

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3664
ANSWERED ON:12.12.2000
PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS IN ASSAM
RAJEN GOHAIN

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Panchayat elections have not been held in Assam;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (c) the manner in which the additional monitoring systems including control of funds are being contemplated by the Union Government to stop misuse and misutilisation of funds for rural development in Assam; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure early holding of Panchayat elections in the State?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT [SHRI M. VENKAI AH NAIDU]

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Panchayat Elections, which were due in the State in October, 1997, were first postponed in early 1998 citing the then on-going Budget Session of the State Legislature. Later, the elections were postponed owing to monsoons and the law and order situation in the State. The Government of Assam, subsequently, intimated that the Registrar General (Census Operations) had put a restriction on holding of Panchayat Elections during March-June, 2000. The State Government decided to hold Panchayat Elections during November, 2000; however, on a Writ Petition filed in the Hon'ble High Court at Guwahatipraying for a direction to the competent authorities not to hold Panchayat Elections in the areas falling under the Mising Autonomous Council, the Hon'ble High Court directed the State Government to dispose off the Representation, before the notification for holding elections was issued.

2. Several steps have been taken towards proper execution and monitoring of Programmes in all States/UTs, including Assam, for the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development, which include :-

- (i) Constitution of Vigilance and Monitoring Committees at the Block, District and State levels.
- (ii) Utilisation Certificates and Audit Reports are essential for release of Second Installment of Central Share of funds.
- (iii) Non-diversion of funds Certificate from the District Authority is required before release of Second Installment of Central Share of funds.
- (iv) Field Visits by officials of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- (v) Physical verification of the assets created by District/State officials.

3. The Government of Assam has been addressed to take appropriate steps towards early disposal of the Representation in respect of the Mising Autonomous Council Areas and conduct Panchayat Elections in the State at the earliest.