension and development services in the rural areas and introduced administrative machinery which formed the basis for planning and implementing rural development programme. But, Community Development Programme did not yield the expected results because there was no institutional mechanism for the local people to participate in the development work. However, through this programme approach, the country was covered with a network of Community Development Blocks each headed by a Block Development Officer (BDO). The basic premise on which the Community Development Programme rests is to motivate the rural people to undertake self reliant community based approach to improve their socio-economic conditions and rural environment. The target aimed by the programme was to give the rural people a fuller and richer life. However, the programme was failed and not reaped any expected results, so the historical Balwant Rai Mehta Committee Report was submitted in the year 1957. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee recommended the creation of institutions which were to be statutory, elective, and comprehensive in duties and functions, equipped with necessary executive machinery with adequate resources and with enough freedom and autonomy. To secure this, the Committee envisaged establishment of three-tier system of rural local government system, namely the Gram Panchayat at village level, Panchayat Samiti at Block/Taluk Level and Zilla Panchayat at District level. Later on these three-tiers of rural local governance system, popularly known as the Panchayati Raj system became the hub of all the rural development programmes of central as well as state governments. The birth of Panchayati Raj System heralded a new era in the history of rural development in India by transforming the rural villages into developed villages. Hence, Panchayati Raj started taking the new role of rural transformation by implementing all rural development programmes / schemes of central government and state government as well.

The institutional approach for rural development was continued during the Second Five Year Plan period by the introduction of Panchayati Raj. It also became the institutional framework for mobilizing people’s participation in rural development programme at the grassroots level. Accordingly, the system of rural development begun in 1950 was strengthened in the year 1959. As development agencies in the rural areas, the very objective of Panchayati Raj System was to contribute to the welfare and uplift of poor people living in the rural areas. Hence, from this period onwards, the Government of India and State Governments, while implementing the rural development programmes, emphasized on the institutional approach i.e. on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions and it also acted as an Institution of Rural Transformation by implementing all the programmes of Government of India as well as the State Governments all over the country.

After the lunch of Community Development Programmes during October 1952, the following major rural development programmes of Government were implemented with the involvement of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) to make rural transformation. The programmes were implemented for improving the socio-economic conditions of rural masses and to bring a change in the lives of people living in the rural areas of the country.

During the first and second plan period (1952-61), the rural development programme sub-divided into 41 different types of programmes in four broad categories namely (i) Constructional Programmes, (ii) Irrigation Programmes, (iii) Agricultural Programmes and (iv) Institutional and Other Programmes.

i) Constructional Programmes: Under the constructional programmes category, programmes undertaken for the construction...
of Kuchha road, Pucca road, culverts, drains, pavements of streets, school buildings, community centre buildings, dispensary building, house for Harijans and drinking water sources. The primary aim of the constructional programmes was to provide infrastructural facilities in the rural areas to facilitate rural transformation during this period. This type of programmes helped build rural infrastructure which is the soul of rural transformation.

ii) Irrigation Programmes: The irrigation programme was meant to provide irrigation facilities in the rural areas as rural areas are predominantly agriculture dependent areas which need better facilities of irrigation. Thus, under irrigation programme, the government undertook works to make irrigation facilities through wells, pumping sets, tube-wells and tanks. This type of programmes helped the rural agriculture sector people to make some improvement to some extent.

iii) Agricultural Programmes: Under this category of programme, the government provided financial assistance for the development of agriculture in rural areas. The government funds utilized for reclamation, soil conservation, consolidation of holdings, improve seeds, manure and fertilizers, pesticides, improved methods of co-nations and improved implements. The main aid of these programmes was to make improvement in agriculture and agricultural productivity with an aim to change the rural agriculture scenario.

iv) Institutional and Other Programmes: Under this category, programmes were undertaken for the institutional development in the rural areas. The government funds mainly earmarked for the institutional development. The government funds utilized to develop and support youth clubs, women organisation, community centre, Vikash Mandals, cooperative societies, distribution stores, maternity centres, dispensaries, veterinary dispensaries, key village centres, Panchayats, adult literacy centres, primary schools, training centres, cottage industries, production-cum-training centres, demonstrator plots and soakage pits and smokeless Chhulha. In other word, the institutional and other programmes were meant to build the rural infrastructure in order to make lasting improvements of rural areas in shape of infrastructure building.

