

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 443
ANSWERED ON 20.07.2021**

CREATION OF VILLAGE LEVEL ISOLATION CENTRES

443. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any steps to combat pandemic situation with the help of local Panchayati Raj bodies like Gram-Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether any additional financial support is proposed for the creation of village level isolation centers with necessary infrastructure and facilities; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ
(SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL)

(a) Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has been providing technical and advisory support to the Panchayats towards taking various steps to combat Covid pandemic situation. The States have been advised to enable Panchayats/ Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) to facilitate sanitation and social distancing in the rural areas. It has been advised for Panchayats take up effective communication strategy for spreading awareness involving display boards, dissemination on Covid appropriate behavior, mass customized communication SMS/whatsapp messages and adherence to appropriate behaviour at the worksites. During the Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyan (GKRA) launched by the Government from 20 June, 2020 to 22 October, 2020, the implementing states were advised to utilize the Central Finance Commission Grants in convergence with MGNREGS in order to provide employment to returning migrant labourers in construction of Panchayat Bhawans and other public infrastructure.

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has issued a detailed Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) dated 16-5-2021 on 'Covid 19 Containment and Management in peri-urban, rural and tribal areas' which outlines the containment and clinical management practices with respect to Covid – 19 management, The SOP has advocated a multi-pronged approach led by Gram Panchayats (GPs) and engaging other stakeholders for coordinating community action and awareness creation at the village level. MoPR has accordingly advised the states to empower RLBs to implement various instructions contained in the SOP. In order to monitor the various key performance indicators on real time basis, MoPR has recently launched an online dashboard capturing the key indicators on Covid Preparedness and Covid Response in rural areas at different levels of Panchayats.

(b) & (c) To enable the Panchayats to effectively fight the Covid pandemic, MoPR has advised the States to enable Gram Panchayats to utilise the Fourteenth Finance Commission (XIV FC) unspent balance grants and Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) Basic (Untied) grants for the purchase of masks, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits, sanitizers, oximeters, infrared thermometers, oxygen cylinders/concentrators etc, preparation of isolation centre/ Covid Care Centre, creation of additional beds in the Covid Care Centre etc. The expenditure involving larger outlays like group insurance premiums, vaccination costs for the village population, etc were advised to be met from the Finance Commission Grants with the District/ Block Panchayats.

In order to provide the necessary resources to the Panchayats, the first instalment of Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) Basic (Untied) Grants and Tied Grants for FY 2020-21 were released by Ministry of Finance (MoF) based on recommendation of MoPR, without any pre-conditions to the RLBs. Further, in view of the sudden rise in the Covid pandemic, the first instalment of XV FC Basic (Untied) Grants of FY 2021-22 to 25 States were also released in advance in the month of May, 2021, as a special case, so that these funds could be utilized by the Panchayats for various prevention and mitigation measures to combat the Covid pandemic.
