

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
PANCHAYATI RAJ**

(2022-23)

31

SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2023-24)**

THIRTY FIRST REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2023-24)

Presented to Lok Sabha on 14.03.2023

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 15.03.2023



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND
PANCHAYATI RAJ
(2022-2023)**

Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi -- Chairperson

**MEMBERS
Lok Sabha**

2. Shri Sisir Kumar Adhikari
3. Shri A.K.P Chinraj
4. Shri Rajveer Diler
5. Shri Vijay Kumar Dubey
6. Shri Sukhbir Singh Jaunapuria
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20. Shri Shyam Singh Yadav
21. Smt. Dimple Yadav

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla
23. Shri Dineshchandra Jemalbhai Anavadiya
24. Smt. Shanta Chhetri
25. Dr. Dharmasthala Veerendra Heggade
26. Shri Iranna Kadadi
27. Shri Ram Shakal
28. Smt. Ranjeet Ranjan
29. Shri Naranbhai J. Rathwa
30. Shri Ajay Pratap Singh
31. Shri Bashistha Narain Singh

Secretariat

1. Shri D. R. Shekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri C. Kalyanasundaram - Director
3. Shri Arjun Choudhary - Committee Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson (Acting) of the Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (2022-23) having been authorised by the Committee [as per Rule 277(3) of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha] to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Thirty First Report on Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

2. Demands for Grants have been examined by the Committee under Rule 331E (1) (a) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.
3. The Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on 10 February, 2023.
4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 13 March, 2023.
5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officials of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for placing before them the requisite material and their considered views in connection with the examination of the subject.
6. The Committee would also like to place on record their deep sense of appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered to them by the officials of Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

NEW DELHI;
13 March, 2023
22 Phalgun, 1944 (Saka)

NARANBHAI J. RATHWA
Chairperson (Acting),
Standing Committee on Rural Development
& Panchayati Raj

REPORT
PART I
NARRATION ANALYSIS
Chapter-1 Introduction

1.1 Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj is one of the sixteen Departmentally Related Standing Committees of the Lok Sabha primarily entrusted with the mandatory task of examination of Demands for Grants for each financial year sought by the Ministry/Department under its purview while also scrutinizing the schemes under the administrative control of the concerned Ministry/Department. The present Report is on the examination of the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for the ensuing financial year 2023-24 under Rule 331E(1)(a) of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

1.2 The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) was created on 27th May, 2004. The main mandate of the Ministry is to oversee the implementation of Part IX of the Constitution, implementation of Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) in the Fifth Schedule areas and operationalizing District Planning Committees in terms of Article 243ZD of Part IX-A of the Constitution. Since most of the actions including framing of laws rests with the State Governments, it has been stated by the Ministry that it strives to reach its goals with regard to improvements in the functioning of Panchayats primarily through policy interventions, advocacy, capacity building, persuasion and financial support. Accordingly, the aim of the Ministry is to make Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) an effective, efficient and transparent vehicle for local governance, social change and public service delivery mechanism meeting the aspirations of rural local population.

1.3 It has stated that since “Local Government” is a subject in the State List of the Constitution, MoPR supplements and complements the efforts of the State Government towards training and capacity building of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, which are

1.5 The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) adopted 9 thematic approaches by grouping together 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to localize Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) through PRIs at the grassroots by 2030 in a mission mode. The 9 themes are (i). Poverty Free and Enhanced Livelihoods Village; (ii). Healthy Village; (iii) Child-friendly Village; (iv). Water Sufficient Village; (v). Clean & Green Village; (vi). Village with Self-Sufficient Infrastructure; (vii). Socially Secured and Socially Just Villages; (viii). Village with Good Governance; and (ix). Women friendly Village. The Ministry has revamped its principal scheme- RGSA to re-orient the capacity and training of the elected representatives towards localization of SDGs by adopting the above thematic approach.

1.6 According to the Ministry, the scheme of the Incentivization of Panchayats is implemented by it as a Central Component of RGSA to encourage the Panchayats and its representatives for better performance. Moreover, to transform the functioning of PRIs, making them more transparent, accountable and to addresses various aspects of functioning of Panchayats such as planning, budgeting, implementation, accounting, monitoring, social audit and delivery of citizen services like issue of certificates, licenses, etc. Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat is also being implemented as a Central Component of RGSA. The Central Sector scheme of Media & Publicity to disseminate various information among PRIs and the scheme of Action Research & Research Studies to take up studies on subjects relevant to PRIs are also implemented by the Ministry.

1.7 The Ministry also submitted that the funds under International Cooperation are used for membership fees of the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF), which is expected to facilitate a global interaction and exchange of ideas in respect of local governance.

1.8 The Ministry launched SVAMITVA Scheme on 24th April 2020 with the aim of demarcation of the inhabited (Abadi) land in rural areas by drone survey method. This would provide the „record of rights“ to village household owners possessing houses in

inhabited rural areas in villages and issuance of property cards to the property owners. It will unlock the value of the land of inhabited area of the village and will speed up the construction and financing of residential and commercial buildings in rural areas through banks. Scheme would cover all the villages by March 2025.

1.9 The Ministry in their written reply have outlined following as major priorities of the Ministry for the upcoming financial year, 2023-24:

“The Ministry has been providing programmatic, technical and institutional support for strengthening of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) including advocacy for inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral coordination. Under the ambit of capacity building, knowledge support is also being provided for enhancing devolution to PRIs and finding solutions for local governance as well as outreach towards strengthening rural India. The major priorities for upcoming year of 2023-24 are to enhance the capacities of Panchayats for good governance and attainment of SDGs adopting 9 thematic approach through participatory local planning, democratic decision-making, transparency and accountability and to strengthen PRIs to function as effective institutions local Government. It would be the priority of the Ministry to make e-Gram SWARAJ more useful to District, Block and Gram Panchayats in taking informed and evidence-based decision. Ministry will also confer National Panchayat Awards 2023 (under Incentivization of Panchayats scheme) to best performing Panchayats (including other Institutions/ organizations) under 9 themes of Localization of SDGs. Further, major priorities under SVAMITVA Scheme for upcoming financial year of 2023-24 are:

- (i) Completion of drone flying in all the inhabited villages by March 2024.
- (ii) Saturation of Scheme with the generation of Property Cards for all inhabited villages in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, and Union Territories of Ladakh, A&N Islands, and Lakshadweep.
- (iii) Generation of 3.5 crore Property Cards across the Country

1.10 When the Ministry were asked about collaboration with the State Governments/Union Territories towards evolving a national policy for Panchayati Raj Institutions and achieving Sustainable Development Goals on the model of Cooperative and Competitive Federalism, the Ministry in their written reply have submitted the following:

“The Ministry has been implementing the scheme of revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) w.e.f. 2022-23 with the focus on localization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at grassroot level adopting thematic approach through concerted and collaborative efforts of Central Ministries and State line departments with „whole of Government” approach at all levels.

The Ministry recognizes that realizing the objectives of National Development and 2030 agenda requires the involvement of people, local governments and all stakeholders. These goals need to be translated into policies at the local level, which are relevant and applicable to the communities being served. The Ministry has adopted a thematic approach for LSDGs with active involvement of States/UTs. Theme-wise Joint Advisories have been issued to the States for convergent activities for taking forward LSDGs. Series of National & Regional Workshop/Write-shop/ Seminars is being organized in different States following the approach of co-operative federalism, which are well participated by the Elected Representatives (ERs), Functionaries and other stakeholders of Panchayats and have created an opportunity for cross learnings.

Article 243G of the Constitution allows discretion to the States, and not to the Central Government, in the matter of devolution of powers (funds, functions and functionaries) to Panchayats. The States vary in the extent to which they have devolved powers to the Panchayats to plan, implement and monitor schemes for economic development and social justice including those matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution. Therefore, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is not facing any constraints to achieve the objective of decentralized and participatory local self-government through Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).”

1.11 The Ministry have identified the following issues which are inhibiting the Panchayati Raj Institutions from becoming self-sufficient, decentralized and the centre of local self-governance as envisaged under the Constitution of India:

“Fund, Function and Functionary, also known as 3Fs, are crucial for efficient functioning of the Panchayati Raj System. Through Central Finance Commission grants, State Finance Commission grants and various central and state sponsored schemes Panchayats are now receiving huge funds. However, proper devolution of constitutionally mandated functions to the three levels of Panchayats alongwith their mapping with the activities to be performed by the Panchayats and

provision for adequate manpower in Panchayats still remain important factors which inhibit the Panchayati Raj Institutions from becoming what they had been intended to be. Since “Local Government” is a subject in the State List of the Constitution and all actions for proper functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions including framing of laws rests with the State Governments, the Ministry strives to reach its goals with regard to improvements in the functioning of Panchayats through policy interventions, advocacy, capacity building, persuasion and financial support. Government has recently introduced many innovative changes in the Panchayati Raj Institutions such as Public Finance Management System(PFMS), e-GramSwaraj, AuditOnline, Single Nodal Agency, Gram Manchitra, Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) Scheme, revamped training and capacity building of elected Panchayat Representatives through the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan Scheme, Government e-Marketing (GeM), focus on efficient delivery of services and entitlements, linking of Gram Panchayat Development Plan/Block Panchayat Development Plan /District Panchayat Development Plan with the Localising of Sustainable Development Goals etc. Their impact will be visible in due course.”

1.12 The Detailed Demands for Grants (2023-2024) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj were presented to the Lok Sabha on 07th February, 2023. An allocation of Rs. 1016.42 Crore has been made in the Budget Estimates (BE) of Demand No. 72 for the year 2023-24, which is 17 per cent higher than the BE for the previous financial year 2022-23 i.e. Rs.868.57 Crore and 12 per cent higher than Revised Estimate for the same year i.e. Rs 905.77 Crore.

The Committee have examined, in-depth, the Demands for Grants of the Ministry for the financial year 2023-24 and the same is deliberated in succeeding Chapters of the Report. The Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been given at the end of the Report. The Committee expects the Ministry to take all necessary steps for proper and timely utilization of funds ensuring completion of the various schemes and projects in a time bound manner. The Committee expect the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to take the Committee’s Observations/Recommendations positively and act on them expeditiously and furnish Action Taken Replies in respect of the Observations/Recommendations made in the Report within three months from the date of presentation of this Report.

Chapter 2

Examination of Demands for Grants (2023-24)

2.1 The Ministry have furnished following detailed statement with the break-up of BE 2023-24 proposed by the Ministry for different schemes/programmes and finally approved by Ministry of Finance:

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	BE Proposed by MoPR	BE Approved by MoF
i.	Umbrella Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan	1014.30	895.00
ii.	SVAMITVA	98.39	76.00
iii.	Secretariat Services	57.00	45.42
Total		1169.69	1016.42

Statement showing breakup of Budget Estimate for 2023-24

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	BE 2023-24 (Approved)
1	Umbrella Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)	895.00
(i)	Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)	819.00
	(a) Grants in aid	810.00
	(b) Office Expenses & Professional Services	9.00
(ii)	Incentivization of Panchayats	47.80
	(a) Grants in aid	46.00
	(b) Professional Services	0.564
	(c) Office Expenses	1.200
	(d) Training Expenses	0.036
(iii)	Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat	20.00
	(a) Grants in aid	0.25
	(b) Office Expenses	18.25
	(c) Capital Expenditure	1.50
(iv)	Action Research & Publicity	8.00
	(a) Grants in aid	05.67
	(b) Advertising and Publicity	02.00
	(c) Professional Services	00.32
	(d) Other Administrative Expenditure (in 2022-23)/ Office Expenses (from 2023-24)	00.01
(v)	International Cooperation	0.20
2	SVAMITVA	76.00
	(a) Grants in aid	51.30
	(b) Office Expenses	4.16

	(c) Capital Expenditure	20.54
	Total - Scheme	971.00
3.	Sectt. Services (Non Scheme)	45.42
	(a) Salary	15.42
	(b) Non Salary	30.00
	Grand Total (Scheme + Non Scheme)	1,016.42

2.2 The Ministry were asked to provide brief notes on Supplementary Grants and Excess Grants presented to the House, if any, during 2022-23, the Ministry in their written reply have submitted the following notes:

“A token supplementary demand of Rs. 1 lakh was presented during the year 2022-23 for regularization of the component of Action Research and Publicity Scheme that formed part of umbrella RGSA Scheme. This token supplementary of Rs. 1 lakh is to be utilized as grants in aid under Action Research and Publicity, a constituent component of umbrella RGSA Scheme, as per the laid down procedure. However, no excess grant was presented to the House during 2022-23.”