During the third and fourth plan period (1962-74), the government of India emphasized on agriculture, area development, employment and social group development in the rural areas. During the Fifth Five Year Plan Period (1974-78) and Sixth Five Year Plan Period (1980-85), emphasis was laid on the removal of rural poverty and unemployment within a time bound period of 10 years. During the Sixth Five Year Plan Period (1980-85), more emphasis was laid on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions. During this period, programmes undertaken under four broad categories viz. (i) agricultural development programmes (ii) Area Development Programmes (iii) Employment Generation Programmes and (iv) Social Group formation programmes were as follows:

i) Agriculture Development Programme:

Under the Agriculture Development programmes like Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP), High Yielding Varieties Programme (HVP), National Demonstration Programme (NDP), Farmers’ Training and Education Programme (FTEP), Multiple Cooperation Programme (MCP), Special Programmes for Commercial Crops (SPCC) and Intensive Cattle Development Programmes (ICDP) were undertaken for rural transformation and development of rural masses.
ii) Area Development Programme:

The Area Development Programmes undertaken activities like Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP), Hill Area Development (HAD), Command Area Development (CAD) and Whole Village Development i.e. Integrated Rural Development Programme.

iii) Employment Generation Programme:

The employment generation programmes aimed at improving skill and knowledge of rural people and to make them ready for employment. A good number of employment generation schemes like Crash Schemes for Rural Employment (CSRE), Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Project (PIREP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment and National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) etc were launched by the government to provide skill training and employment to the rural people with the aim to improve the socio-economic conditions of the rural masses and make transformation in the living conditions of rural masses.

iv) Social Group Formation Programme:

Under Social Group Scheme, programmes like Small Farmers and Marginal Farmers and Agriculture Labour Development Agency (SFDA & MFAL), Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) etc. were implemented for the development of rural masses and to bring a change in socio-economic conditions of the people living in rural areas.

Besides the above programmes, in the year 1975 Government of India initiated the 20-Point Programme to mount an attack on rural poverty. The programme was announced on 14th January 1982. The 20-point programme was launched to eradicate poverty and to enhance the agricultural production and productivity, reduction in income inequalities, removal of socio-economic disparities and to bring improvement in life. For providing safe drinking water to rural people, the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) was started to provide adequate safe drinking water facilities to the rural families by supplementing the efforts made by the State Government under the Minimum Needs Programme. The National Drinking Water Mission was also launched in 1986 to facilitate quality of drinking water for rural people. The employment generation programmes like NREP and RLEGP got merged into a single scheme namely Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and was launched by the Government on 28th April 1989. The scheme aimed at reaching every Panchayat and seeks to provide employment to at least one person in a family living Below the Poverty Line (BPL) in the rural area for 50 to 100 days in a year at a place near his residence. The scheme was implemented by the Village Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis give the technical clearance to the plan of works, which was finalized at the Gram Panchayat level.

The Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched in the year 1993 during the 8th plan period to provide employment during the lean agricultural season. The primary objective of the Employment Assurance Scheme was to create additional wage employment opportunities during the period of acute shortage of wage employment through manual work for the rural poor living Below the Poverty Line. In this programme, the Panchayati Raj Institutions were playing a very crucial role while selection of the beneficiaries of the programme.

The Jawahar Gram Samriddhi Yojana (JGSY) was started during 1999 which was dedicated to development of demand driven rural infrastructure, including durable assets at village level and skills to enable the rural poor to increase the opportunities for sustainable employment. It also aimed at generating supplementary employment for the unemployed poor in the rural
area. Panchayati Raj Institutions played the role of selecting the beneficiaries and implementation of the rural infrastructural programmes in the community.

The Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) was launched during the year 2000-01, merging the Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) and Jawahar Gram Samriddhi Yojana (SGSY). The programme aimed at providing wage employment to rural people. Preference was given to agricultural wage earners, non-agricultural skilled wage earners, marginal farmers, women, members of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes, parents of child labours withdrawn from hazardous occupations, parents of handicapped children or adults with handicapped parents. The programme was implemented through the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

National Food for Work Programme (NFFWP) was launched during 2004 to generate additional supplementary wage employment and create assets. It also aimed to ensure a minimum level of employment and income to the poor, give the poor an opportunity to develop their collective strength, improve their economic position, reduce their vulnerability, discourage migration and provide access to health, education and welfare services in rural villages. Panchayati Raj Institutions played the role of selecting the beneficiaries and supervised the implementation of the programmes in their respective Gram Panchayats.

Current Rural Development Programmes:

1) Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY)

The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) is an anti-poverty programme with a focus on reduction of rural poverty through organization of poor at grass-roots level. The SGSY was launched w.e.f. 1.4.1999 as a new self employment programme. With the coming into effect of the SGSY, the earlier programmes namely Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment(TRYSEM), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas(DWCRA), the Ganga Kalyan Yojana(GKY) as well as the Million Wells Scheme are no longer in operation.

The main purpose of the SGSY programme is to bring the assisted poor families (Swarojgaris) above the Poverty Line by providing them with income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. SGSY aims at establishing a large number of micro enterprises in the rural areas building upon the potential of rural poor. Below Poverty Line (BPL) families living in rural areas constitute the target group of SGSY and within the target groups and special safeguards have been provided to vulnerable section by way of reserving 50% benefits to SCs/STs, 40% for women and 3% for persons with disabilities. The assisted families may be individual or Self Help Groups (SHGs). However, as per implementing guidelines, SGSY favours the group approach.

The financial assistance to the individual Swarojgaris or Self Help Groups is provided in the form of subsidy. Subsidy to individuals is uniform at 30% of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.7,500/=. In respect of SCs/STs, the subsidy is 50% of the project cost, subject to a maximum of Rs.10,000/=. For groups of Swarojgaris, the subsidy is 50% of the cost of the scheme, subject to a ceiling of Rs.1.25 Lakhs. There is no monitory limit on subsidy for irrigation projects, subsidy is back ended. The monitoring and reviews of the programme is being done through Central Level Coordination Committee (CLCC), State Level Coordination Committee (SLCC) and at Block/DRDA Level by field visit and physical verification of assets. During the current financial year i.e. 2013-14, a total amount of Rs.6000.00 lakhs has been targeted to be supported to the beneficiaries under this project by the Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Odisha.
2) Housing Scheme for Rural Poor:

Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) was launched in the year 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of RLEGP and continued as a sub-scheme of JRY. IAY has been delinked from the sub-scheme and has been made an independent scheme with effect from 1st January 1996. Under Indira Awas Yojana, rural people are provided support for housing under BPL category. The families belong to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and other vulnerable categories are considered eligible for the benefit under the scheme. The beneficiaries need to be selected through Palli Sabha and approved in the Gram Panchayat for final short-listing under the scheme. The beneficiaries are required to construct the houses for themselves. The amount of financial support provided to the beneficiaries decided by the government by revising the amount from time to time taking into account the prevailing market price of raw materials. During the current financial year i.e.2013-14 up to December 2013, a total amount of Rs.1358.142 lakhs has been spent under IAY for Scheduled Castes, Rs.18018.000 lakhs for Scheduled Tribes, Rs.1375.005 lakhs for minorities and Rs.12079.720 lakhs spent for others respectively as per the financial performance report of Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Odisha.

3) Mo Kudia:

Mo Kudia is a fully state sponsored scheme by the Government of Odisha which has been implemented w.e.f. 2008-09 financial year. Under this programme, housing support is provided to the homeless poor families. The objective of the scheme is to provide housing support to that family who does not find a place in the 1997 BPL list, 2002 Household Survey and waiting list of IAY prepared during the year 2006. The beneficiaries are selected by the Panchayati Raj Institutions those who have not been included in the above list but have a genuine housing problem and belong to poor family and living in rural areas. The beneficiaries are usually selected from the categories like poor family, persons with disability (with 40% and above), mentally retarded, widow, destitute woman, woman of domestic violence, woman head of family, adult orphans of government approved orphanages, leprosy and AIDS patient, family affected by naxal and racial violence, homeless due to flood and fire and home destroyed by elephants are selected for government support. Under this scheme, financial assistance of Rs.10,000/- is also granted to the families whose house is completely destroyed either by flood or fire. The government provides an amount of Rs.45,000/- to the beneficiary for construction of his house in normal districts and Rs.48,500 is granted to IAP districts.

4) Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC):

It is aptly said ‘water is life and sanitation is health’. Total sanitation is a part of rural upliftment which cannot be ignored while discussing about rural development programmes in PRIs. As per the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act 1992, sanitation is included in 11th schedule of our Constitution. Gram Panchayats have been accorded pivotal role in the implementation of sanitation schemes through Total Sanitation Campaign. Panchayati Raj Institutions at all three levels have to implement the total sanitation campaign. Panchayats are to take responsibility of social mobilization for construction of community toilets and for maintenance of clean environment by way of safe disposal of wastes. Panchayati Raj Institutions can also contribute from their own sources for school sanitation over and above the prescribed amount. Panchayats can also encourage opening rural sanitation marts for safe environment and Total Sanitation Campaign.

The Total Sanitation Campaign was launched in April 1999 in Odisha with emphasis on Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and massive training programme to masons,
PRIs as well as government functionaries for demand generation. The purpose of TSC is to bring about improvement in general quality of life in rural areas, since sanitation is one of the basic determinants of quality of life and human development index. Good sanitary practices prevent contamination of water and soil and thereby prevent disease. Besides, hygiene and sanitation is a crosscutting issue across all sectors having direct and indirect impact on health, economic, education, nutrition, environment, women empowerment (dignity, convenience and safety etc) and community development as well. Total Sanitation Campaign has been launched throughout the state to encourage sanitary practice and for that the government has also made provisions for cash award to three-tier PRIs on individual and institutional capacity for their best activities in this regard.

5) National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 which confers legal right to employment on the rural citizens, is landmark legislation in the history of independent India. The NREGA 2005 received the accent of President of India on 5th September 2005 and notified in the Gazette of India on 7th September 2005. It seeks “to provide for enhancement of livelihood security of the households in rural areas of the country by providing at least one hundred days of guaranteed wage employment in every financial year to every household whose adult members volunteer to do the unskilled work and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto made under the Act”. Subsequently, the scheme was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Initially, the programme was started in selected 200 districts of the country and later on it was started throughout the country. The launch of this ambitious scheme was guided by the Maharashtra Employment Guarantee Scheme (MEGS), which has been implemented for over last 30 years in Maharashtra, without decline in the demand for unskilled wage work. This is the only programme which has brought a radical change in the rural infrastructural development and the wage employment opportunity for the rural poor simultaneously. The programme is entirely planned, implemented and monitored by the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The novelty nature of the scheme has brought a revolutionary change in the socio economic scenario in rural India.

