

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:380

ANSWERED ON:09.08.2012

PRIME MINISTER S RURAL DEVELOPMENT FELLOWS SCHEME

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Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to post youths in naxal affected districts under the Prime Minister Rural Development Fellows Scheme to enhance implementation of various social sector programmes of the rural sector;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) the details of the terms and conditions fixed for such fellowship;
- (d) the number of youths so far posted in various naxal affected districts under the scheme;
- (e) whether there is any proposal to expand the scope of such fellowship in other social sector schemes such as Bharat Nirman, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and ICDS etc. and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

- (a): Yes, Sir.
- (b): The details of the scheme are given in Annexure `A`.
- (c): The details of terms & conditions of the scheme are given in Annexure `B`.
- (d): A total number of 106 PMRD Fellows have been deployed in different IAP districts as on date.
- (e) & (f): As per the defined role of PMRD Fellows, the Fellows are assisting in better implementation of flagship programmes, such as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Scheme (MGNREGA), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) and IAP.

ANNEXURE- `A`

THE DETAILS OF THE PMRDF SCHEME AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.380 DATED 09.08.2012 THE SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

CAPART is an autonomous organization under the aegis of the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India. Among the objectives of CAPART, as given in its Memorandum of Association and Rules, are the following:

- (i) to promote aid, guide, organize, plan, undertake, develop, maintain and coordinate project/schemes aimed at all round development, creation of employment opportunities, promotion of self-reliance, generation of awareness, organization and improvement in the quality of the life of the people in rural areas in general and of the economically and socially handicapped as also those who are physically, orthopedically and visually handicapped and mentally retarded in particular (as amendment of Article 3(ix) of Memorandum of Association and Rules of CAPART regarding priority treatment of physically, orthopedically and visually handicapped persons along with SC/ST and freed bonded labourers approved by the general Body in its meeting on 07.07.1995).
- (ii) to carry out research studies, survey, evaluation and the like on the use of appropriate technology and to offer fellowships, scholarships and prizes in furtherance of the objects of the society;
- (iii) to do all other such things as the society may consider necessary, incidental or conducive to the attainment of its objectives.

In furtherance of these objectives, CAPART has decided to implement schemes for providing capacity building opportunities to well-

qualified young professionals who choose to carry out development facilitation at the grass-roots levels in the left-Wing Extremism (LWE)- affected districts in the country. This scheme would be named as the Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship (PMRDF) scheme.

II. CONTEXT

The Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India has identified a number of districts of the country as LWE districts, spread over various states, such as Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal. These districts show certain common characteristics such as high poverty ratio exceeding 50% of the population, higher coverage of area under forest, high proportion of tribal and/or dalit population, and coverage under Backward Regions Grant Fund because of very low development indicators. The Government of India has launched a special programme in these districts, called the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). These districts are also called IAP districts in administrative parlance.

It is widely recognised that the spread of influence of the Naxalite groups, who follow the path of armed conflict, is due to, what has come to be known as, development deficit. An Expert Group of the Planning Commission, in its widely quoted report of the year 2008, entitled 'Development Challenges in Extremist Affected Areas', observes that the Naxalite movement seeks to obtain its support from the masses in the course of providing answers to the people's problems and needs.

There is a growing realisation in the Government that LWE cannot be challenged and overcome without a special drive for development and transformation of local general administration into an empathetic, development administration. However, one of the key problems encountered in such a reform process from below is the lack of capacity of district administration who would be leading the change process. To catalyze this reform process and trigger actions which would lead to positive outcomes, the strategy to be adopted is to provide fresh input and ideas to leverage support to the reform process, infuse optimism and instil confidence among key stakeholders, and provide decision-making support to the district leadership. This will provide a valuable opportunity to the young professionals to build their capacity by getting hands on experience in the development process in such difficult areas.