2.3 The Ministry have also furnished the detailed note indicating the extent to which various items of Demands for Grants 2023-24 stand modified in the light of the recommendations of the Standing Committee’s previous years’ Reports on Demands for Grants as under:

“Vide recommendation no. 14 of Para no. 2.16 on examination of Detailed Demands for Grants – 2021-22, the Committee had recommended that “RGSA is due for independent evaluation, hope that the comprehensive paper will result in restructuring of the Scheme into a more effective and powerful tool to the transformation of Panchayati Raj Institutions. The Committee may be apprised of the outcome in this regard”. Accordingly, on the basis of the evaluation of the scheme of RGSA by an independent research organization-National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, the scheme of RGSA has further been revamped for its implementation during 2022-23 to 2025-26. The broad structure of the revamped scheme was reflected in the Cabinet proposal that has been approved. These are being duly reflected in the DDG (2023-24).”

2.4 Statement showing Scheme-wise BE & RE for the year 2020-21 to 2022-23 and BE 2023-24

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2020-21		% increase / decrease of BE 2020-21 over BE 2019-20	% increase / decrease of RE 2020-21 over RE 2019-20	2021-22		% increase / decrease of BE 2021-22 over BE 2020-21	% increase / decrease of RE 2021-22 over RE 2020-21	2022-23		% increase / decrease of BE 2022-23 over BE 2021-22	% increase / decrease of RE 2022-23 over RE 2021-22	2023-24	% increase / decrease of BE 2023-24 over BE 2022-23
		BE	RE			BE	RE			BE	RE			BE	
1.	Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan	790.53	499.94	3.70	13.40	593.00	618.00	-24.99	23.61	593.00	682.98	0.00	10.51	819.00	38.11
2.	Incentivization of Panchayats	47.00	47.00	6.82	46.81	48.00	52.51	2.13	11.72	50.00	50.82	4.17	-3.22	47.80	-4.40
3.	Mission Mode Project on E-Panchayats	20.00	17.82	29.03	57.91	20.00	11.71	0.00	-34.29	20.00	15.00	0.00	28.10	20.00	0.00
4.	Media & Publicity	8.00	10.22	-46.67	51.08	12.00	5.52	50.00	-45.99	10.00	10.00	-16.67	81.16	8.00*	-38.46
5.	Action Research & Research Studies	2.00	2.00	-33.33	54.50	3.00	2.50	50.00	25.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	20.00	*	0.00
6.	International Co-operation	0.20	0.16	0.00	6.25	0.20	0.17	0.00	6.25	0.20	0.20	0.00	17.65	0.20	0.00
7.	SVAMITVA	0.00	79.65	NA	NA	200.00	140.00	NA	75.77	150.00	105.00	-25.00	-25.00	76.00	-49.33
	Total	867.73	656.79	3.30	28.21	876.20	830.41	0.98	26.43	826.20	867.00	-5.71	4.41	971.00	17.53
5.	Secretariat Service (Non Scheme)	33.21	33.21	6.00	14.24	37.23	37.97	12.10	14.33	42.37	38.77	13.81	2.11	45.42	7.20

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2020-21		% increase / decrease of BE 2020-21 over BE 2019-20	% increase / decrease of RE 2020-21 over RE 2019-20	2021-22		% increase / decrease of BE 2021-22 over BE 2020-21	% increase / decrease of RE 2021-22 over RE 2020-21	2022-23		% increase / decrease of BE 2022-23 over BE 2021-22	% increase / decrease of RE 2022-23 over RE 2021-22	2023-24	% increase / decrease of BE 2023-24 over BE 2022-23
		BE	RE			BE	RE			BE	RE			BE	
	Grant Total	900.94	690.00	3.39	27.54	913.43	868.38	1.39	25.85	868.57	905.77	-4.91	4.31	1016.42	17.02

#(+0.01)Token Suppl.

*Schemes at Sl. No. 4 and No. 5 in the above table has since been merged to one scheme w.e.f. 2021-22

Not Applicable (NA) as the scheme started only in 2020-21 with internal arrangement of funds within RGSA.

2.5 The Ministry were asked that how they propose to spend Budget Estimates of 1016.42 Cr. in Fiscal Year 2023-24, the following proposal has been submitted by the Ministry:

“As stated above vide point no.19 & 20, Ministry has utilised almost 100% of RE allocations in 2020-21 and 2021-22 and also will utilise entire RE-2022-23 which is higher than the BE-2022-23. However, the proposed BE for 2023-24 is around 29% higher from the RE allocation of 2022-23, which is mainly due to enhanced allocation sought under the scheme of RGSA looking at the demand of funds from the States with the focus on capacity building & Training for the new approach adopted by the Ministry for achievement of SDGs through local level interventions involving Panchayati Raj Institutions. Further, the enhanced allocation sought under RGSA, which is as per financial outlay approved under CCEA note, prepared based on the assessment of funds requirement under the scheme for different years.

Since larger share of the fund allocation is for the scheme of RGSA, the following is the Roadmap for proper utilization of allocated funds under the scheme that will have overall impact on the total expenditure of the Ministry:

- Timely approval of Annual Action Plans (AAPs) for the year 2023-24, which provide ample time to States for implementation of approved activities.
- Sharing of checklist and providing handholding support to States for formulation of AAPs.
- Regular interaction with States through VCs and telephonic calls for monitoring the progress and expediting the approved activities. Necessary advice/clarification as and when required is issued.
- Region/State-specific VCs also being undertaken.
- Constant monitoring of the progress of approved activities through MIS.
- Mandatory release of funds through PFMS till last level of Executing Agency.
- Effectively taking up with the States for release their matching share, liquidate unspent balances and submit the requisite documents viz. UCs etc. for release of funds to the maximum extent.

- Ministry has developed web based applications for Panchayats (e-Gram SWARAJ for planning, budgeting, accounting, monitoring, geo tagging of assets etc.)
- Best performing panchayat will be incentivizing through awards and financial incentives under Incentivization of Panchayats scheme of Ministry.
- All Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities to strengthen and betterment of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

Chapter-3

Budget Utilization Trends (2019-20 to 2022-23)

3.1 The amount earmarked, spent and the achievement of MoPR during 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23

(Rs. in Crore)

S. N.	Name of the Scheme	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			2022-23 (31.12.2022)		
		BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.
Revenue Expenditure - Scheme													
1.	Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan	762.34	432.96	432.90	790.53	499.94	499.93	593.00	618.00	618.00	593.00	682.98	505.25
2.	Incentivization of Panchayats	44.00	25.00	25.00	47.00	47.00	49.68	48.00	52.51	52.52	50.00	50.82	49.63
3.	Mission Mode Project on E-Panchayats	15.50	7.50	7.25	20.00	17.82	17.79	20.00	11.71	11.71	20.00	15.00	12.62
4.	Media & Publicity	15.00	5.00	5.25	8.00	10.22	7.50	15.00#	8.02#	8.02#	13.00#	13.00#	9.44#
5.	Action Research & Research Studies	3.00	0.91	0.91	2.00	2.00	2.00	#	#	#	#	#	#
6.	International Co-operation	0.20	0.15	0.14	0.20	0.16	0.16	0.20	0.17	0.17	0.20	0.20	0.15
7.	SVAMITVA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	79.65	79.65	200.00	140.00	139.99	150.00	105.00	97.20
	Total of Scheme	840.04	471.52	471.45	867.73	656.79	656.71	876.20	830.41	830.41	826.20	867.00	674.29
Revenue Expenditure: Other (Non Plan/ Non Scheme)													

S. N.	Name of the Scheme	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22			2022-23 (31.12.2022)		
		BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.	BE	RE	Actual Exp.
8.	Secretariat Service	31.33	28.48	26.81	33.21	33.21	30.36	37.23	37.97	34.43	42.37	38.77	26.75
	Grant Total	871.37	500.00	498.26	900.94	690.00	687.07	913.43	868.38	864.84	868.57	905.77	701.04

With effect from 2021-22, the Schemes of Media & Publicity and Action Research & Research Publicity have been merged into one scheme as Action Research and Publicity.

3.2 The Ministry have furnished the below given reason for the constant gap between Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates during the last three years:

“Despite higher allocation sought by the Ministry at RE stage, Ministry of Finance imposed drastic cut and allocated the reduced funds to the Ministry at RE stage during the last three years. However, almost 100% of RE allocation has been utilized by the Ministry. It may be mentioned here that for 2022-23, against the Budget estimates of Rs.868.57 crore, an amount of Rs.905.77 crore has been approved at RE stage. The Ministry has already spent Rs.804.11 crore as on 25.01.2023, which is around 93% of the BE and around 89% of the RE 2022-23. The Ministry will spend all the RE amount by 31.03.2023. “

3.3 In regard to the surrender of budgetary allocations, the Ministry have the following in their written note submitted to the Committee:

“Statement showing the BE/RE, Actual Expenditure and amount Surrendered during the last three years (2019-20 to 2021-22) are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

S. No.	Year	B.E	R.E	Actual Expenditure	Amount surrendered w.r.t B.E
1	2019-20	871.37	500.00	498.26	373.11
2.	2020-21	900.96*	690.00	686.27	214.69
3.	2021-22	913.44**	868.38	864.84	48.60

*including Rs 2 lakhs as Token Supplementary

**including Rs 1 lakh as Token Supplementary

It may be mentioned here that the surrendered amount with respect to BE is due to arbitrary cuts at RE stage.”

