

Swanirvar Gram Sarkar: An Observation Note on Gram Sarkar in three Villages of Bogra

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b) Objectives

The main objective of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar is to attain self-reliance in the national economy through the self-reliance each village with the participation of the community in planning and implementation of different activities. In order to achieve this objective the Gram Sarkar is to perform the following functions :

- i. Increasing the food production;
- ii. Population control and family planning;
- iii. Mass library; and
- iv. Maintenance of the law and order; holding salish to settle local disputes.

c) Executive summary

The Gram Pradhan and other members must be chosen through the consensus of the villagers present in the open meeting and it must be done in such a manner that it ensures the representation in the Swanirvar Gram Sarkar of people of all walks of life and different functional/interest groups. But it has been observed from the visit of these three villages that Swanirvar Gram Sarkar is not formed in accordance with the usual process. Not to talk of functional representation, it has been reported that even no meeting was arranged in case of two villages. The villagers do not know about the formation of it. It has been observed that even the Gram Pradhan is not fully aware of the persons who are members of the Swanirvar Gram Sarkar. It has been done so secretly in many cases of the three villages visited even the members are not aware of their membership.

There is another rule that the choice of Gram Pradhan and members through consensus shall be recorded and signed by the Circle Officer or the person authorised by him in this behalf and copy of it shall be left with the Gram Pradhan chosen in the meeting. But it has been observed from the recent visit that in none of the villages, the Gram Pradhan has the copy of the chosen persons in the Swanirvar Gram Sarkar.

As soon as (not later than thirty days after the choice of the Gram Pradhan and the Members) the Circle Officer shall appoint a day with three days notice in advance, for meeting to be held at a place within the Gram and the Swanirvar Gram Sarkar shall assume the charge of the office in that meeting. In the meeting Gram Pradhan must subscribe to an oath of office in a form in Bangla. But in case of these three villages, only Gram Pradhan of the Daripara and Kaltapara took oath but the members did not take oath and in case of Ramnagar no oath of office has yet been administered. Even the oath of Gram Pradhans in case of two villages was administered in the office of Union Parishad and not in their respective villages. Though members did not take oath but still Swanirvar Gram Sarkars in two villages (Daripara and Kaltapara) have assumed the office.

Neither Gram Pradhan nor the members of three villages visited, have any clear cut idea about the aims and objectives of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar. They also do not know the procedures to be followed and none of the Swanirvar Gram Sarkars maintain the records of their functions. Even the lists of the members are not found in their custody. Training should be imparted to the Gram Pradhan and members in order to orientate them with the functional procedures of Gram Sarkar.

The persons assigned with the responsibility of organizing the meeting to form Gram Sarkar have been found negligent in the performance of their responsibility. Therefore, for the formation of Gram Sarkar in the right manner, the concerned government officials must be more dutiful and sincere. Otherwise, the participation of the villagers in the formation of Gram Sarkar would never be ensured.

The villagers' cooperation is essential for the smooth functioning of Gram Sarkar. This cooperation should be ensured only when they would consider it their own organization. The participation of the villagers, in the formation of Gram Sarkar must be ensured for the development of such kind feeling. From the present study as well as from other sources, it has been found that the participation of the villagers in the formation of Gram Sarkar in many cases is almost absent. In such a situation, the villagers can not consider Gram Sarkar as their own organization. Moreover, a serious resentment

has been observed among them. Such a feeling about an institution like Gram Sarkar is not at all congenial for its smooth running. The Government should make a thorough survey over the matter for identification of villages where deviation has happened with the formation of Gram Sarkar and take necessary arrangements to form it again there. This is essential for the removal of resentment from the masses as well as for getting the required cooperation from them.

It has been observed that almost all members of Swanirvar Gram Sarkars are not aware about the objectives and functions of it. Training on the philosophy of Gram Sarkar and its implementation procedures should be arranged for the members of Gram Sarkar.

Besides this, the following points have attracted the attention of the author.

To run any organization smoothly, there is a need of an office. The office is treated as a venue where necessary documents are preserved; officials sit for the purpose of doing their routine work. But in case of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar, there is no house to be used as an office and this can hamper the proper functioning of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar.

Money is the nerve centre for the effective management of any organization. It is needed to run different projects and to pay for its salaried employees, if any. But at the moment, the government has not spelled out clearly the source of income for Gram Sarkar. Therefore, lack of any clear cut source of income can create some challenging difficulties for the smooth running of Swanirvar Gram Sarkar.

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