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Title: Need to release funds directly to the Gram Panchayat Presidents in Tamil Nadu for undertaking developmental work in their areas.

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SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN (PALANI): There are 5 municipal corporations, 102 municipalities, 611 town Panchayats, 385 unions and 12618 village Panchayats in Tamil Nadu. Presently, the Central Government releases funds to the District Rural Development Agency which is under the control of the State Government and they send the money to the Gram Panchayats. For the past three years, the State Government is not providing any funds to the Gram Panchayats. By virtue of Tenth Finance Commission, the Tamil Nadu Government allocated Rs. 32,000 p.m. to Rs. 50,000 p.m. to every Panchayat, out of which the State Government deducts about 90 per cent money as dues of electricity. With the meagre balance amount the Gram Panachayats are not able to give even the salaries of the staff. All developmental work in the Panachayats comes to a standstill in view of the severe financial crunch. The public could not get even the basic facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, etc. from the Panachayats. The Panchayat Presidents find it very difficult to face the public due to their helplessness. The situation is now alarming in the State and about 4000 Panchayat Presidents have already decided to resign their post.

Sir, I demand that an amount of not less than Rs. 10 lakh per year be released directly to the Gram Panchayat presidents for developmental work under their jurisdiction every year.