3.4 The Ministry have furnished the following information as achievement of targets (both in the physical and financial terms separately) in accordance with the vision map of the Ministry and according to the parameters set by the current Finance Commission:

“ The current Finance Commission i.e. Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) in its interim report given recommendations for the Financial Year 2020-21 and in the final report recommended grants for the Financial Year 2021-22 to 2025-26. During 2020-21 and 2021-22, Ministry implemented a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) with the primary aim to develop governance capabilities to strengthen PRIs. RGSA is a demand driven scheme which primarily aimed at strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions across the Country. No physical and financial targets under the scheme were/ have been fixed since the scheme provided for funding activities selected by States / UTs as reflected in their respective Annual Action Plan

subject to the approval of Central Empowered Committee of RGSA. Under the scheme, the total 33,77,161 ERs & other stakeholders, 33,34,000 ERs & other stakeholders and 32,10,525 ERs & other stakeholders were trained during the year 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 respectively. The financial achievement during the last three years 2019-20 to 2021-22 and current year 2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022) under the schemes of RGSA, SVAMITVA, Incentivisation of Panchayats, Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat, Media & Publicity and Action Research & Research Studies are as under:

(Rs in crore)

Schemes	Years	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	Expenditure as % of RE	Amount surrendered w.r.t B.E
RGSA	2019-20	762.34	432.96	432.90	99.99	329.44
	2020-21	790.53	499.94	499.93	100.00	290.60
	2021-22	593.00	618.00	618.00	100.00	0.00
	2022-23	593.00	682.98	505.25	73.98	-
SVAMITVA	2019-20	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	2020-21	0.00	79.65	79.65	100.00	0.00
	2021-22	200.00	140.00	139.99	99.99	60.01
	2022-23	150.00	105.00	97.20	92.57	-
Incentivisation of Panchayats	2019-20	44.00	25.00	25.00	100.00	19.00
	2020-21	47.00	47.00	49.68	105.70	0.00
	2021-22	48.00	52.51	52.52	100.02	0.00
	2022-23	50.00	50.82	49.63	97.66	-
Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat	2019-20	15.50	7.50	7.25	96.67	8.25
	2020-21	20.00	17.82	17.79	99.83	2.21
	2021-22	20.00	11.71	11.71	100.00	8.29
	2022-23	20.00	15.00	12.62	84.13	-
Media & Publicity	2019-20	15.00	5.00	5.25	105.00	9.75
	2020-21	8.00	10.22	7.50	73.39	0.50
	2021-22	15.00*	8.02*	8.02*	100.00	6.98
	2022-23	13.00*	13.00*	9.44*	72.61	-

Schemes	Years	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure	Expenditure as % of RE	Amount surrendered w.r.t B.E
Action Research & Research Studies	2019-20	3.00	0.91	0.91	100.00	2.09
	2020-21	2.00	2.00	2.00	100.00	0.00
	2021-22	*	*	*	0.00	0.00
	2022-23	*	*	*	0.00	-

Note: Expenditure of 22022-23 is as on 31.12.2022

& with effect from 2021-22, the Schemes of Media & Publicity and Action Research & Research Publicity have been merged into one scheme as Action Research and Publicity.

Under „Mission mode project for e-Panchayat“, all the e-Panchayat applications are under implementation now and States/UTs are continuously being supported for the same. Further, no funds are released to States directly for e-Panchayat. Under the Incentivization of Panchayats scheme, during 2020, 2021 and 2022 awards were conferred to Panchayats/States/UTs 306, 313 and 329 respectively. Number of awards conferred are based on the number of nominations received from the States/UTs and final selection by the Ministry. The budgetary allocations under Media, Publicity and Research Scheme are in conformity with physical outputs, wherever feasible to do so, and their projected Outcomes. The IEC/ awareness campaigns are designed to cater to the information needs of the target segments such as the elected representatives of the PRIs at the three tiers, staff of the PRIs, officials of the State machinery and the public at large.

Further, under the scheme of SVAMITVA as on 31.12.2022, drone flying completed in 2.17 lakh villages, maps generated after inquiry process/ objection process in 83,200 Villages and 267 CORS sites monumented.”

Chapter-4

Realization of Key Sustainable Development Goals through Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

4.1 Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) of revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) has been approved by the Government of India for implementation during 2022-23 to 2025-26 with the total outlay of Rs.5,911 crore including Rs.3,700 crore Central Share and Rs.2,211 crore State share. The scheme has been approved for implementation in all States and Union Territories including institutions of rural local government in non-Part IX areas, where Panchayats do not exist. The primary aim of the scheme is to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The scheme has both Central and States components. The funding pattern for State Components is in the ratio of 60:40 among Centre and States respectively, except NE, Hilly States and UT of J&K where Central and State share is 90:10. For other UTs, the Central share is 100%. The Central component of the scheme is 100% funded by the Central Government. The funds under RGSA are released to the States/UTs primarily for Capacity Building & Training (CB&T) of Elected Representatives (ERs), Functionaries and other Stakeholders of the Panchayats. Funds are also provided for other admissible activities relating to strengthening of Panchayats as approved under Annual Action Plan (AAP) of the States/ UTs under the scheme. The allocation under RGSA for 2019-20 (BE) was Rs.762.34 cr. which increased by 3.7% to Rs.790.53 crore in 2020-21 (BE), whereas BE allocation was reduced by 24.98% to Rs.593 crore. The expenditure under RGSA has been almost 100% of the allocation at the stage of RE during the last three years.

4.2 When the Ministry were asked that against their proposed amount of Rs.1014.30 Cr. for the Umbrella Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, only Rs. 895 Cr. has been allocated at BE Stage of 2023-24, the Ministry have stated the following:

“The Ministry of Panchayati Raj had demanded Rs.1014.30 crore under the umbrella scheme of the restructured Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan for the financial year 2023-24. The demand was made keeping in view the Annual Action Plan presented by the States/Union Territories in 2021-22

and the expenditure trend of the States/Union Territories. However, the Ministry of Finance has allocated only Rs.895 crore for 2023-24 at BE stage.”

4.3 When the Ministry were asked that whether the allocation of Rs. 895 Cr. for 2023-24 would be sufficient to foot the expenditure to be incurred under the restructured scheme, the Ministry have given the following submission:

“The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has taken different initiatives towards achievements of Sustainable Development Goals in rural areas through Panchayat. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has adopted thematic approach towards SDG whereby 9 themes have been developed. Each of these themes covers several SDGs, which in turn mapped to different ministries & schemes, adopting a thematic approach. Series of interventions in respect to institutional capacity of panchayats like thematic training, specialized training, Panchayat Learning Centre (PLC), exposure visits of Panchayat Representatives, National / Regional Conferences / Workshops on LSDGs are planned during the reference year. Hence, it is expected that the allocated amount of BE of Rs.895 cr. will be spent in these planned activities primarily and if require then same will be revised accordingly.”

4.4 When the Ministry were enquired about their very less spending under RGSA for financial year 2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022) and their plan to utilize the balance funds by 31 March, 2023, the Ministry have deposed as follows:

“During 2022-23, Rs.596 crores has been released up to 20/01/2023 and only approx. 77 crores is balance due to MEP & QEP restriction of Ministry of Finance. It will be released in the month of February/ March, 2023 to the States/UTs including NE States from whom requisite demands/ documents are expected.”

4.5 State/UT- wise status of fund released under the scheme of RGSA from 2019-20 to 2021-22 and current year i.e. 2022-23 (as on 31st December, 2022)

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	State/ UT	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23*
1	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	Andhra Pradesh	0.00	22.34	38.54	0.00
3	Arunachal Pradesh	39.59	0.00	30.07	108.69
4	Assam	23.22	26.12	44.04	44.34
5	Bihar	0.00	0.00	63.77	0.00
6	Chhattisgarh	0.00	4.04	7.93	0.00
7	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.14
	Daman & Diu	0.00			
8	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.59	0.00
9	Gujarat	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	Haryana	0.00	9.89	0.00	0.00
11	Himachal Pradesh	10.00	22.10	32.42	60.65
12	Jammu & Kashmir	6.19	25.00	40.00	40.00
13	Jharkhand	0.00	2.34	7.74	0.00
14	Karnataka	0.00	0.44	29.15	36.00
15	Kerala	0.00	8.13	12.00	30.40
16	Ladakh	-	2.15	1.08	0.00
17	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
18	Madhya Pradesh	85.48	71.42	47.11	0.00
19	Maharashtra	8.44	66.76	73.34	37.84
20	Manipur	4.54	3.41	2.98	8.63
21	Meghalaya	2.63	3.97	0.00	0.00
22	Mizoram	0.50	21.19	5.56	14.27
23	Nagaland	3.94	3.72	4.58	0.00
24	Odisha	0.00	2.94	1.33	11.40
25	Puducherry	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
26	Punjab	0.00	13.45	10.78	34.25
27	Rajasthan	0.00	12.98	17.27	0.00
28	Sikkim	5.10	4.75	1.19	6.01
29	Tamil Nadu	5.30	56.88	39.89	0.00
30	Telangana	0.00	12.00	0.00	0.00
31	Tripura	0.00	2.53	4.67	0.00
32	Uttar Pradesh	169.92	32.54	83.08	20.00
33	Uttarakhand	23.79	26.75	0.00	42.48
34	West Bengal	44.10	33.52	15.14	0.00
Sub-total		432.74	491.34	614.25	496.10
Other Implementing Agency		0.16	8.59	3.74	9.12
Total		432.90	499.93	617.99	505.22

*As on 31st December, 2022

4.6 The Ministry were asked to furnish the reasons for non-release of any amount to 19 out of 34 States/UTs under the Scheme in 2022-23 as on 31st December 2022, the Ministry have furnished the following reason:

“The short fall in releases and non-release of funds to the States/UTs is mainly on account of timely non-submission of requisite documents including Utilization Certificates, Audited Statements, non-release of State Share and/or availability of unspent balance with States/UTs more than releasable amount and also non-compliance of Ministry of Finance (MoF) instructions regulating release of funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes.”

4.7 The Ministry were asked the reasons of sharp decline in the all India release figures against the Annual Action Plans consecutively for the last three years, the Ministry have submitted the following reasons:

“For the release of Central Share against the approved AAP of the States/UTs, scheme mandates (i) Release of corresponding State Share; (ii) 75 percentage utilisation of the Central and State Shares release along with submission of Audited statement of previous year. Release to States is made in two installments as per scheme provision. It has been seen that in large number of cases, there are delays by the States in release of State share and/or there is persisting deficit of state share. The delayed release compounds the delay in timely utilisation of the funds and results into delayed submission/non-submission of Utilisation Certificate. It is also seen that many States/UTs have unspent balance of funds allocated from previous years. Further some states have also not complied to the MoF instructions regulating release of funds under CSS. These all have led to reduced releases of central share to the States.”

4.8 The Ministry have informed the Committee that the criteria followed in approving the annual action plans of States are as under:

“The Annual Action Plan (AAP) as submitted by States/UTs in line with the scheme guidelines, are appraised and placed before the Central Empowered Committee (CEC) Chaired by the Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj for consideration.”

4.9 The Ministry have submitted that following steps have been taken for supplementing the efforts of the State Government towards training and capacity building of the elected representatives:

“The scheme of revamped RGSA is being implemented for strengthening of Panchayats, which endeavours for graduated capacity building of Elected Representatives (ERs), Panchayat Functionaries and other stakeholders. Special emphasis is being given on digital literacy of ERs and also on mobilizing, educating and transforming ward members or Panches into sectoral resource persons with a clear role to transform them into agents of change. The outcome of the Scheme will be enhanced capabilities of Panchayats for good governance and attainment of SDGs through participatory local planning, democratic decision-making, transparency and accountability. Around 15,11,827 ERs, Panchayat Functionaries and other stakeholders have been trained during 2022-23 (21.01.2023). As part of Capacity Building and Training, the scheme has provisioned for the exposure visits of Panchayat representatives. During F.Y. 2022-23, exposure visit for approx. 98,653 Panchayat representatives have been approved.”

4.10 When asked about the provisions for separate training for women representatives, the Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence have submitted the following:

“This is an on-going challenge for us. We have modules for them and we are giving emphasis on women’s training. Starting from this year, there is a special thrust on institutionalizing Mahila Sabhas and Bal Sabhas. For that, in the annual action plan, it is proposed that the State would submit that this would be a separate line. So, trainings that would accrue from this fund would be exclusively to organize women by taking the help of self-help groups that are already there. They have been doing it. But as far as line item in this scheme is concerned, that is going to be inserted from the 2023-24.”