On 13th September, 2011, a scheme of Rural Development Fellows, henceforth referred to as Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows (PMRDFs), was announced by Hon'ble Union Minister of Rural Development in the presence of Hon'ble Prime Minister, for deploying young professionals in each of the IAP districts under the district administration. It was also declared that the cost of this scheme will be met from the budget of CAPART. What is implicit though in the announcement is that the challenge of Naxalite violence cannot be dealt with by following the 'business as usual' path, and that new ways must be found for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the public services. This requires rigorous efforts to understand the local communities, their socio-cultural and political structure, local economy and its linkages, and relationship of the political and executive machinery with the community. Above all, it requires weaving relationships among all the important actors in a way that the disaffection and discontent are addressed effectively. Creating a deep sense of empathy in the administration for the poorer and marginalised sections would be a sine qua non for democratic governance in areas under Naxalite influence. Moreover, the district administration needs fresh input in improving the planning process, refurbishing the implementation machinery, monitoring results and influencing government decisions for quick redressal of the pressing issues whenever necessary.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE SCHEME

The main objective of the PMRDF scheme is to provide an opportunity for capacity building of bright young professionals who may come forward to work in the LWE-affected areas and may have the educational background, and even some experience, but may not have the actual, micro-level experience of development facilitation work in the difficult and challenging situations prevailing in the IAP districts. The status of the PMRD Fellows will be that of trainees, and this Fellowship will impart the unique exposure and experience to the Fellows enabling them to make meaningful contributions to the society through the walks of life they will choose for themselves following the Fellowship. On successful completion, the Fellows will be awarded a proficiency certificate.

In the course of the Fellowship, the PMRD Fellows may be called upon to provide managerial support to the District Administration in the IAP districts and to act as development facilitators particularly in implementation and monitoring of the flagship schemes in the Rural Development sector. By this process, the PMRDFs, who are expected to be professionally qualified and well motivated, but lacking in hands-on experience of working in LWE areas at the field level, would get an opportunity to build their capacity in programme implementation and monitoring, as well as gain field experience.

IV. ROLE OF PMRDFs

During the tenure in IAP districts, the PMRDFs would work alongside the District Administration team on any matter related to the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) that may be assigned to them, and particularly in the following areas, among others:

- a) Conducting socio-economic and political analysis of the district and ascertaining the felt needs of the people;
- b) Assisting in better implementation of flagship programmes such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act Scheme (MGNREGA), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP), Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) and IAP;
- c) Monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes of the above programmes;
- d) Conducting data crunching relating to budget outlays and utilisation of funds;
- e) Creating a network for voluntary cooperation in the local area.

The PMRDFs will be deployed with Zilla-Parishads/DRDAs/District Administration. The exact details of the day-to-day roles will be worked out between the Fellow and the District Collector.

V. TENURE & TERMS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

The duration of the Fellowship shall include the orientation period and will be for a further period of two years, extendable by one year based on performance and mutual consent, and the Fellowship can be terminated by either side without assigning any reason after giving one month's notice or an amount equal to one month's stipend in lieu of the notice. The total duration of the Fellowship shall not exceed three years beyond the orientation period.

The Fellows shall be required to accept the terms and conditions governing the Fellowship contract with CAPART and subscribe to an Agreement with CAPART in regard to the Fellowship.

The completion of the Fellowship will not vest any right on the PMRD Fellow for employment or any obligation in this regard on CAPART, or any District Administration/DRDA/Zilla Parishad/State Govt./Central Govt.

VI. SELECTION OF THE FELLOWS

The scheme envisages to deploy two Fellows initially in each IAP district. This would involve deploying 156 Fellows for the 78 IAP districts. Allowing for some attrition rate, about 200 Fellows may be selected initially. In the selection process, CAPART may be assisted by an outsourced agency with prior experience in similar programmes. The applications for the Fellowship shall be sought through open advertisements. Applicants may be asked to submit the application in a pre- designed form.

The applicants would also be asked to:

- (1) Send a brief write up explaining how they hope to contribute as PMRDFs in the IAP districts;
- (2) Another brief write up where they would be asked to select a basic problem as prevalent in the IAP district and offer problem solving solutions;
- (3) One more brief write up on their anticipated benefits as a result of his Fellowship and their post-Fellowship plans; and to
- (4) Indicate their knowledge of local languages and district preferences.

The synoptic responses will also be used to ascertain their ability to write crisply and precisely. The applicants will be shortlisted based on the details in their application. The shortlisted candidates will be tested using tools like group discussion, psychometric tests, interviews, etc. to ascertain their motivation, leadership, professional skills and pro-poor orientation, and in this manner the final selection will be made.

Eligibility Criteria: The eligibility criteria for the PMRDF would be as follows:-

- a) Age between 21-30 years at the time of application;
- b) Graduate in Law/Engineering/Medicine/Business Administration, or Post-Graduate in any subject;
- c) Working knowledge of Hindi; and
- d) Preferably some work experience.

