

Mission Shakti : Success Beyond Target

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Indian culture as well as tradition respects women as 'Shakti', the source of power. She serves being the form of Mother, Sister, Wife and Daughter. Days have passed. Now she is free of every burden and has proved herself quite capable. After the successful political role of women in Panchayati Raj system, for which Late Biju Babu deserves all the credit, now they have proved their excellence in economic sector being a part of family's income source through Mission Shakti. Groups constituted under Mission Shakti are basically non-formal organizations. In order to get rid of financial crunch, this idea was conceived in the mind of the poor people. They assembled themselves and initiate such effort. 36,000 WSHGs were there in the State prior to the launching of 'Mission Shakti'. Banking organizations, Co-operative Banks, Private Banking sectors, N.G.Os and both the Union and State Governments extend a helping

hand. Where Banking organizations were reluctant to sanction individual loans apprehending the uncertainty in repayment there they cheerfully grant group loans and also double the loan amount. Group loans generally grow with small business, agriculture and consumer loan including repayment of the previous loan from the private money lenders (Sahukar) and for medical treatment etc. Most of the people, who were below poverty line, now by this way, have been excluded from the B.P.L list. The definition of the word 'poor' impacts in a certain directive to their mentality and they try to come out of the said



depressive word with self-confidence. According to CARE India and SIDBI, there are over 16 lakh Self Help Groups throughout the country. An amount of over Rs. 6500 crore has been sanctioned towards these S.H.Gs. The aforesaid statements were expressed by the said Organisations in the year 2005. Orissa, among

the eastern States, occupies a distinct place in formation of record number of Women Self Help Groups. The Scheme 'Mission Shakti' was launched in Orissa on 8th March, 2001 on International Women Day. A target was fixed for at least one lakh S.H.Gs by the end of the year 2005. But in fact, 1,49,233 WSHGs were formed with 1878985 members by the end of February 2005. Latest on Govt. papers reveals that 1,93,652 S.H.Gs with 24,57,555 nos. of members and saving of an amount of Rs.18292.62 lakhs are in total by the end of May 2006. But the Bank report says that till date, 2,40,000 S.H.Gs are planning their way of life throughout the State. Women Self Help Groups are actively performing the role of reorganizing the village as well as the country. Saving of an amount nearing Rs. 200 crore has been possible through Women S.H.Gs where as more than Rs. 55462.18 lakhs have already been sanctioned as loan assistance towards 2,22,142 A/c holders by the end of March-2006. The Units run by S.H.Gs are in Cattle rearing, Goat farm, Poultry, Bee keeping, Horticulture, Tissue culture, Floriculture, Pisci-culture, Vegetable and Mushroom cultivation, Sewing, Handicrafts, Making of soft toys, Cottage industries' products handicrafts, Pickle and Spice production etc. S.H.Gs. are also carrying out labor-intensive Programmes. Selling of control kerosene and L.P.G has also been handed over to these S.H.Gs. The State Government has directed to the Health and Urban Development Department for purchasing phenyl and pesticides prepared by the S.H.Gs. 1080 S.H.G candidates have been imparted with Computer Training. During natural calamity, S.H.Gs are being engaged in relief and restoration works. Panchayati Raj and Horticulture Departments are also one step ahead in providing special

loan assistance to some selected S.H.Gs. A Programme named 'Trupti' is being implemented including the S.H.Gs in 36 Blocks of 9 districts i.e. Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Nayagarh, Khurda and Angul in first phase under Orissa Poverty Alleviation Mission. The State Government has also requested D.F.I.D to include Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundargarh and Sambalpur districts in this Scheme. For about 500 industrial entrepreneurs in each Block has been conceptualized. They will be provided with an amount of Rs.1 lakh each out of which 50% is grant-in-aid and rest 50% has to collect by these S.H.Gs. Women once engaged only in household work are now generating income for their family. By the help of the S.H.Gs, women in village are discussing themselves regarding the day-to-day development in social, political, economical, cultural and spiritual fields. They also discuss their personal and family problems and find a way for solution to their impediments through S.H.Gs. Participating in the process of development and welfare of their village they successfully perform their role. In Adivasi populated areas, the S.H.Gs are fighting against illiteracy, poverty, superstitions and sale and distillation of spurious country liquor. They also create public awareness regarding the eventuality bursts out of drinking wine or using other excise-goods. People can escape their problems by helping each other. It does mean not only to the fiscal but also to every aspect of life. The moral power of women representatives in Panchayati Raj system becomes strong and decisive owing to these S.H.Gs as they certainly create congenial atmosphere for Co-operative movement as well as social reforms. The 'zoolum' of the 'Sahukar' lessens by this way. Programmes and

preparations undertaken by the Government for proper health-service towards women and children are successfully being implemented; infant mortality rate has been reduced and "care of the pregnant one helps in bringing out a healthy child" is well taught in the areas where S.H.Gs are active.

A statistics reveals that over 24 lakh families have been included in this economic movement. They are making efforts for betterment of their living standard through 244 income-generating Programmes. Observing the unexpected success in the State, the jubilant State Government has decided for sanctioning another loan assistance of Rs. 343 crores towards 1,47,951 S.H.Gs. A target for 2 lakh Women S.H.Gs by 2008 was fixed. But the above-mentioned figure i.e. 2,40,000 S.H.Gs have already been possible by the end of July 2006 clears that the Mission is success beyond target. High-level discussions and field-level workshops are being held regularly for chalking out strategy for marketing facility. Exhibition-cum-sale is also being organized thrice in a calendar year at Delhi, Mumbai including 9 places of the State. Besides, Sales Centers are also there in Bhubaneswar Ekamra Hat. Emphasis has been laid on selling of the products by the Self Help Groups. Considering into all bearings, necessary training is being imparted in phase wise and over 20,000 Women Self Help Groups have been imparted with training so far. There is no problem for the Banking Organisations as 95 % of the loan

amount is being collected timely. Really it is an investment at grass root level.

Recently it is learnt that, 25 % of the S.H.Gs lacking managerial skill and requisite knowledge as well as art to successfully run the institution are being extended with necessary helps by the Government. Role of a woman is there in every man's success. Village women help their family being an active member of S.H.Gs. They discuss various problems pertaining to the progress of their village. Self-confidence in women increases and gender biases operating against them decreases. It is said that our country lives in village as 70 % of the total population of the country reside in rural community. If we make the village socially, politically, economically, culturally and spiritually sound, the fortune of the country would be like-wise. And the Indian culture will certainly be able in creating a congenial atmosphere for 'Basudhaiba Kutumbakam'; the whole world is a family, basing upon the truth that the Omnipotent always act for peace, progress and prosperity for the whole mankind, His best creation on this planet.

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