4.11 When asked about the status of construction of Panchayat Bhawans in Gram Panchayats, the Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence submitted the following:

“आंकड़ों के मुताबिक अभी भी देश भर में 51,512 पंचायतें हैं, जिनके पास खुद का भवन नहीं है। पंचायतों की संख्या बढ़ती-घटती रहती है,

ज्यादा तो पंचायतें बढ़ती हैं, जब राज्यों में नई पंचायतों का सृजन किया जाता है और जब उनको अर्बनलोकल बॉडी, नगर पंचायत इत्यादि बनाता है तो वे कम हो जाती हैं। यह संख्या मुझे याद है, जब गरीब कल्याण रोजगार अभियान कोविड के समय किया था, तब उस समय 59 हजार पंचायतें होती थीं, जिनके पास खुद के भवन नहीं थे और 30 हजार पंचायत भवन उस वर्ष के दौरान इनीशिएट किए गए थे। जिसमें मनरेगा, फाइनेंस कमीशन और राष्ट्रीय ग्राम स्वराज अभियान, तीनों के फंड्स कन्वर्ज किए गए थे। कहने का अभिप्राय यह था कि पंचायतें लगभग सारे टाइम बढ़ती रहती हैं। जो कम होती हैं, उनकी संख्या उस के बराबर नहीं होती, जितनी बढ़ रही थीं। राष्ट्रीय ग्राम स्वराज अभियान में कुछ क्षमता होती है, जो कि समय-समय पर हम लोग उनको देते भी रहे हैं। ग्राम पंचायत भवनों जो सरकारें माँगती हैं, नीड के मुताबिक, जैसे इस समय सबसे ज्यादा उत्तर प्रदेश में है, लगभग 30 हजार ग्राम पंचायत भवन पंचायतों के पास नहीं हैं। नीड के आधार पर जितनी अपनी फंड अवलेबिलिटी होती है, उस के हिसाब से कुछ-कुछ ग्राम पंचायत भवनों के लिए फंड्स दिए जाते हैं। अभी इस सारे को करने के लिए, एनुअल एक्शन प्लान में जो राज्य सरकारें माँगती हैं, उसके हिसाब से उन्हें धन दिया जाता है।“

4.12 The Ministry have informed the Committee that following administrative and technical support is rendered to Gram Panchayats by the Centre apart from respective States Governments/UTs:

“Under the scheme of Revamped RGSA, financial assistance to States / UTs is being provided to setup Block Project Management Unit (BPMU) and Block Panchayat Resource Centre for administrative and technical support to GPs / cluster of GPs.”

4.13 The Ministry have submitted before the Committee that following efforts have been taken by the Ministry for Localization of Sustainable Development Goals through Panchayati Raj Institutions:

“Given that nearly 70% of India lives in rural areas, attainment of Sustainable Development Goals at the National level will require actions at the grassroots level through Panchayati Raj Institutions. Hence, role of Panchayati Raj Institutions especially Gram Panchayats is very crucial in localizing the SDGs. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has constituted an Expert Committee on the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals in Panchayats. The report was released on 7th December, 2021 and circulated to all States & UTs. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has adopted thematic approach towards SDG whereby 9 themes have been developed taking into account the 17 SDGs. Each of these themes covers more than one SDGs, which in turn mapped to different ministries and schemes, adopting a thematic approach. Series of interventions have been made imbuing the spirit of „Whole of Government“ and „Whole of Society“ in the process of Localization of SDGs that cover working together with Central Ministries/ Departments, State Governments, UN Agencies, Educational Institutions, CSOs on different convergent efforts at the grassroots level. 26 Departments of 21 Ministries have come together embodying the spirit of partnership to work towards the fulfillment of LSDGs by signing Joint Resolution and Joint Advisories in the 9 thematic areas.

To accelerate the pace of localization and achievement of SDGs in Panchayats, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has taken initiatives to strengthen the process of preparation of thematic Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) by engaging Gram Panchayat to take Sankalp on themes of LSDGs for comprehensive rural plan and incentivizing best performing Panchayats through National Panchayat Award aligned with 9 themes of LSDGs. Further, the scheme of RGSA has been revamped with the focus to capacitate PRIs to deliver on SDGs.“

4.14 **Incentivization of Panchayats**

Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has been incentivizing the best performing Panchayats/states/Union Territories (UTs) through National Panchayat Awards under the under the 100% Centrally funded Incentivization of Panchayats scheme, one of the central components of Centrally Sponsored scheme of revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA). These awards have been revamped w.e.f. year 2022 to assess the performance of Panchayati Raj Institutions in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through 9 identified Localization of SDGs themes namely, (i) Poverty free and enhanced livelihoods Panchayat (ii) Healthy Panchayat (iii) Child friendly Panchayat (iv) Water sufficient Panchayat

(v) Clean and Green Panchayat (vi) Self-sufficient infrastructure in Panchayat (vii) Socially Secured Panchayat (viii) Panchayat with good governance (ix) Women-friendly Panchayat. The revamped National Panchayat Awards competition will be pyramidal and multi-level at Block, District state/UT and national level where awardee GPs will be shortlisted at respective level and further nominated for higher level. The revamped National Panchayat Awards will enable ranking of all the participating Gram Panchayats /equivalent bodies across the country at every level i.e. Block, District, State/UT and National to enable creating a baseline for them to assess their status under each of the LSDG themes. This will enable these local bodies to achieve the SDGs in a phased manner by the year 2030. Apart from this, special awards for GPs and Institutions have also been instituted. The categories of National Panchayat Awards with effect from 2023 are given as under:

(i) **Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar:** For top 3 ranking Gram Panchayats under each of nine award themes

(ii) **Nanaji Deshmukh Sarvottam Panchayat Satat Vikas Puraskar:** For top 3 Gram Panchayats with highest aggregate/average score under all nine themes combined and top 3 Block and District Panchayats with highest aggregate score under all themes of all concerned GPs.

(iii) **Gram Urja Swaraj Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar :** for 3 GPs for their performance regarding adoption and usage of renewable sources of energy

(iv) **Carbon Neutral Vishesh Panchayat Puraskar :** for 3 GPs who have done exemplary work towards achieving Net-Zero carbon emissions

(v) **Panchayat Kshamta Nirmaan Sarvottam Sansthan Puraskar:** for 3 Institutions across the country who have provided institutional support to GPs in achieving Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)

4.15 Details of award money/financial incentives released to States/UTs during the last three years i.e., 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 & 2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022)

(Rs. in crore)					
Sl. No.	States/ UTs	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as on 31-12-22)
1.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0.05	0.18	0	0.36
2.	Andhra Pradesh	2.20	2.47	2.95	2.59
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.50	0.15	0.85	0.85
4.	Assam	0.97	1.59	1.62	1.59
5.	Bihar	0.25	2.76	2.27	2.3
6.	Chhattisgarh	1.55	1.54	1.6	1.69
7.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0.70	0.35	0.25
8.	Daman & Diu	0	0.35	0.32	
9.	Goa	0	0	0	0
10.	Gujarat	0.05	3.62	1.88	1.87
11.	Haryana	0.05	2.86	1.48	0.58

Sl. No.	States/ UTs	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23 (as on 31-12-22)
12.	Himachal Pradesh	1.33	1.54	1.41	1.44
13.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.05	0.60	0.36	1.4
14.	Jharkhand	1.36	1.52	1.59	1.59
15.	Karnataka	1.63	0.10	1.87	2.13
16.	Kerala	0.25	1.75	2.1	2.65
17.	Ladakh	0	0	0	0.43
18.	Lakshadweep	0	0.05	0.3	0
19.	Madhya Pradesh	2.35	0.05	5.13	2.72
20.	Maharashtra	0	2.31	4.6	2.71
21.	Manipur	0.78	0.25	1.76	0.94
22.	Meghalaya	0.05	0	0.05	0.05
23.	Mizoram	0	0	0.25	0.3
24.	Nagaland	0	0.26	0.36	0
25.	Odisha	0	2.97	1.87	2.89
26.	Punjab	1.62	1.64	1.74	1.68
27.	Rajasthan	1.34	1.83	1.72	1.88
28.	Sikkim	0.81	0.86	0.86	0.86
29.	Tamil Nadu	0.05	3.56	1.87	1.8
30.	Telangana	0.05	2.91	1.68	2.46
31.	Tripura	1.06	1.36	1.43	1.4
32.	Uttarakhand	0.05	2.96	1.49	1.51
33.	Uttar Pradesh	4.70	4.79	4.78	3.83
34.	West Bengal	1.60	1.65	1.95	2.75
Total		24.70	49.18	52.49	49.50

4.16 The Ministry have provided the following reason for increasing the budgetary allocation of Rs.47.80 Cr. at BE Stage to Rs.50.82 Cr. at the RE Stage for 2022-23:

“The enhancement in the budgetary allocation at RE stage was necessitated to meet the committed liabilities for awards and related activities. As on 31.12.2022, expenditure of Rs.49.67 crore approximately has been incurred. The allocated funds are expected to be spent fully by the end of financial year 2022-23.”

4.17 When the Ministry were asked about the number of Panchayats that have been identified for conferring the award under the Incentivization of Panchayats Scheme in

the Country this year and whether allocation under BE 2023-24 would be sufficient to meet the demand, the Ministry have submitted as under:

“For the upcoming National Panchayat Awards 2023 which will be conferred during the month of April, 2023, around 45 awards for PRIs (including other Institutions / organizations) are expected to be identified for conferment on the basis of recommendations by states/UTs and final selection by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The allocated budget for the financial year 2023-24 for Rs.47.80 crore seems to be sufficient.”

4.18 The Ministry have provided the details of Gram Panchayats incentivized under the component during the last three years and their achievements as follows:

“Number of Gram Panchayats incentivized during the last three years under different category of awards are as under:

S.N.	Category of Award (for Panchayats)	No. of Gram Panchayats awarded		
		Award Year 2020	Award Year 2021	Award Year 2022
i.	Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar (DDUPSP)	139	148	156
ii.	Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar (NDRGGSP)	27	30	27
iii.	Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award (GPDPA)	28	30	29
iv.	Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Award (CFGPA)	30	30	29

Further details of the Gram Panchayats such as States, District, Blocks etc. along with code of Local Government Directory (LGD) is available on Ministry’s website at <https://www.panchayat.gov.in/web/ministry-of-panchayati-raj-2/list-of-awardee-panchayats>”

4.19 The Ministry have informed the Committee that following steps have been taken by the Ministry to popularize the best practices of Gram Panchayats that have been incentivized under the scheme during previous years:

“National Panchayat Awards conferred on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day (NPRD) celebrated on 24th April annually are well

attended (virtually or physically) by Union and States Ministers, high level dignitaries and the representatives from various Panchayats across the country besides awardees. This occasion highlights and propagates the achievements/best practices of awardee Panchayats. Further, among the awardee panchayats, Ministry compiles best practices of some selected Gram Panchayats which has been uploaded on the Ministry's website (<https://www.panchayat.gov.in/web/ministry-of-panchayati-raj-2/best-practices>) and also publicized periodically through Ministry's social media platforms. Besides, thematic audio-video programmes have been produced by the Ministry and States which are shared on various social media platform in addition to playing them at National Level Conferences/Workshops to generate awareness among all PRIs."

4.20 The Ministry were asked to provide the details of States/UTs that have been found to be least performing as compared to the parameters fixed for selection under Incentivization, for different categories of awards and the steps that have been taken to persuade those States to perform better, the Ministry have submitted the following details:

"Under the National Panchayat Awards 2023, Panchayats are assessed and ranked for their performance in the states/UTs. Keeping in view the level of participation by different tiers of Panchayats in the National Panchayat Awards 2023 competition, which is based on performance of the Panchayats, the states/UTs of Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh were found to be lagging behind.