VII. ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

The selected Fellows shall undergo an orientation programme of 2 months duration (including travel time), which will include one month of IAP district immersion.

The orientation programme will be preceded by a curriculum development exercise and appropriate training materials will be developed through the participating institutions. These materials will be given to the selected candidates in the form of a compendium prior to commencement of the orientation.

The orientation modules may include the following:

- a) The socio-economic and political context; Constitution and the framework of governance; decentralisation with special reference to the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA); rights-based approaches; social and political movements, including the Naxalite Movement; and the ideas of India.
- b) Understanding poverty; poverty alleviation programmes.
- c) Inclusion - its various dimensions; Gender sensitivity.
- d) Flagship programmes of the Government.
- e) Outcome budgeting.

- f) Planning, monitoring and evaluation.
- g) District planning and convergence.
- h) Quantitative and qualitative skills.
- i) Leadership; decision-making; conflict resolution; communication; soft skills.
- j) Exposure to governance at various levels - Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), DRDA, District Collector's Office; Police; Forest and other key government departments.

The core competencies that would be developed through the orientation programme are as follows:

- a) Analytical, leadership, communication, inter-personal, negotiation and conflict resolution skills of the participants to work in challenging socio-political and economic contexts;
- b) Ability to effectively engage with all key stake-holders by virtue of being informed and sensitised to specificity of the socio- political and economic context of different IAP districts;
- c) Strong information base on development programmes and ground situation;
- d) Rights-based approach to development which would equip them to advocate and work towards securing and honouring rights of disadvantaged communities and groups in a complex socio-political locales;
- e) Ability to lead grassroots planning and intervention processes;
- f) Ability to undertake critical analysis of programmes, policies, budgetary demands, allocation and manner of fund utilisation, etc. so as to strengthen intervention plans and implementation strategies;
- g) Ability to liaise, build network and alliances across the government, peoples' groups and networks, business and industry to position them strategically to work with all groups.

After completing the orientation programme, it is expected that the PMRDFs would be fully equipped and confident to handle their roles and functions on deployment in the IAP districts.

At the end of the Fellowship, the incumbents will be awarded with a certificate of successful completion of training as PMRDFs.

In the orientation programmes for PMRDFs, CAPART may be assisted by an outsourced professional agency/agencies.

VIII. DEPLOYMENT OF THE PMRD FELLOWS

After the orientation, the Fellows will be deployed in the IAP districts. The District Collector will involve them in their roles envisaged at appropriate levels, keeping in view the qualifications, training and experience of the PMRDFs. The PMRDFs will remain under the overall supervision of the District Collector throughout the duration of the Fellowship.

Post-deployment, CAPART will work closely with the District Collectors of the IAP districts, the State Governments concerned, the professional/ academic institutions involved in the scheme and the PMRD Fellows, apart from the Ministry, to monitor the progress made by the Fellows and to ensure successful implementation of the scheme.

IX. STIPEND TO THE PMRD FELLOWS

The PMRD Fellows shall be entitled to a stipend package at different stages and periods of their entire training period to be fixed by DG, CAPART from time to time subject to their satisfactory performance as assessed by their District Collectors and so notified at the time of selection of the Fellow and execution of the agreement by the Fellow with CAPART.

X. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The performance of the PMRDFs will be assessed by the respective District Collectors on an annual basis.

XI. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The PMRDFs will be entitled to casual leave for 8 days, restricted holidays for two days and earned leave for 15 days in a calendar year, and unpaid leave for a maximum period of 30 days during their entire tenure. Moreover, the Fellowship duration shall not be extended to cover the shortfall on account of any period of the Fellow's absence during the Fellowship.

For leave on maternity ground, the earned leave entitled to the PMRDFs during the tenure will be adjusted against the total period of absence and the balance up to a maximum of forty-five days would be treated as maternity leave. Any absence beyond this would be treated as leave without pay.

XII. INVOLVEMENT OF THE STATE GOVERNMENTS

The PMRDF Fellowship scheme of CAPART shall operate under the overall umbrella of the IAP scheme of the Govt. of India under implementation in the selected districts in various States.

The Ministry of Rural Development will take up the matter with the State Governments concerned and seek their input and cooperation, including active involvement of the District Collectors and IAP implementation teams in the States and districts, for ensuring successful implementation of the PMRDF scheme. CAPART will take the follow-up action as necessary.

