

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
PANCHAYATI RAJ  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:753

ANSWERED ON:28.07.2005

AUTONOMY TO GRAM PANCHAYATS

Chavda Shri Harisinh Pratapsinh; Gadakh Shri Tukaram Gangadhar; Khaire Shri Chandrakant Bhaurao; Mahato Shri Sunil Kumar; Singh Deo Smt. Sangeeta Kumari

**Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has so far not provided autonomy to Gram Panchayats;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to enable the Gram Panchayats for self-governance?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ ( SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR )

(a),(b) & (c) Article 243G of the Constitution provides for the devolution of powers to empower Panchayati Raj Institutions, including Gram Panchayats, to function as 'institutions of self-government' for the twin purposes of (i) making plans for economic development and social justice for their respective areas, and (ii) implementing programmes of economic development and social justice in their respective areas, for subjects devolved to PRIs, including those listed in the XI Schedule, and subject to such conditions as the State may, by law, specify. Schedule XI of the Constitution provides for the devolution of powers to Gram Panchayats and Panchayati Raj Institutions with regard to subjects that have a bearing on economic development and social justice in rural areas. A joint programme of action has been chalked at the seven Round Tables held last year between the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj and State Ministers of Panchayati Raj to ensure that on the basis of Activity Mapping, Panchayats at various levels are devolved with funds, functions and functionaries to enable them to emerge as institutions of self-government. Efforts are also being made to institutionalize social audit measures through Gram Sabhas so that Gram Panchayats are made responsible to the Village Community as a whole.

The Minister has now initiated a process of visiting each of the States/UTs to review with the authorities concerned the progress in implementing the points for action contained in the compendium. A Committee of Chief Secretaries of States and State Panchayati Raj Secretaries has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Secretary(Panchayati Raj) to monitor the progress on the implementation of the 150 recommendations of the Seven Round Tables. Two review meetings of the Committee have so far been held on the 11th April, 2005 and the 29th June, 2005. A Council of Ministers of Panchayati Raj of States/Union Territories has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Panchayati Raj, Government of India. The inaugural meeting of the Council, which is on the subject of Panchayati Raj, will be held on the 5th-6th August, 2005 at Kochi. It is expected that these efforts will accelerate the pace of implementation of provisions of Part IX, read with Article 243ZD of the Constitution, and thus bring about greater conformity, in both letter and spirit, in all States/UTs to the Constitutional provisions of Panchayati Raj.