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Title: Need to release funds for Mandal Parishad and Zila Parishad- local bodies under Panchayati Raj System – in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU (SRIKAKULAM): The 14th Finance Commission has granted funds to the Gram Panchayats to the tune of Rs. 8,600 crores to Andhra Pradesh. But the most important institutions of the 5 tier Panchayati Raj System – the Mandal and the Zilla Parishads, have been left to suffer severe financial crunch as no funds have been allocated to them by the 14th Finance Commission. It is highly regrettable that the lifeline money that used to be devolved to the two parishads in question by all the Finance Commissions until now has been discontinued by the 14th Finance Commission.

There are 1196 Mandal Parishads and 23 Zilla Parishads in states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Due to the dearth of funds, the parishads in question are unable to provide even the basic civic amenities like roads, drinking water, health, sanitation, etc. to the citizens living in the rural areas. A cluster of closely located villages make up Mandal and Zilla Parishads. Development of infrastructure to connect villages has taken a severe hit due to non-availability of funds.

The Parishads are currently powerless as they are unable to do anything about the various complaints that they receive on a daily basis from the locals regarding upgradation of the basic amenities. The provisions of the 75th constitutional amendment must be followed in letter in and spirit and funds must be immediately released to empower the local governments.

I humbly request the Government to rectify this retrograde step taken by the 14th Finance Commission by allocating Rs. 15,000 crores to the state of Andhra Pradesh and Rs. 9,000 crores to the state of Telangana at the earliest date possible.