

Need:

Even after 63 years of independence, benefits of democracy yet to reach among tribal communities. On the other hand, industrial and green revolutions have been taken place by sacrificing basic rights of tribal communities. For most tribal communities their only source of survival is forest products. Sadly, their forest land also has been snatched away by the government through laws. Large numbers of tribal were displaced in the name of development by constructing big dams and industrial hubs. The tribal communities never have been benefited through these developments. On the contrary they lost everything.

To fight against these challenges and protect the identity, culture and self respect of the tribal community various protest movements were taken place in Gujarat like revolt of Kisansabha, Satipati movement, movement for forest land dwellers right in Dang district, etc. In 1993, government of India established a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Dilipsingh Bhuria, Member of Parliament to get recommendations to mild down the unrest among tribal as well as their alternative development.

On the basis of Bhuria Samiti's recommendations the new law called "Panchayat Extension in Scheduled Area – 1996" was prepared. Under this law, the power has given to the village people (Gramsabha) to decide their direction of development. This is also called the law of Tribal Self Rule. It is true that under the new law tribal are given enormous decisive powers of decision making. However the benefits of the act are still remain on paper as the tribal neither aware about the law nor they have capabilities to demand their rights. It is the need of the time to make them aware and develop their capabilities to enjoy their rights. Instead of making a new tribal self-rule act, on the basis of Central Act the Gujarat State Government has only amended Gujarat Panchayat Act in 1998 and made the rules of Gramsabha in 2009, after 11 years of the act came in force. This shows the seriousness of the state Government about the implementation of the law and the tribal development.

In the beginning organization has initiated work to aware the people about PESA and implement the same in their villages. Though there was a lack of resources the organization reached in much organized way in some of the villages of Gujarat. It is very important to replicate what happened in **Chandapur** (1st Tribal Self Rule village of Gujarat) and nearby villages and the villages need continues support, guidance and legal help until and unless this process initiated and sustain in large numbers of tribal villages of southern belt.