The Ministry has advised to the respective State/UT Governments to find the reasons of low participation in Award competition based on which corrective action can be suggested."

4.21 **Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat**

e-Panchayat was subsumed under the erstwhile Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashastikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) scheme in 2012-13. No funds are released to States directly for e-Panchayat. Funds are only released to National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICS) for central level support for maintenance and training of e-GramSwaraj and other applications, faculty support and programme management. From 2018-19, e-Panchayat is a component under the flagship scheme – Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA).

Ministry has developed eGramSwaraj, a Simplified Work Based Accounting Application for Panchayati Raj, amalgamating the functionalities of all the applications under e-panchayat

Mission Mode Project (MMP). In this endeavor, Ministry has put in place an e-Financial Management System (e-FMS) comprising of Panchayat Planning, Physical Progress, Financial Progress, and Asset Management with Local Government Directory (LGD) forming the base for such a robust system along with the Public Financial Management System (PFMS), Special Planning and Geotagging. The Ministry endeavours to harness the digital technology towards its vision to enhance the end-to-end experience of public services; Government and non-government online.

- Computerization of Panchayat operations, leveraging BharatNet for internet connectivity
- Applications to be made mobile based for accessing them from anywhere and everywhere

4.22 The Ministry have furnished the following detailed note on the working of E Panchayats and to make Panchayats paperless:

“Ministry has formulated a scheme for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enablement of all the Panchayats in the country in a Mission Mode approach. e-Panchayat is one of the Mission Mode Projects (MMP) under the Digital India programme of Government of India that seeks to transform the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), making them more transparent, accountable and effective as last mile cutting edge organs of decentralized local self-governments.

The project aims at automating internal workflow processes of all the nearly 2.71 Lakh Panchayats or equivalent bodies across the country benefitting approximately 30 lakh elected members and about 10 lakhs PRI functionaries and improve local governance and make democracy work effectively at grassroots level.

Under the MMP, a suite of Core Common Software Applications was developed to address various aspects of Panchayats’ functioning such as planning, budgeting, implementation, accounting, monitoring, social audit and delivery of citizen services like issue of certificates, licenses, etc. With a vision to usher in digital Panchayats to empower & transform rural India, e-Gram SWARAJ (<https://egramswaraj.gov.in/>), was launched. It provides a Single window with the complete profile of the Gram Panchayat, including Sarpanch & Panchayat Secretary details, demographic details of the Panchayat, details of Panchayat finances, asset details, activities taken up through Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), Panchayat information from other Ministries/ departments such as Census 2011, SECC data, Mission Antyodaya survey report etc. e-Gram SWARAJ improves reporting and tracking of Panchayat activities, providing a single interface for capturing Panchayat information. It strengthens and

decentralizes planning process so that the development funds consumed by the Plans result in effective outcomes.

The application focuses on Work Based Accounting, tracking every expenditure incurred for each of the activities proposed under the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). In order to ensure better financial management of PRIs for enhancing transparency & accountability in maintenance of accounts, Ministry has integrated e-Gram SWARAJ with PFMS. e-Gram SWARAJ PFMS Interface is one of its kind for Gram Panchayats to make real time payments to vendors/service providers. All transactions are secured, and payment vouchers are created using 2 factor authentications. Till date, 2.22 lakh GPs or equivalent bodies (including TLBs) have carried online transactions of over Rs. 1 lakh crore.”

4.23 When the Ministry were asked about their inability to spend the amount allocated under the scheme during the last three years, the Ministry submitted as below:

“Funds are released to National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI) for central level support for maintenance and training of e-Gram SWARAJ and other applications, faculty support and programme management. The shortfall in expenditure was owing to the following reasons

- Some of the funds were left unutilized in the previous years with the implementing agency.
- Reduction in demands for handholding and Capacity Building on e-Gram SWARAJ and other applications from States and adoption of virtual modes of training methodology as per COVID guideline in the financial year 2021-22.”

4.24 The Ministry have provided the following details of the funds released to National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI), National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR) and State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) during the last three years:

“Details of the funds released to National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI), National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR) and State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs) during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

Year/Organization	NICSI	NIRDPR	SIRDs
2019-20	7.08	0.16	Nil
2020-21	17.79	Nil	Nil

Year/Organization	NICSI	NIRDPR	SIRDs
2021-22	11.22	Nil	Nil

4.25 The Ministry have provided the details of training programmes that have been conducted for the orientation for the PES application for the elected representatives and Panchayati Raj functionaries as under:

“Ministry has organized 17 trainings in the year 2022-23, 20 training programs in year 2021-22 to the State level trainers for providing handholding support on various applications under e-Panchayat MMP/ e-Gram SWARAJ.

4.26 Number of GPs with Panchayat Bhawan and with Computer

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of GPs/ TLBs With Computer	No. of GPs/ TLBs with Bhawan
1	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	271	59
2	Andhra Pradesh	10017	11162
3	Arunachal Pradesh	305	697
4	Assam	1156	2036
5	Bihar	6677	1424
6	Chhattisgarh	7042	11553
7	Goa	191	187
8	Gujarat	14359	14211
9	Haryana	1720	3166
10	Himachal Pradesh	3281	3217
11	Jammu and Kashmir	3973	2903
12	Jharkhand	3516	4230
13	Karnataka	5958	5550
14	Kerala	941	940
15	Ladakh	130	184
16	Lakshadweep	10	5
17	Madhya Pradesh	23066	22291
18	Maharashtra	26923	23891
19	Manipur	3758	161
20	Meghalaya	7368	5413
21	Mizoram	243	427
22	Nagaland	553	664
23	Odisha	6794	6798
24	Puducherry	100	77
25	Punjab	7304	8069
26	Rajasthan	10223	9701

Sl. No.	Name of the State	No. of GPs/ TLBs With Computer	No. of GPs/ TLBs with Bhawan
26	Sikkim	13	176
28	Tamil Nadu	10099	11194
29	Telangana	4436	4783
30	The Dadra and Nagar Haveli & Daman And Diu	38	25
31	Tripura	505	1132
32	Uttar Pradesh	47788	54010
33	Uttarakhand	7791	6610
34	West Bengal	3340	3316
Total		219889	220262

4.27 BharatNet Connectivity

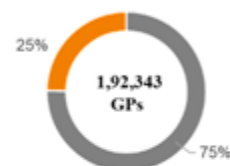


BharatNet Project



- BharatNet project is implemented by Ministry of Telecommunications in a phased manner to create a network to connect all the Gram Panchayats with broadband in the country.
- The targeted date for the completion of the project is 2024-25.
- As on 06.02.2023, out of 2.55 lakh Gram Panchayats (GP), 1.92 lakh GPs have been made Service Ready under the BharatNet project in the country. Out of this, 80640 GPs are operational.

Service Ready Gram Panchayats



• Total GP Service Ready • Remaining GPs

Operational Gram Panchayats



• GPs Operational • Not Operational

Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt

4.28 State-wise number of Service Ready GPs (including TLBs)

S. No.	State/UT	Total Service Ready GPs
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	70
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	5216
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	773
4	ASSAM	1640
5	BIHAR	8160
6	CHHATTISGARH	9567
7	GOA	0
8	GUJARAT	14359
9	HARYANA	6204
10	HIMACHAL PRADESH	414
11	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	1106
12	JHARKHAND	4345
13	KARNATAKA	5958
14	KERALA	941
15	LADAKH	192
16	LAKSHADWEEP	9
17	MADHYA PRADESH	18062
18	MAHARASHTRA	24032
19	MANIPUR	1465
20	MEGHALAYA	680
21	MIZORAM	441
22	NAGALAND	229
23	ODISHA	6794
24	PUDUCHERRY	101
25	PUNJAB	12807
26	RAJASTHAN	8991
27	SIKKIM	31
28	TAMIL NADU	1111
29	TELANGANA	9068
30	THE DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU	38
31	TRIPURA	755
32	UTTAR PRADESH	41079
33	UTTARAKHAND	1828
34	WEST BENGAL	2815
Total		189281

4.29 State wise number of GPs with Active Internet Connection

Sl. No.	States	Total RLBs	Active Internet at RLBs as on 21-01-2023
1	ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS	70	27
2	ANDHRA PRADESH	13325	1755
3	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2108	143
4	ASSAM	2197	604
5	BIHAR	8160	3463
6	CHHATTISGARH	11659	4891
7	GOA	191	0
8	GUJARAT	14359	11167
9	HARYANA	6220	3570
10	HIMACHAL PRADESH	3615	302
11	JAMMU AND KASHMIR	4291	382
12	JHARKHAND	4345	2101
13	KARNATAKA	5958	3314
14	KERALA	941	941
15	LADAKH	193	43
16	LAKSHADWEEP	10	3
17	MADHYA PRADESH	23066	3555
18	MAHARASHTRA	27923	10000
19	MANIPUR	3818	302
20	MEGHALAYA	9039	116
21	MIZORAM	834	59
22	NAGALAND	1291	28
23	ODISHA	6794	4308
24	PUDUCHERRY	108	91
25	PUNJAB	13241	9483
26	RAJASTHAN	11279	7319
27	SIKKIM	198	7
28	TAMIL NADU	12524	484
29	TELANGANA	12769	3719
30	THE DADRA AND NAGAR HAVELI AND DAMAN AND DIU	38	17
31	TRIPURA	1219	271
32	UTTAR PRADESH	58189	5014
33	UTTARAKHAND	7791	1010
34	WEST BENGAL	3339	2153
Total		271102	80742

4.30 The Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence have updated the Committee about the current status of Internet Connectivity in Gram Panchayats:

“Another important project is the BharatNet Project. So far, out of 2.5 lakh panchayats, 1.9 lakh panchayats have been made service ready, but all

the panchayats are not operational. Only 80,000 panchayats are operational. There are some gaps here. We are working with the Ministries of Telecom and IT to see how that gap can be filled. The target date to reach to all the panchayats is 2024-25. There are another two years left. Basically, in the hilly areas, Northeast areas, and in J&K it will take around 2025 to reach through BharatNet. In other districts, it is almost there. We hope that in the next six months we will make a substantial progress in this.”

4.31 The Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence submitted following regarding the number of online public services/documents rendered by Gram Panchayats:

“दस्तावेज सभी स्टेट में अलग-अलग सूची होती है। वर्ष 2021 में हम लोगों ने एक सिटीजन चार्टर कैम्पेन शुरू किया और पाया कि पूरे देश में अलग-अलग स्टेट्स का गिने तो 912 सर्विसेज पंचायतों द्वारा संचालित हो रही थी, कहीं कम थी और कहीं ज्यादा, कहीं सर्विसेज आनलाइन थी और कहीं ऑफलाइन थी। अब जब हम लोगों को पता चल गया है कि कौन सेवा किस राज्य में पंचायतों द्वारा दी जाती है। हम लोग एक समयबद्ध तरीके से उन सभी सेवाओं को आनलाइन करने का प्रयास कर रहे हैं, जिस की शुरुआत हरियाणा और मध्यप्रदेश में कर भी चुके हैं।”

4.32 **Action Research & Publicity**

The scheme Action Research and Publicity (by merging the scheme of „Media & Publicity” and „Action Research & Research Studies”) primarily aims at effective communication through all the available media platforms for advocacy, awareness and publicity regarding Panchayati Raj and its programmes which aim to build capacity within, and enhance the performance of Panchayats at all levels. The research component of the scheme is meant for taking up research studies through institutions to assess the impact of various schemes/ programmes/ initiatives of the Government related to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The 100% centrally funded scheme is a central component of the RGSA Scheme.

