

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PLANNING
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3473
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2011
NEW BACKWARD DISTRICTS
Patle Kamla Devi

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Planning Commission has not given its approval for the inclusion of new districts under the Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) Scheme;
- (b) if so, whether no other remaining district falls under the category of rising regional imbalance except the 250 districts identified for this purpose, as no regional imbalance exists;
- (c) if not, whether the Planning Commission would consider/is considering to give its approval on the proposals/ demands for inclusion of other districts of the country including Janjgir-Champa of Chhattisgarh; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR PLANNING, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY AND EARTH SCIENCES (DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) to (b): The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) was approved in 2006-07 and the District Component of BRGF covers 250 districts of 27 States. The districts covered under the District Component of the BRGF includes all the 200 districts covered under the first phase of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act(MGNREGA) and 170 districts identified by the Inter Ministry Task Group (IMTG) on Redressing Growing Regional Imbalances as backward. 120 districts were common to both. The 200 districts under the first phase of MGNREGA were identified on the basis of an index of backwardness comprising three parameters with equal weights to each, namely, value of output per agricultural worker, agriculture wage rate and percentage of SC/ST population of the districts. The 170 districts were identified by the IMTG as backward on the basis of 17 socio-economic variables.

(c) & (d): As per the above criteria adopted for selection of districts for coverage under the District Component of BRGF, Janjgir-Champa district of Chhattisgarh did not qualify for coverage. The programme is currently approved for funding during the Eleventh Five Year Plan period. At present there is no proposal, under consideration, of the Government to cover more districts under the programme during the Eleventh Five Year Plan Period. However, the Planning Commission is currently in the process of formulation of the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) and various Steering Committees and Working Groups have been constituted for this purpose. A Steering Committee for Rural Livelihoods and Rural Governance has been set up to provide a critical review of, inter-alia, MGNREGA and BRGF during the Eleventh Five Year Plan and to suggest scope, content, strategies, priorities and allocations for these programmes in the Twelfth Five Year Plan. A Working Group on Area Programmes has also been constituted to review the performance of various Area Pogrammes and to suggest scope, content, strategies, priorities and allocations for the area programmes including BRGF in the Twelfth Five Year Plan.