In Odisha, it was implemented during February 2006 in a few selected districts and from 2008 it has been implemented in all districts of Odisha. With the provisions of NREGA 2005, the Government of Odisha has formulated a National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS-Odisha). The purpose of the scheme is to give effect to the legal guarantee of work, by providing at least 100 days of guaranteed employment to every rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work subject to conditions of the Act. The objective of the scheme is to provide livelihood safety to rural families and to strengthen the economic conditions of rural labour and to give them an opportunity to live with dignity. The unique feature of the scheme is that when a registered job card holder fails to get work within 15 days of his application to the Gram Panchayat, he is entitled to get unemployment allowance as per law. The scheme is being implemented through three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions under the direct control and supervision of Collector of the district, DRDA and Panchayat Samiti. The PRIs being the implementing agency, prepares the annual action plans and monitor and supervise the programme through social audit programme in the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Sabha recommends different works to be undertaken in the Gram Panchayat out of the MGNREGS funds and accordingly the budget and other technical works are being sent to the Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad for administrative and financial approval. At Gram Panchayat level, the programme is implemented by the Gram Panchayat under the
direct control and supervision of Sarpanch and Chief Executive Officer of Gram Panchayat. The Programme is being monitored and supervised through Panchayat level, Block level, district level and State level committees and a Grievance Redressal Mechanism has been developed to redress the grievance of people under the system. During the current financial year i.e.2013-14, up to December 2013, a total of Rs.73251.19 lakhs has been spent under the project throughout Odisha covering 30 districts as per the financial performance report of Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Odisha.

6) Backward Regions Grant Fund:

The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) programme is being implemented through Panchayati Raj Institution to address regional imbalances in development. The fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows in identified districts in Odisha like Balangir, Kalahandi, Phulbani, Boudh, Keonjhar, Rayagada, Deogarh, Koraput, Sambalpur, Dhenkanal, Malkangiri, Sonepur, Gajapati, Ganjam, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Nabarangapur, Jharsuguda and Nuapada. BRGF consists of two funding windows (a) capacity building fund and (b) substantially untied grants. The capacity building fund is primarily used to build capacity in planning, implementation, monitoring, accounting and improving accountability and transparency. The allocation of substantially untied grants will be used by the Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies to address critical gaps in integrated development identified through the participatory planning process. The funds are usually used for construction of Cement Concrete Road in rural areas, construction of Panchayat’s own office building if not available, maintenance of Panchayat office with prior approval of Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Odisha, and construction of drainage system by both sides of rural roads in villages etc.

BRGF insists on integrated, decentralized and participatory plans consolidated by District Planning Committees (DPCs) with the funding pattern being 25% for Anganwadis, 16% for schools, classrooms, compound, 14% for drinking water and 10% for Gram Panchayat buildings. The development grant of BRGF is largely untied in nature and the Panchayati Raj Institutions would largely decide the actual projects to be taken up. During the current financial year i.e.2013-14, as per the financial performance report, out of total expenditure of Rs.16400.97 lakhs, the Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Odisha, has already spent and submitted utilization certificate of Rs.3051.99 lakhs to Government of India.

7) Gopabandhu Gramin Yojana:

A new initiative called Gopabandhu Gramin Yojana (GGY) was launched by the Government of Odisha during 2006-07 with a view to provide additional developmental assistance to the targeted 11(Eleven) districts of the State not covered under the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). With this Scheme, Rural Connectivity and quality of rural life has undergone tremendous change. Most of rural roads in the targeted districts have been covered. In order to further strengthen rural connectivity, both inter village and intra village, in the targeted districts during the 12th Plan Period with due importance to electrification and water supply, these revised comprehensive guidelines and are hereby issued. It has been conceptualized for providing additional development assistance to the targeted 10 districts namely Angul, Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jajpur, Jagatsingpur, Kendrapara, Khurda, Nayagarh and Puri which are not covered under the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF).

The primary objective of the scheme is to provide additional funds to the targeted districts for development of infrastructure primarily consisting of Bijili (Electricity), Pani (Water) and
Sadak (Road) to every revenue village in the identified eleven districts. The additional development funds provided under this Yojana is of untied nature and supplements the programmes, which are already available in the aforesaid sectors and provide synergy and convergence to the different development programmes. As per the Government instructions, 75% of the fund to be earmarked for the construction of village concrete roads and the rest to be used for Bijili (electricity) and Pani (water) component. For the transparency and accountability, the programme is being monitored and supervised by a village level Vigilance Committee and by conducting social audit at Panchayat level. The district Collector along with district level officials is also authorized to make field visit to activate the programme.