Action Research & Publicity utilises the funds for effective communication and publicity of various schemes, programmes and initiatives of the Ministry and other Ministries/Departments based on their prior proposal or proposals at short notices. The research component of the scheme is meant for taking up research studies through institutions to assess

the impact of various schemes/ programmes/ initiatives of the Government related to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).

All the media/ IEC activities will be planned, executed and monitored effectively to ensure timely payment against every activity within the shortest possible time after completion of the project in order to minimize the chances of committed liabilities and outstanding payments. Financial progress made during the month is closely supervised through enhanced monitoring measures like adhering to Monthly Expenditure Plan (MEP) and Quarterly Expenditure Plan (QEP). The Ministry has tried to improve the outreach of its programmes and vision through the social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (for video uploads). The previous and current years have witnessed significant improvement in the no. of visitors on all these platforms and substantial growth in social media outreach /engagements. In addition to this, the Ministry directly reached to more than 2.5 lakh Panchayats across the country through Bulk SMS for awareness generation on COVID-19 and other important messages.

4.33 The Ministry were asked the reason of reduction of BE for 2023-24 Rs. 8.00 Crore from Rs. 13.00 Crore in 2022-23 for action research and publicity, the Ministry have furnished the following reason:

“Due to discontinuation of physical printing of quarterly news magazine „Gramoday Sankalp” and related postal delivery expenses, with larger emphasis on its digital mode of communication, the budget provision was proportionately reduced. “

4.34 The Ministry have submitted the following details of studies presently undergoing and conducted in the last three years:

“Currently, out of the 12 studies sanctioned, 3 studies are in progress, draft reports on 2 studies are in the final stages of approval and 7 studies have been completed in the last three years under the component “Action Research & Research Studies (AR&RS)”, as indicated in the table below.

Year	No. of Studies Sanctioned	No. of Studies Completed	Remarks
2020-21	4	4	-
2021-22	5	3	Draft reports for 2 studies are in the final stages of approval.
2022-23 (As on 23.01.2023)	3	-	The studies were sanctioned during the 2 nd quarter, therefore,

Year	No. of Studies Sanctioned	No. of Studies Completed	Remarks
			first draft reports are expected in March, 2023 only.
TOTAL	12	7	

Note: During the year 2019-20, due to paucity of funds, no new study was sanctioned.”

Chapter-5

SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) Scheme

5.1 SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) is a Central Sector Scheme launched by Hon'ble Prime Minister on 24th April 2020, the National Panchayati Raj Day. The scheme aims to provide the „record of rights” to village household owners possessing houses in inhabited rural areas in villages and issuance of property cards to the property owners. Majority of funds under the scheme is earmarked for CORS and LSM components and these are sanctioned to Survey of India. Funds on a limited scale under IEC and SPMU components are released to the States/UTs. Funds are also provided to NICSI for Enhancement of Spatial Planning Application “Gram Manchitra” & Online Monitoring System; Central Infrastructure - Hardware & Software and NPMU.

Funds are released for the following components of the Scheme

- i. **Establishment of CORS network** (Funded to Survey of India)
This component provides establishment of CORS network by Survey of India. This will be funded by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, for establishment of CORS networks.
- ii. **Large Scale Mapping using Drones** (Funded to Survey of India)
This component would be funded by Ministry of Panchayati Raj for Large Scale mapping using Drone across the inhabited villages of the Country.
- iii. **IEC Initiatives** (Funded by MoPR to State Revenue Department)

Awareness programs to sensitize the local population about the surveying methodology and its benefits. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj would provide fund to State Revenue Department/ Nodal department

iv. Project Management:

- a) Establishment of National Project Management Unit at Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Funded to National informatics centre)
- b) Establishment of State Project Management Unit at State Revenue Department (Funded by MoPR to State Revenue Department)

v. Application Enhancements - a. Gram Manchitra, b. SVAMITVA Dashboard (Funded by MoPR to National informatics centre)

vi. Documentation support, National/ Regional level Workshop and Exposure visits (Funded by MoPR to State /any Government agency under Grant-in-aid head)

Majority of funds under the scheme are earmarked for CORS and LSM components and these are sanctioned to Survey of India. Funds on limited scale under IEC and SPMU components are released to States/UTs.

5.2 Physical Performance of the Scheme

Sl. No.	Scheme/Activity	Target for 2020-21 Physical	Achievement for 2020-21 Physical	Target for 2021-22 Physical	Achievement for 2021-22 Physical
i.	Number of villages drone flying completed.	1.01 lakh villages	40,514 villages	1,92,001 villages	94,387 villages
ii.	Number of villages maps generated after inquiry process/ objection process	1.01 lakh villages	7,954 villages	1,92,001 villages	40,785 Villages
iii.	No. of CORS sites Monumented	210 CORS	119 CORS	357 CORS	209 CORS

Note: In the year, 2020-21, the SVAMITVA Scheme was in Pilot Phase and implemented in nine States on Pilot basis (Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh)

5.3 State wise progress of the Scheme

State wise Progress

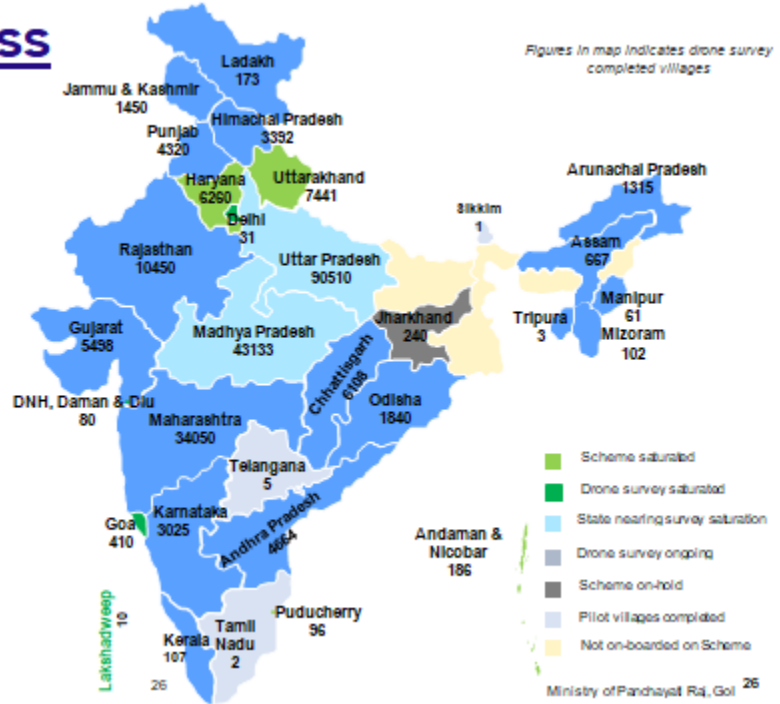
Drone survey completed in **2.25 Lakh Villages**

Scheme completed in Haryana, Uttarakhand, Puducherry, and A&N Islands.

Drone survey completed in Goa, Dadra Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Lakshadweep, Delhi

Drone survey target is 3.72 lakh villages based on States onboarded on Scheme

Status as on 6-Feb-2023



Property Cards Generated



States/UTs	No. of villages	No. of Property Cards
1. Andaman and Nicobar Islands	141	7409
2. Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu	75	4397
3. Gujarat	89	16089
4. Haryana	6260	2590473
5. Himachal Pradesh	80	1200
6. Jammu & Kashmir	180	5800
7. Karnataka	2179	746632
8. Ladakh	25	1534
9. Madhya Pradesh	13220	1608447
10. Maharashtra	4775	722612
11. Odisha	13	316
12. Puducherry	92	3000
13. Punjab	53	5347
14. Rajasthan	370	12174
15. Uttar Pradesh	33605	4978558
16. Uttarakhand	7441	278229
Total	68,598	1,09,82,217

Ministry of Panchayat Raj, Govt of India

5.4 The Ministry have provided the following Plan of Action for the SVAMITVA scheme:

- Drone based survey of all inhabited villages across the country
- Generation of legal document “Property Card” for property holder as per States/ UTs Rules/Acts
- Operationalisation of Continuous Operating Reference Station (CORS) across the country to provide 5cm accuracy in locational services for multifarious applications

5.5 When the Ministry were asked about the reduction in BE for the scheme in comparison with previous years, the Ministry in its written reply have submitted the following:

“Year-wise budget outlay for the entire scheme was approved in the guidelines/EFC of the scheme as per the implementation schedule of the scheme during different years. Budget Estimate (BE) for the year 2023-24 proposed according to the already approved outlays and no reduction is proposed in this.”

5.6 When the Ministry were asked the reasons for not achieving the physical targets for the two consecutive years of 2020-21 and 2021-22, the Ministry have deposed as follows:

- (i) “The Scheme started with the minimal number of the drones available with the Survey of India. It took development trajectory for the availability of sufficient drones, with the emergence of new drone policy and development of drone ecosystem in the country in the due course of time.
- (ii) Land being the State subject, States need to amend their Rules/Acts to implement the Scheme. For the generation of Property cards in States, ground verification of maps, household attribute collection and objection/claim and dispute resolution period activities are time-consuming.
- (iii) Restrictions induced by the Covid-19 pandemic in the initial phases of the scheme resulted in slow progress in scheme implementation.
- (iv) Drone survey activity depend on various climatic conditions like floods, rains, high winds, snowfall, etc., These climatic conditions and the difficult terrains in hilly and North-Eastern areas resulted in slow progress in achieving the physical targets.
- (v) The availability of the sufficient number of chuna-marked villages by the States also affects the progress of the scheme.”

5.7 Release of funds under SVAMITVA scheme (as on 31.12.2022)

(In Rupees)

Organization / State / UT	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Andhra Pradesh		26,70,000		26,70,000
Arunachal Pradesh		16,54,250		16,54,250
Assam		54,74,750		54,74,750
Chhattisgarh		13,14,500		13,14,500
Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu		2,19,750		2,19,750
Haryana	21,61,270			21,61,270
Himachal Pradesh		41,15,250		41,15,250
Karnataka	7,75,125			7,75,125
Madhya Pradesh	47,68,750	45,08,750		92,77,500
Maharashtra	10,52,500			10,52,500
Mizoram		2,77,750		2,77,750
Odisha		11,50,000		11,50,000
Puducherry			24,000	24,000
Punjab		13,24,500	7,80,000	21,04,500
Rajasthan			61,40,000	61,40,000
Tripura		3,87,000		3,87,000
Uttar Pradesh	1,44,75,000			1,44,75,000
Uttarakhand	15,10,000			15,10,000
Total	2,47,42,645	2,30,96,500	69,44,000	5,47,83,145

Chapter-6

Transparent and Accountable Gram Panchayats

6.1 System of monitoring and control over the performance of each scheme of the Ministry.

A. RGSA: The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of RGSA has been under implementation since financial year 2018-19. With a view to monitor and control the performance of this scheme, this Ministry has taken action to the effect that the monitoring of progress of implementation of the scheme including utilisation of funds is closely monitored with the States through meetings, video-conferences etc. Further, release of funds to the States is considered depending upon the status of utilization of funds released earlier. In addition, an online Management Information System (MIS) for the scheme has also been rolled out for monitoring of the progress of the approved activities in the States under the scheme. Training Management Portal (TMP) and Training Management Dashboard has also been launched for real time monitoring of the training conducted in the States/UTs under the scheme. Transaction based PFMS has been introduced for release and tracking of funds under RGSA.