XIII. THIRD PARTY EVALUATION OF THE SCHEME

CAPART shall arrange for third party evaluation of the scheme. A Mid-term evaluation of the scheme may be carried out after the Fellows have been in position in their districts for at least one year. Another evaluation may also be done prior to the formal closure of the scheme.

XIV. FUTURE BATCHES OF PMRD FELLOWS

Any further expansion of the scheme shall be decided by the Ministry and necessary arrangements shall be made accordingly by CAPART.

Annexure - 'B'

THE DETAILS OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF PMRDF SCHEME AS REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c) OF THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 380 DATED 09.08.2012.

Terms & Conditions governing PMRD Fellows

- 1) The nature of the PMRD Fellowship is purely of a traineeship contract, effective from the date of reporting for the PMRDF orientation programme and for two years (beyond the orientation period) of deployment in any of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) districts in the country, extendable by one year based upon the performance. The term will not be extended any further.
- 2) The PMRD Fellows shall be entitled to a consolidated stipend package of Rs. 50,000/- (Rupees fifty thousand only) per month during the two-month orientation period and Rs. 75,000/- during the 1st year, and a 10% increment during the 2nd year as well as during the third year of Fellowship, subject to the Fellow's satisfactory performance as determined by CAPART. This package shall be deemed to cover the Fellow's honorarium, boarding & lodging expenses during the orientation period, accommodation/house rent during the rest of the Fellowship period, local transportation costs, health insurance, life & disability insurance cover and any other contingency expenses. It will be mandatory for the PMRD Fellows to purchase suitable health insurance and life & disability insurance coverage for the entire duration for the Fellowship including the orientation period.
- 3) The Fellowship can be terminated by either side without assigning any reason after giving one-month's notice, or an amount equal to one month's stipend in lieu of the notice.
- 4) The completion of the Fellowship term will not vest the candidate with any right for regularization or employment in CAPART/Ministry of Rural Development/ Govt. of India/DRDA/ZillaParishad/District Administration/State Govt./Central Govt..
- 5) Travel costs, to the extent permissible for reimbursement, will be based on actual (may be restricted to 2nd AC train fare by shortest route, plus local transport costs).
- 6) The PMRDFs are entitled to casual leave for 8 days, restricted holidays for two days and earned leave for 15 days in a calendar year and unpaid leave for a maximum period of 30 days during their tenure. They are not to be sanctioned leave without pay beyond 30 days during their Fellowship period. The Fellowship period will not be extended to cover the shortfall on account of absence of the Fellow on any ground.
- 7) For leave on maternity ground, the earned leave entitled to the PMRDFs during the tenure, i.e., 45 days will be adjusted against the total period of absence and the balance up to a maximum of forty-five days would be treated as maternity leave. Any absence beyond this would be treated as leave without pay.
- 8) The PMRD Fellows will be deployed under the District Collectors in the District Administration/DRDAs/Zilla Parishads of the respective IAP Districts.
- 9) The PMRDFs will remain under the overall supervision of the District Collector during the entire Fellowship period.
- 10) The performance of the PMRDFs will be assessed by the respective District Collectors on an yearly basis on a pre-designed format and forwarded to CAPART.
- 11) The PMRD Fellows shall carry out the roles and functions assigned to them by their District Collectors within the overall scope of the PMRDF scheme of CAPART.
- 12) The Fellowship offer to the candidate who does not report for orientation programme within the prescribed date will be deemed to have been terminated.
- 13) In case a PMRD Fellow does not report for training to the District Collector where he/she is assigned, he/she shall be liable to

refund to CAPART the entire amount spent on orientation as well as the selection, to be worked out on pro-rata basis by CAPART.

14) If it comes to be known at any stage that a candidate has secured the PMRD Fellowship by misrepresenting or suppressing any material fact or information having a bearing on such selection, the PMRD Fellowship of that person shall be liable to be terminated by CAPART without any notice and without any recompense to that person.

15) Any instance of indiscipline, misconduct, unruly behaviour, undesirable activities or unauthorized absence on the part of a PMRD Fellow, shall make that person's Fellowship liable to be terminated by CAPART without any notice and without any recompense to that person.

I have read these terms & conditions of the PMRD Fellowship scheme of CAPART and do hereby append my signature in acceptance of the same.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Place: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No.: _____

E-mail: _____