

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3076
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.08.2017

STRENGTHENING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS

3076. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- a) whether Constitution 73rd Amendment Act, 1992 brought about major changes in Panchayati Raj System;
- b) if so, the extent to which the Panchayati Raj System has been strengthened over the years;
- c) whether during 12th Five Year Plan Approach Paper the issues were not addressed and adequate funds were not provided to the Panchayati Raj Institutions by the Union Government and the Central and State Finance Commissions; and
- d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to ensure that Panchayati Raj Institutions are strengthened for development of villages and have greater say in their routine daily functioning?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
(SHRI PARSHOTTAM RUPALA)

(a) & (b): The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (73rd CAA), 1992 incorporated as Part IX in the Constitution has provided Constitutional Status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The Constitution of India recognizes Panchayats as 'Institutions of local self-government'. 'Panchayats' being 'Local Bodies' is a State subject mandated under Part IX and List II (State List) of Seventh Schedule (Article 246) of the Constitution of India. Under Part IX of the Constitution mandatory provisions, which include three tiers of Panchayats, direct election to seats at all three tiers of Panchayats and indirect elections to offices of chairpersons of Block and District Panchayats, reservations in seats and offices for the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and women, rotation of reserved seats and offices of chairpersons and setting up of State Election Commissions and holding elections to Panchayats every five years have been implemented by all States except very few delays in holding of timely elections and in constitution of State Finance Commissions in some States/UTs. The implementation of the provisions of part IX of the Constitution has resulted in the strengthening of Panchayati Raj System in the country.

(c) & (d): 12th Five Year Plan (FYP) Approach Paper delved into the challenge that requires greater attention to ensure better implementation, improved accountability and impetus to several programmes aimed at building rural and urban infrastructure and providing basic services with the objective of increasing inclusiveness and reducing poverty. Accordingly, the MoPR has been taking several steps to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions in the States and Union Territories covered under Part IX of the Constitution through provisioning of financial and technical assistance for capacity building of Panchayati Raj Institutions, including Elected Representatives (ERs), to enable them to perform the devolved functions effectively and efficiently. Under the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) for the period 2015-20, grants to the tune of Rs. 2,00,292.20 crore are allocated to Gram Panchayats constituted under Part IX of the Constitution, for delivering basic services and technical & administrative support towards operations. The amount allocated for the Fourteenth Finance Commission is more than threefold to the grants of Rs. 65160.76 crore recommended by Thirteenth Finance Commission for the award period 2010-15 for all levels of PRIs.

MoPR also incentivises the States which have devolved more functions, funds and functionaries to the Panchayats. The States are regularly assisted in strengthening systems of budgeting, accounting and auditing, development of software applications and imparting training for bringing transparency, accountability and efficiency in functioning of Panchayats and for preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans by the Gram Panchayats for effective development.