B. Incentivization of Panchayats: The objective of the Incentivization of Panchayats scheme is to give due recognition to Panchayats/States/UTs that perform their role well. The scheme has an inbuilt monitoring mechanism which operates at different levels. Detailed Questionnaires for Awards have been developed by MoPR by utilizing various outcome and Sustainable Development Goals themes based parameters/indicators to measure accountability system and transparent functioning of Panchayats. All the panchayats will be ranked based on their performance under each theme. Their performance will be assessed by block level thematic committees and 3 top ranking GPs will be recommended for district level competition. Further district & State/UT will also assess and recommend the 3 top ranking GPs under each theme for national level competition. The selection committees at various levels will be engaging nodal Departments/Ministries for assessing the performance of GPs.

MoPR with its NIC team has developed National Panchayat Awards Portal (www.panchayataward.gov.in) for:

- Submitting online application by GPs for awards
- Recommendation of GPs for awards by states/UTs
- Monitoring the awards process at various levels (National, state/UT, District and Block)
- Creating a repository of the information of GPs on various indicators under different themes

C. e-Panchayat Mission Mode Project (MMP): e-Panchayat Mission Mode project is one of the central components of the flagship scheme of MoPR - RGSA to support States" as per their specific requirement w.r.t e-enablement. Review meetings, workshops, hand-holding

sessions, video conferences and visits by senior officials to States is undertaken regularly to review progress. A National Project Management Unit (NPMU) also coordinates/facilitates the implementation of this project.

D. Action Research and Publicity: Media & Publicity Scheme is monitored through periodical review. Physical visits are also undertaken to assess the efficacy of the campaigns and the requirement for further improvement. Audits are carried out as per the norms of the Government of India. For research activity under the scheme entrusted to various agencies, the following steps are taken for monitoring the progress of the research activities and implementation of the study recommendations:

- (i) The agency is required to make a presentation at the time of submission of the progress report, to update the status of the study.
- (ii) Before the final report is submitted the organization is asked to submit a draft report, which is evaluated by the concerned division and accordingly the agency is called for a presentation again.
- (iii) Final report is submitted after incorporating the suggestions made during the presentation, and the same is examined and sent to the respective divisions handling the subject concerned for detail examination of the report before it is finalized and balance amount is released to the agency.
- (iv) A copy of the report is circulated to all the Divisions of this Ministry and the concerned State Government(s) with actionable points emerged from the study report, if any, for information and taking further necessary action.

E. SVAMITVA: Scheme progress on key performance indicator parameters can be monitored through the Scheme dashboard (<https://svamitva.nic.in>). Scheme framework provides four-layer monitoring and evaluation framework for timely monitoring, reporting and course corrections (wherever necessary). It shall operate at National level, State level, District level and Panchayat level and comprise of relevant decision makers and subject matter experts

6.2 The Ministry have outlined the following salient features of the analysis and outcome of the last review/evaluation/Mid Term Appraisal of each schemes made by the Ministry or by any other agency:

“Third party evaluation of Centrally Sponsored Scheme of RGSA was undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) based on the Terms of Reference (ToRs) vetted by the NITI Aayog. The evaluation of the scheme brought out that intricacy and challenges of training programmes at the Gram Panchayat level require robust institutional competency in terms of developing infrastructure, accessing modern training equipment and tools, as well as pooling faculty and resources through coordination with the best quality institutions. Findings also call for more concerted processes for reforming governance at the Panchayat level through adequate Capacity Building &

Training (CB&T) activities in core areas of PRIs and emerging needs arising with the changing governance mechanism. The report appreciated the interventions made under RGSA scheme and recommended its continuation for strengthening of PRIs. Accordingly, scheme of Revamped RGSA was prepared and approved by the Government of India for implementation during 2022-23 to 2025-26.”

6.3 The Ministry were asked to outline the mechanism to periodically verify achievements at grass-root-level in States/UTs and actual outcome of activities undertaken by PRIs, the Ministry have furnished the following reply:

“The Ministry organizes annual competition among the Panchayats and confers awards on them based on their performance in delivery of services and public good under the National Panchayat Awards. Specific parameters gauging their performance have been developed and their responses are sought. After evaluation of the parameters through a set of questionnaire, based performing panchayats are awarded and financial incentives provided. With effect from 2022-23, the Ministry is taking action to rank the Panchayats based on their performance on the Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) and will confer awards.”

6.4 The Ministry have provided the following mechanism of ensuring accountability of Elected Representatives/ Panchayat functionaries/officials:

“Panchayati Raj System is the third tier of Government. „Panchayat”, being a State subject, the Constitution empowers a State Legislator to make laws relating to all „Panchayat” related matters, subject to provisions of the Constitution. States have, accordingly, made their Panchayati Raj laws, which may vary from State to State. Provisions relating to Panchayats, including powers, duties, responsibilities and accountability of the Elected Representatives/ Panchayat functionaries/officials are governed by respective Panchayati Raj laws of a State. Therefore, to work out a mechanism to ensure accountability of Elected Representatives/ Panchayat functionaries/officials is concerned mainly with State Government and State Legislature.

It may be relevant to mention that audit is an effective mechanism of ensuring accountability of Elected Representatives/Panchayat functionaries/officials. It may also be relevant to mention that Article 243J of the Constitution of India provides that the Legislature of a State may, by law, make provisions with respect to the maintenance of accounts by the Panchayats and the auditing of such accounts. Accordingly, State Governments have been vested with the sole responsibility of audit of

Panchayati Raj Institutions. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has provided the platform of AuditOnline, since 15th April 2020, in order to enable the States to complete the statutory audits of their RLBs in timely manner and also to facilitate the availability of the audited accounts of the Panchayats online. As per the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of XV FC recommendations dated 14th July 2021, one of the mandatory conditions, inter alia, to be eligible for release of Grants, the Rural Local Bodies are to ensure their accounts are audited as well.

To begin with, States were asked to carry out audits of 25% Gram Panchayat accounts for the expenditures incurred under 14th Finance Commission during 2019-20. Subsequently, the States were requested to carry out audit of Panchayat expenditures, across the three tiers, incurred under 14th FC & XV FC for the year 2020-21. As per the Operational Guidelines, for the year 2022-23, the States have to ensure that at least 25% of Rural Local Bodies have their accounts audited for the audit period 2020-21.

The 15th Finance Commission mandates that with effect from 2023-24 all accounts of Panchayats are to be audited for the Year minus two (for the year 2023-24, audit will be carried out for 2021-22). The 15th Finance Commission also mandates that they be placed in the public domain.

In order to realize the principle of accountability through Audit, the Ministry is proposing to bring in a more structured culmination to the online audit process by incorporating the Action Taken Report (ATR) Module. Towards these end, the Ministry has engaged with States in a structured manner to bring the audit of Panchayats to the level of 100% as mandated by the 15th Finance Commission.”

6.5 The Ministry were asked about the proactive measures that have been undertaken by the Ministry to ensure regular audit of Panchayati Raj Institutions, the Ministry have submitted the following details in its reply:

“Article 243J of the Constitution of India provides that the Legislature of a State may, by law, make provisions with respect to the maintenance of accounts by the Panchayats and the auditing of such accounts. Accordingly, State Governments have been vested with the sole responsibility of audit of Panchayati Raj Institutions. However, Ministry of Panchayati Raj has provided the platform of AuditOnline for carrying out online audit of annual accounts of Rural Local Bodies (RLBs), as the Central Finance Commission has been emphasizing on ensuring availability of audited Panchayat accounts. The AuditOnline application was rolled by M/o Panchayati Raj on 15th April 2020, in order to enable

the States to complete the statutory audits of their RLBs in timely manner and also to facilitate the availability of the audited accounts of the Panchayats online. It would be relevant to mention that as per the Operational Guidelines for the implementation of XV FC recommendations dated 14th July 2021, one of the mandatory conditions, inter alia, to be eligible for release of Grants, the Rural Local Bodies are to ensure their accounts are audited as well. As per this Operational Guidelines, for the year 2022-23, the States have to ensure that at least 25% of Rural Local Bodies have their accounts audited for the audit period 2020-21. To begin with, States were asked to carry out audits of 25% Gram Panchayat accounts for the expenditures incurred under 14th Finance Commission during 2019-20. Subsequently, the States were then requested to carry out audit of Panchayat expenditures, across the three tiers, incurred under 14th Finance Commission and 15th Finance Commission for the year 2020-21.

For the audit period 2019-20, 1,18,356 Audit Reports have been generated. As on date, accounts of 1,87,565 (70%) Panchayats across the country have been audited for the audit period 2020-21.”

6.6 The Ministry were asked that whether a regular audit is being conducted for the various schemes of the Ministry and the audit observations regarding the various schemes, the Ministry have stated as follows in its written reply:

“The office of Director General of Audit has conducted annual audit of the Ministry for scheme as well as non-scheme up for the latest financial year 2018-19 & 2019-20, the reports of which are awaited.”

6.7 The Ministry have provided following details of state wise total no. of Panchayats vis-a-vis number of Panchayats audited during each of the last three years:

“For the audit period 2020-21, around 19,95,470 Audit Observations have been recorded across the three tiers of Panchayats (3,082 ZPs, 27,314 BPs & 19,65,074 GPs).” (Source: AuditOnline portal of Ministry of Panchayati Raj)”

6.8 The Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence made following submission regarding status of audit of Gram Panchayats:

“The Panchayat audit has now been made compulsory. Earlier, this was a very difficult area. The audit reports of the Panchayats were pending for a

very long time. But now all the Panchayats have to mandatorily complete 100 per cent audit. For 2021-22 period have to be audited 100 per cent and then only we can release funds from the next year. For 2019-20, it was 25 per cent and we have achieved the 25 per cent target. But from the next year, all the Panchayats have to conduct the audit and put it in portal. They have been given freedom to conduct audit through the empanelled auditors. It is because in many States there is shortage of local fund auditors. So, they can use the services of the empanelled auditors and they can complete the audit. But it has to be uploaded. Next year only with 100 per cent audit we can release the money from the Finance Commission. So, there is a very good progress.”

6.9 The Ministry have informed the Committee that following are the provisions of auditing by respective States:

“As per Constitutional mandate (Article 243J), the Accounting and Auditing of the Panchayats are in the purview of the State Governments. Hence the audits are carried out in the States as per their respective Acts/Rules/Regulations. However, C&AG provides Technical Guidance and Support to the Local Fund Auditors of the States for carrying out audits of RLBs.”

6.10 When the Ministry were asked whether a copy of the audit report is submitted to the Ministry by the States and corrective actions that have been taken by the Ministry on such reports, the Ministry have provided the details given below:

“Since the Statutory audit of Panchayats are in the purview of the State Governments, copy of the audit reports of RLBs are not required to be submitted to MoPR.

„Panchayats” being in States” List of Schedule 7 of the Constitution, the State Governments are vested with the sole responsibility for ensuring proper utilization of the Panchayat finances which includes Central Finance Commission Grants. Accordingly, the State Governments have also the responsibility to take corrective actions against any mis-utilization/misappropriation of funds by the RLBs in their respective States. For corrective measures, legal/penal actions as provided for in the respective statutes/rules of the concerned State can be initiated/imposed after due enquiry establishes mis-utilization/misappropriation of funds of RLBs.”

