

Monitoring activities of Panchayats

396. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has set up or is planning to set up any system for monitoring the activities of Panchayats;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken by Government to make Panchayats achieve their objective and to make them responsible?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj reviews the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the States/UTs covered under Part-IX of the Constitution through review meetings and reports. Moreover, the Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) intends to incentivize States for empowerment of Panchayats and enhancing accountability through a detailed review. Local Self Government Institutions (Panchayats) is a State subject. Accordingly, monitoring of activities of Panchayats is in the domain of the respective State.

(c) Does not arise.

Recognition of Girijana Tandas

397. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any proposal to recognise the girijana tandas where more than 500 people live in the agency areas of gram panchayats in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) if not, by when such proposal would be implemented; and

(d) the funds released for the present tandas in each State especially in East and West Godavari districts in agency areas of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) to (c) Union Government has not received any such proposal. It is purely a State subject relating to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh. However, the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has informed that it has received such proposal and the State Government is examining it.

(d) No funds have been released by the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to Tandas separately now.

National level consultation with Panchayats

398. SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) what concrete measures were adopted towards operationalisation of National Policy for Farmers after March, 2008 session of national level consultation with Panchayats;

Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) what has been the result towards developing greater technical support for each Gram Panchayat and attaching Agriculture University students with the Panchayati Raj institutions; and

(c) whether structured programmes were formulated for achieving the objectives stipulated during March, 2008 session?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) to (c) During the National Consultation of Panchayats for operationalisation of National Policy for Farmers 2007 held on 16-17 March, 2008, it was unanimously agreed that Panchayats have an important role to play in order to give an impetus to agricultural production, productivity and sustainability to farming. Accordingly, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Agriculture have written to all concerned Ministries and Departments, Agriculture Universities and State Governments to operationalize the National Policy for Farmers in accordance with the decision taken/recommendations made during the National Consultation. Indian Council of Agriculture Research has also been requested to organize a conference of Vice Chancellors of all the universities and other related organizations and PRLs in order to achieve greater technical support to farmers by involving Agriculture Universities' students to strengthen the extension services at the grass root level.

Categorization of BPL beneficiaries

399. SHRI SUBHASH PRASAD YADAV: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the cases for categorization of Below Poverty Line (BPL) beneficiaries;

(b) whether there have been variations in the poverty estimates of Union and State Governments;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any committee under Shri N.C. Saxena has been set up to look into the matter;

(e) if so, the details thereof including terms of references;

(f) whether any order has been passed by any court in respect of estimates of poverty and the base year for reckoning such estimates;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether a new survey for poverty estimates is proposed; and

(i) if so, the details thereof along with the likely time therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN): (a) to (c) The Planning Commission is the nodal agency in the Government of India for estimation of poverty at the national and State level which categorises the people as Below Poverty Line (BPL). The State-wise poverty is estimated from the State-specific poverty lines and State Specific Consumer Expenditure Distribution obtained from the large sample surveys on Household Consumer Expenditure conducted by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) after an interval of 5 years approximately following the Expert Group method.

(d) and (e) The Ministry of Rural Development conducts the BPL Census in association with States and UTs to identify the households in the rural areas living below the poverty line who could be