During the current financial year i.e. 2013-14, as per the financial performance report up to December 2013, the Department of Panchayati Raj, Government of Odisha, has spent a total of Rs.314.09 lakhs for electrification projects (Bijili), Rs.15083.14 lakhs for construction of roads (Sadak) and Rs.545.66 lakhs for water supply projects (Pani) respectively under the scheme.

8) 13th Finance Commission Grant-in-Aid:

The Finance Commission is a constitutional body set up every five years under Article 270, 275 and 280 of our Constitution to make recommendations relating to distribution of net proceeds of taxes between union and states, the principles which should govern the grants-in-aid of the revenues of the states out of the Consolidated Fund of India and the measures needed to augment the Consolidated Fund of a State to supplement the resources of the Panchayat and Municipalities. The 13th Finance Commission of India, Dr. Bijaya Kelkar made his recommendations during December 2009 and it came into effect from April 2010 and to be continued up to March 2015. In Odisha context, the release and utilization of funds under 13th Finance Commission grant-in-aids has been earmarked for general basic grant-in-aids, Operation and Management, Pure Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation, Management of solid waste and drainage system of rural areas, Database Management, Accounts and Audit, upgradation and Maintenance of Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat office buildings etc.

9) Cement Concrete(CC) Road in Rural Areas:

The Panchayati Raj Department, Government of Odisha has taken initiative in the past for construction of Cement Concrete Road in the villages under various schemes in order to improve the quality of life and hygienic conditions in the rural villages. It has become a very popular scheme and one of the most sought after schemes in the rural areas. In the past, though Cement Concrete Roads were taken up under different schemes, all the villages have not yet been covered. The State Government has decided to give thrust to the scheme for construction of intra village Cement Concrete Roads in the villages with the objective of attaining saturation in the State with special focus on Vulnerable Tribal Groups like STs/SCs habitations. Government has given importance on construction of good quality roads. The programme is being implemented taking Block as a Unit and Panchayat Samitis are authorized to prepare the plan of action and funds are being provided directly to the Blocks. Under this programme, funds are provided based on population of a village. Rs.3 Lakhs sanctioned to a village having population of 0-500, and population ranging 501 to 1000 gets a grant of Rs.5 lakhs and Rs.7 lakhs provided to the villages where there is a population of more than 1000 people in rural areas. The Panchayat Samiti i.e. Block is authorized to work as implementing agency in every district. The programme is monitored and supervised by the district level officers along with district collector through field visit and physical verification of works implemented.
10) Drinking Water Supply Scheme:

Drinking Water Supply Scheme aims at providing sufficient pure and safe drinking water to all rural household on continuous basis for domestic as well as cooking purpose, since providing safe drinking water to all sections of rural population on a continuous basis is of paramount importance. It has been recommended that water be treated not as an ‘economic good’ but an ‘economic resource’ which is essential for both growth and development. Accordingly, during February 2005, the State Government took a policy decision to implement all drinking water supply schemes on a participatory mode to improve service delivery system and sustainability. The programme termed as Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) is under implementation since 1972-73. In 1986 it was renamed as National Drinking Water Mission. Under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme, a large number of drinking water supply sources such as piped water supply projects, hand pumps, tube-wells and sanitary wells have been installed in the rural areas. Jaldhara is a strategy adopted by the Government of Odisha for the implementation of water facilities for the rural habitations through different projects. In this scheme, the Gram Panchayat is to identify the biggest village and go for the piped water supply and Gram Panchayat is to operate and maintain the existing spot sources.

Above all, Panchayats at village levels are expected to perform certain obligatory functions to provide basic services like health, education, food safety, social safety, agriculture, environment protection and management of common property etc. For this, the Government of Odisha, besides Panchayati Raj Department, with the help of other line departments is also implementing different programmes/schemes with the active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) at field levels. So, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) play a vital role in selecting the beneficiaries and proper implementation, monitoring and supervision of programmes at the field level. It also makes all out efforts for better implementation of the programmes day-by-day for the greater benefit of rural people.

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