

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:823

ANSWERED ON:22.10.2008

EXPERT COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ON SIXTH SCHEDULE

Verma Shri Ravi Prakash

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Expert Committee on "Planning for the Sixth Schedule Areas and those not covered by Parts IX and IX-A of the Constitution" has recommended strengthening of the village and autonomous councils;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government on the recommendations made by this Expert Committee?

Answer

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR)

(a) to (c) : Yes Sir. As regards the village councils, the Expert Committee was of the view that it would be ideal to have a democratically chosen village development Committee or Board with responsibilities for village planning, protection and management of natural resources. Till this happens, the Committee suggested some interim solutions to be adopted by the States concerned on the basis of their specific situation, such as use of the existing institutional mechanism for decentralized planning at habitation, village or cluster level, or usage of the mechanism set up for implementation of NREGA at the village cluster or habitation level, or adopting a system suggested in Section 4 of The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996. In respect of Sixth Schedule Areas, the district or Regional Council may be persuaded to set up Village Level Bodies on similar lines, in exercise of their powers in this regard as provided for in the Sixth Schedule.

As regards the District Councils, the Expert Committee recommended that the devolved functions should be fully transferred to them. In order to ensure that there is no overlap in functions and roles between the Councils and State line departments, the functional responsibilities of both should be clearly demarcated. The Expert Committee has also recommended that the States should wind up parallel institutions or merge them with the Councils, in respect of transferred departments.

The report of the Committee has been forwarded to the Chief Secretaries of the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Planning Commission, Ministry for Development of North Eastern Region and the Central Ministries administering the major Centrally Sponsored Schemes. There have been inter-Ministerial consultations on the report of the Expert Committee.