

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
PANCHAYATI RAJ  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4945

ANSWERED ON:26.04.2010

ACCOUNTABILITY IN PANCHAYATI RAJ

Singh Rajkumari Ratna;Singh Shri Jagada Nand;Thamaraiselvan Shri R.;Thomas Shri P. T.

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

- (a) whether any study has been conducted by the Government for providing discretionary powers to panchayats to make them autonomous bodies;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether there is a lack of uniformity in Panchayati Raj System;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (e) whether the Government introduced a Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) in the Eleventh Five Year Plan;
- (f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the salient features of this Scheme;
- (g) whether the development of villages is not being done in a holistic way under Panchayati Raj System; and
- (h) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government to address the issue?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (Dr. C. P. JOSHI)

(a) & (b): Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) commissions studies on various aspects of Panchayati Raj from time to time. A study is also commissioned every year on the Devolution Index (DI) that ranks States for undertaking measures for effective devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

(c) & (d): Part IX of the Constitution has certain mandatory features which are common in all States and Union Territories to which Part-IX of the Constitution applies i.e.,

(a) Constitution of Panchayats at Village, Intermediate and District levels except for States having a population of less than 20 lakhs which may not constitute a Panchayat at the Intermediate level;

(b) Regular elections to the Panchayats every five years;

(c) Reservation of seats and offices of Chairpersons for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and women at each level of Panchayats and (d) Constitution of State Finance Commission and State Election Commission.

Under Article 243G of the Constitution, State Legislatures are to endow the Panchayats with powers and authority to enable them to function as institutions of self governance. States vary in the extent of powers that they have devolved to the Panchayats to plan, implement and monitor schemes for economic development and social justice. Within the Constitutional framework, Panchayats are a State subject and States pass legislations suitable in their context. The present status of devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries to the Panchayati Raj Institutions by various States/UTs is given at Annexure.

(e) & (f): MoPR is implementing the scheme of Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) since 2005-06 with the objective to incentivize States/UTs for undertaking measures for effective devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries to the PRIs. Presently, the scheme has an annual allocation of Rs.10 crore. Incentive grants are given to the States/UTs on the basis of independent evaluation and ranking as per the Devolution Index. For the year 2009-10, the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi has prepared the Devolution Index for ranking the States/UTs.

(g) & (h): For holistic socio-economic development, MoPR has supported decentralized integrated planning. Every district covered under Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) Programme is required to prepare decentralized Plan that is to be consolidated by the District Planning Committees.