

- (c) what more Government is doing to make this system successful;
- (d) whether Government is aware that in some States a number of departments have been given to the Panchayats without giving any funds; and
- (e) what step Government is taking to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) to (e) Panchayats are functioning in States/UTs to which provisions of Part IX of Constitution applies, except in Jharkhand. J&K has its own Panchayati Raj Act elections to Panchayats have not been held.

In the Constitution, under Article 243G, State Legislatures are to endow Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government and to plan and implement schemes for economic development and social justice including those in relation to matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule and under Article 243H authorize Panchayats to collect taxes, duties etc. and provide for grants in aid. As per the Constitution, the responsibility of devolving appropriate funds, functions and functionaries (3Fs) to Panchayats vests with States and States vary in the extent to which they have devolved the 3 Fs.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj has supported States in Activity Mapping to systematically delineate activities to be performed by various tiers of Panchayats across subjects; issued guidelines on devolution of functions, funds and functionaries; incentivized States to devolve 3Fs under the Panchayat Empowerment Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS); and held discussions and reviews with States to devolve powers to Panchayats.

Advisory by Ministry on role of PRIs

4269. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is fact that his Ministry has issued an advisory in January, 2009, to various Ministries of the Central Government to delineate the role and responsibilities of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the Centrally Sponsored Schemes;
- (b) if so, the details of the advisory;
- (c) whether some Ministries have not adhered to this advisory;
- (d) if so, the details of such Ministries and the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether any such advisory has been issued to the States as well during the last two years; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)'s advisory dated 19.1.2009 to all Central Ministries (available on web site www.panchayat.gov.in) elucidates:-

(i) Constitutional provision relating to the responsibilities of the PRIs in the planning and implementation schemes.

(ii) Critical role of the CSSs/ACAs in devolution of 3Fs upon the PRIs (it included an indicative activity matrix).

(iii) Comparative advantages of PRIs over the departmental structures in planning, implementing and monitoring of Schemes.

(iv) PRIs and District Planning Committees (DPCs) as the appropriate mechanism for convergence of plethora of schemes, pooling of resources and better outcomes.

(v) Essential features that scheme guidelines should incorporate.

(vi) Disadvantages of creating parallel bodies to the exclusion/dilution of role of PRIs and its Committees.

(c) and (d) Ministries have varied in the extent to which they have involved PRIs in CSSs/ACAs. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNAREGA), Mid-Day Meals Scheme (MDM), Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), Saakshar Bharat Mission, Girls Hostel in Economically Backward Blocks, National Rural Health Mission etc. are CSSs that have articulated the roles and responsibilities for PRIs. MoPR has been pursuing with the Central Ministries to provide appropriate roles to Panchayats in their CSSs/ACAs.

(e) and (f) MoPR has also issued detailed guidelines to States/UTs for devolving functions, functionaries and funds (available on website www.panchayat.gov.in) which include:- (i) need for Activity Mapping; (ii) steps in Activity Mapping for clarity on the role and responsibilities of Panchayats at different tiers; (iii) issuing of orders and guidelines by Line Departments regarding transfer of functions to PRIs; (iv) matching devolution of funds and functionaries to PRIs; and (v) role of Gram Sabhas and Standing Committees.

Pricing policy of natural gas

4270. SHRI K.N. BALAGOPAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state: