

**Steps to strengthen Panchayati Raj System**

†1476. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state the steps likely to be taken by Government to strengthen Panchayat Raj System?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO): As 'Panchayats' is a State subject, the Panchayati Raj system is primarily the responsibility of the States. The Ministry of Panchayat Raj supports strengthening of Panchayats through its various schemes. It operates the Backward Regions Grants Fund (BRGF) in some identified backward districts of the country. Under the Scheme, untied funds are given for meeting critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirements. BRGF also aims to strengthen Panchayats through its capacity building component. Under the Scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana (RGSY) financial assistance is provided to the non BRGF districts for capacity building and construction of Panchayat Ghars. The e-Panchayat scheme strengthens Panchayats by e-enabling. Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) focuses especially on Elected Women Representatives. The Ministry also rewards States which devolve powers to the Panchayats to encourage State Governments to strengthen Panchayats.

**Release of funds for Bargarh district of Odisha**

1477. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government would release funds to Bargarh district of Odisha during 2012-13 even though the Action plan has not yet been prepared;
- (b) if so, when it would be released; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO): (a) to (c) As per the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) Programme guidelines, funds are released against proposals, alongwith all the necessary documents received from the State Governments in the form of District Annual Plans duly consolidated by the District Planning Committees. The Annual District Plan of Bargarh for the year 2012-13 has not been received from the State Government of Odisha so far. In view of this, funds can not be released till District Action Plan duly consolidated by District Planning Committee is received from the State Government.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.