

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3087

ANSWERED ON:29.11.2010

NATIONAL LEVEL MONITORS

Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Jeyadural Shri S. R.;Pangi Shri Jayaram;Rao Shri Nama Nageswara

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Government has taken a decision to assess the performance of National Level Monitors (NLM) of various developmental schemes and remove those scoring less than seventy per cent from the panel as reported by print media recently;
- (b) if so, the fact of the matter;
- (c) whether several complaints have been received by the Government involving National Level Monitors;
- (d) if so, the details thereof ; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Union Government to further tighten its monitoring to ensure that public fund is spent judiciously and for the very purpose for which it is allotted ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI PRADEEP JAIN `ADITYA`)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The scheme of the National Level Monitors (NLMs) has recently been revamped and formal guidelines have been framed. The guidelines, inter alia, provide for grading the NLMs by an independent Committee constituted for the purpose on the basis of annual assessment of their performance with regard to quality of their work and adherence to reporting guidelines; assessment of credibility and integrity of the NLMs, by the officers of the Ministry during their visit to those districts where NLMs have already visited; removal of the NLMs who score less than 70% in the grading by the Committee etc. The Guidelines also stipulate that NLMs, once empanelled, may remain in the panel for a period of three years, subject to annual review. The guidelines have been posted on the website of the Ministry for better transparency and wider publicity.

(c)&(d): A few complaints have been received against some of the National Level Monitors, alleging:

- (i) Demanding money from district officials;
- (ii) Retention of job cards of village labourers;
- (iii) Conduct of monitoring/enquiry in a biased manner;
- (iv) Corruption, misconduct etc.

(e): Ministry of Rural Development has evolved a comprehensive multi-level, multi-tool system of monitoring of its programmes. These include review by the Ministry at various levels, including Minister of Rural Development; Performance Review Committee (PRC) Meetings; Area Officers Scheme; National Level Monitors (NLMs); Vigilance and Monitoring Committees (V&MCs) at State and district levels; on-line Monthly Progress Reports (MPRs) etc. Further, in order to ensure action on irregularities substantiated in the NLM reports, the Ministry has decided to link release of funds to States/districts with action taken. The NLMs guidelines also stipulate that the general public of the defaulting States/ districts be widely informed of the inaction and consequent withholding of funds.