

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2743
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2009
MERGER OF DRDAS WITH DISTRICT PANCHAYATS
Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar;Swaraj Smt. Sushma

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details regarding constitution and functioning of the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs);
- (b) whether the Government proposes to disband DRDA and merge it with District Panchayats;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the details for the total amount spent by the Government on said DRDA during each of the last three years and the current year, State-wise; and
- (e) the details of the achievements made in this regard during the said period, State-wise?

Answer

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

(a): The District Rural Development Agency is a Registered Society at the District level. The DRDAs have been handling various Poverty Alleviation Programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development since its creation in the year 1980. Over the years the DRDA has traditionally been a principal organ at the District level to oversee the implementation of different anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development. Since inception, the administrative cost of the DRDAs were met by way of setting apart a certain percentage of the allocation for each programme. Keeping in view the need for an effective agency at the District level to co-ordinate the anti-poverty programmes, a new Centrally Sponsored Scheme for strengthening the DRDAs has been introduced w.e.f. 1st April, 1999. The Scheme is funded by the Central and State Government in the ratio of 75 : 25. The District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) are registered societies under Societies Registration Act, 1860. In respect of such States where DRDA does not have a separate identity a separate cell should be created in Zila Parishad to maintain a separate identity and separate accounts. This cell is directly under the charge of CEO or alternatively an officer who has the qualifications to be a Project Director, of the rank of an Additional District Magistrate. To function effectively an indicative staffing structure as well as suitable personal policy has been spelled out for DRDAs in the Guidelines. The structure of DRDA must include position for Planning for poverty alleviation, Project formulation, Social mobilization and Capacity building, Gender concerns, Engineering Supervision and Quality Control, Project Monitoring, Accountancy and Audit functions as well as Evaluation and Impact studies. State Governments have been given the freedom to modify the structure suitably, but without altering the basic design. The administration of the DRDA is carried out by a Governing Body. The Chairman of the Zila Parishad is the Chairman of Governing Body of the DRDA; and where Zilla Parishads are not in existence, the State Government may nominate elected member of the State Legislature from the concerned district to act as Chairman of the Governing Body of the DRDA. The other members of the Governing Body include all the MPs, MLAs/MLCs, 1/3 nominated Panchayat Samiti Members, CEO/Collector, Banks, officials from line departments etc. The Project Director is the Member Secretary of the Governing Body. The Governing Body of the DRDA provides policy directions, approves the Annual Plan as well as all schemes, both in physical and financial terms and also reviews and monitors the implementation of the plans. All executive and financial powers of the DRDA are exercised by the Executive Committee which is fully accountable in all matters of DRDA to the Governing Body as well as to the State Government. The Executive Committee of DRDA is headed by the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director and shall consist of all the District level officers and other officer deemed necessary for planning and implementation of the anti-poverty programmes. The Project Director of DRDA will be the Member-Secretary of the Executive Committee. The Executive and financial functions shall however lie with CEO, Zilla Parishad/District Collector who shall be designated as the Chief Executive Officer or Executive Director. It shall be his responsibility to ensure that the administration of DRDA and the programmes are conducted in accordance with the guidelines. Wherever the Zilla Parishads are not in existence or are not functional, the DRDAs would function under the Collector/District Magistrate/Deputy Commissioner of the District, as the case may be. The District Rural Development Agencies are visualized as specialized and a professional agency capable of managing the anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development on the one hand and to effectively relate these to the overall effort of poverty eradication in the District.

(b) No Sir, no such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Statement relating to State-wise amount spent on the District Rural Development Agencies by the Union Government during the last three years and current year, year-wise and State-wise is Annexed.

(e) The achievements made by DRDAs, inter-alia, include proper management of the anti-poverty programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development and effective co-ordination with the line departments, Panchayati Raj Institutions, the banks and other financial institutions, NGOs as well as technical institutions with a view to gathering support and resources required for poverty reduction effort in the country.