6.11 When the Committee enquired about the Constitutional provision of Constitution of State Finance Commission in States, the Secretary, MoPR, during the course of evidence have deposed the following:

“The State Finance Commissions are very important. They are just like Central Finance Commission. Their role is distribution between the State and local Government. How the revenue is to be distributed between State functionaries and the local Government functionaries. They also determine the taxes duties, fees which should be assigned to the local Governments, the grants-in-aid to the local governments, measures needed to improve the financial position of Panchayat and any other matter for bringing transparency to the Panchayats. This is the present progress of the constitution of State Finance Commissions since the 73rd amendment. By this time all the States should have constituted Sixth Finance Commission but there is some gap. We are working with the States but by 2024-25 they have to do and if they do not do it by that time, then from 2025 they will not be getting the fund under Finance Commission. So, by next year they have to constitute the State Finance Commission and also submit Action Taken Report. This is the report of the State Finance Commission.”

6.12 Status of Constitution of State Finance Commissions in the States



Constitution of SFCs in the States (1/2)



Sl. No.	States	1 st SFC (1996-2001)	2 nd SFC (2001-2006)	3 rd SFC (2006-2011)	4 th SFC (2011-2016)	5 th SFC (2016-2021)	6 th SFC (2021-2026)
1	Andhra Pradesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
2	Arunachal Pradesh	✓	✓	-	-	-	-
3	Assam	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Bihar	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Chhattisgarh	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
6	Goa	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
7	Gujarat	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
8	Haryana	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Himachal Pradesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	J&K	✓	-	-	-	-	-
11	Jharkhand	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
12	Karnataka	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
13	Kerala	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Active SFCs



Constitution of SFCs in the States (2/2)



Sl.No.	States	1 st SFC (1996-2001)	2 nd SFC (2001-2006)	3 rd SFC (2006-2011)	4 th SFC (2011-2016)	5 th SFC (2016-2021)	6 th SFC (2021-2026)
14	Madhya Pradesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
15	Maharashtra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
16	Manipur	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
17	Odisha	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
18	Punjab	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
19	Rajasthan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
20	Sikkim	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
21	Tamil Nadu	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
22	Telangana	✓	-	-	-	-	
23	Tripura	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	
24	Uttar Pradesh	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
25	Uttarakhand	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
26	West Bengal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Active SFCs

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Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Govt.

6.13 When the Ministry were asked about the Output report of the various schemes being implemented by the Ministry, the Ministry have provided the following details:

“Yes, the Ministry compiles the measurable Output and Outcome of the various schemes based on the advice of Output-Outcome Monitoring Framework (OOMF) of the NITI Aayog and uploads it on the designated dashboard of the Aayog. As per the latest year 2021-22 for which the measurable outcomes for the whole year is available, the measurable outcome of the major scheme like RGSA is satisfactory. Against a target of capacity building & training of 50 lakh Elected Representatives and Functionaries of the PRIs 50.17 lakh participants were imparted training, which is 100.34% of the target. Similarly, 852 Panchayat Bhawans were constructed against the target of 700 Panchayat Bhawans accounting for more than 121% of the target. Similarly, against the target of making 350 GPs functional, 726 Panchayat Bhawans were made functional which is more than 207% of the target. For the outcome indicator of uploading of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) in the dedicated portal, 2.55 lakh GPDP were uploaded against the target of 2.45 lakh which is more than 104% of the target.”

6.14 State wise No. of GPs and No. of PRIs audited for audit period(s) 2019-20 and 2020-21

Sr. No.	States	Total No. of GPs	Audit report generated (Audit Completed)		Total No. of PRIs	Audit report generated (Audit Completed)	
			2019-20			2020-21	
1	Andhra Pradesh	13,467	4,094	30%	14,044	14,043	100%
2	Arunachal Pradesh	2,036	0	0%	2,133	-	0%
3	Assam	2,199	581	26%	2,415	2,075	86%
4	Bihar	8,387	2,141	26%	8,749	8,603	98%
5	Chhattisgarh	11,681	2,917	25%	11,831	7,958	67%
6	Goa	191	48	25%	193	-	0%
7	Gujarat	14,303	3,680	26%	14,538	3,631	25%
8	Haryana	6,208	1,549	25%	6,397	2,627	41%
9	Himachal Pradesh	3,226	825	26%	3,708	3,101	84%
10	Jammu & Kashmir*	4,290	1,110	26%			
11	Jharkhand	4,364	1,854	42%	4,638	-	0%
12	Karnataka	6,020	1,812	30%	6,233	5,901	95%
13	Kerala	941	941	100%	1,107	1,107	100%
14	Madhya Pradesh	22,807	6,054	27%	23,105	7,026	30%
15	Maharashtra	27,902	10,182	36%	28,276	27,040	96%
16	Manipur	161	40	25%	167	87	52%
17	Meghalaya**				9,024	-	0%
18	Mizoram**				834	-	0%
19	Nagaland**				1,290	-	0%
20	Odisha	6,798	1,727	25%	7,142	7,138	100%
21	Punjab	13,267	5,526	42%	13,436	3,464	26%
22	Rajasthan	11,349	4,060	36%	11,726	9,347	80%
23	Sikkim	185	49	26%	189	189	100%
24	Tamil Nadu	12,525	6,427	51%	12,949	12,497	97%
25	Telangana	12,795	5,132	40%	13,341	13,341	100%
26	Tripura	591	150	25%	1,262	1,262	100%
27	Uttar Pradesh	58,703	54,154	92%	59,090	54,078	92%
28	Uttarakhand	7,805	2,215	28%	7,899	2,042	26%
29	West Bengal	3,340	1,088	33%	3,706	1,008	27%
	Total	255,541	118,356	46%	269,422	187,565	70%

Note: * Jammu & Kashmir had received funds under 14th Finance Commission. After becoming, UTs, no grants were provided under XV Finance Commission.

**States were not provided funds under 14th Finance Commission.

6.15 State wise number of Audit observations recorded

Sr. No.	State Name	No. of Observations Recorded (2019-20)	No. of Observations Recorded (2020-21)
1	Andhra Pradesh	1,10,242	371,434
2	Arunachal Pradesh		-
3	Assam	1,501	11,299
4	Bihar	14,104	67,501
5	Chhattisgarh	39,863	111,444
6	Goa	59	-
7	Gujarat	18,606	15,299
8	Haryana	13,821	18,727
9	Himachal Pradesh	1,748	8,956
10	Jammu & Kashmir*	4,692	7,223
11	Jharkhand	3,037	-
12	Karnataka	90,180	37,071
13	Kerala	22,099	29,935
15	Madhya Pradesh	58,736	148,241
16	Maharashtra	30,643	115,510
17	Manipur	153	289
18	Meghalaya**	-	-
19	Mizoram**	-	-
20	Nagaland**	-	-
21	Odisha	17,174	84,823
22	Punjab	6,234	4,042
23	Rajasthan	11,531	33,688
24	Sikkim	276	753
25	Tamil Nadu	11,106	18,677
26	Telangana	54,210	212,698
27	Tripura	383	2,890
28	Uttarakhand	14,751	20,029
29	Uttar Pradesh	684,040	640,762
30	West Bengal	3,043	3,783
Total		12,12,233	19,65,074

Part-II
Observations/Recommendations

1. Allocation of funds to Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR)

The Committee are constrained to note that the budgetary estimate for the year 2023-24 in respect of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is Rs.153 Crore less than the demand placed by the Ministry. According to the MoPR, the major priorities for the upcoming year of 2023-24 are to enhance the capacities of Panchayats for good governance and attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The umbrella scheme of the Ministry i.e. Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) also aims at strengthening PRIs for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Further, the strengthening of PRIs are *sine qua non* for localization of Sustainable Development Goals, to be achieved by 2030. However, the fund allocation to the Ministry has been inadequate when compared to its mandate to strengthen and empower PRIs to achieve SDGs. In this regard, the Committee note that as against the MoPR's proposed budget of Rs. 1169.69 Crore for the financial year 2023-24, the Ministry of Finance has approved a reduced amount of Rs.1016.42 Crore which perhaps compel the Ministry to compromise on expenditure in certain areas. Since the Ministry strives to improve the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions through policy interventions, capacity building, etc., the Committee feel that it is imperative that adequate budgetary allocation should be made to the Ministry to translate their priorities into realities. In this regard, the Committee recommend that the Ministry should take up the matter at the highest-level with the Ministry of Finance and impress upon it to

approve the budgetary allocation to the Ministry according to its requirements, as capacity building of the PRIs are necessary for achieving Sustainable Development Goals. As far as 2023-24 is concerned, the Ministry should place its further demand for funds with the Ministry of Finance for the allocation of remaining funds at RE the stage. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

2. Liquidation of unspent balances

The Committee acknowledge that capacity building of PRIs have a multiplier effect on the Rural Development of the country. Timely and effective spending of budgetary allocations for the schemes/programmes of the Ministry is mandatory to achieve the lofty goals set before the Ministry. However, the Committee lament the fact that spending pattern of the Ministry has not been satisfactory. Analysis of spending pattern of the Ministry during the previous years shows that from 2019-20 to 2021-22, Budget Estimates were reduced every year at Revised Estimate Stage and actual expenditure has been much less than the Budget Estimates. For instance, in 2021-22, against BE of Rs.913.44 Crore, RE was reduced to Rs.868.38 Crore and the Ministry surrendered Rs.48.60 Crore with respect to BE. In 2022-23, the Ministry have been able to spend only Rs. 701.04 Crore out of Rs.905.77 Crore allocated at Revised Estimate stage and have Rs.204.73 Crore unspent balance as on 31.12.2022. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry chalk out its plan in such a manner so as to fully utilize the balance of funds allocated for 2022-23 in a timely manner to fructify and achieve its objectives and schemes/programmes in a realistic manner and

also strengthen the PRIs. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

3. Non-release of funds under RGSA

The Committee note that umbrella RGSA is the flagship scheme of the Ministry. According to the Ministry, funds under RGSA are released to the States/UTs primarily for Capacity Building & Training of Elected Representatives, Functionaries and other Stakeholders of the Panchayats. Further, funds are also provided for other admissible activities relating to Strengthening of Panchayats as approved under Annual Action Plan (AAP) of the States/UTs under the scheme. However, the Committee note that 19 out of 34 States/UTs have not received any funds under the scheme for the financial year 2022-23 (as on 31.12.2022). Similarly, in 2021-22, no funds were released to 9 out of 34 States/UTs. The Ministry to this effect submitted that timely non-submission of requisite documents and non-compliance of instructions stipulated by the Ministry of Finance, inter alia, are the reasons for non-release of funds. In Committees"view, halting funds in such a manner to many states will hamper the progress of this important scheme which aims at strengthening of the PRIs. In this context, the Committee recommend that the Ministry should be proactive in ensuring compliance of Ministry of Finance stipulations and submission of requisite documents by the States/UTs so that funds are released to all the States/UTs uniformly. If necessary, such matters should be taken up at the highest level with the States/UTs so that progress of the envisaged schemes may not hamper on account of delay or non-release of funds under RGSA.

4. Focus on Women's training under RGSA

The Committee note that the scheme of revamped RGSA is being implemented for strengthening of Panchayats through which the Ministry endeavours for graduated Capacity Building and Training (CB&T) of a large number of Elected Representatives (ERs), Panchayat functionaries and other stakeholders. In this regard, the Ministry informed the Committee that around 15,11,827 ERs, Panchayat Functionaries and other stakeholders have been trained during 2022-23 (as on 21.01.2023). However, the Committee are of the considered view that though there is provision for reservation of women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), however for real empowerment of women representatives at Panchayat level there is need to strengthen financially empower the women to facilitate her in taking independent decision. To curb the prevalent concepts such as „Sarpanch/Pradhan Pati“ are in Panchayati Raj Institutions, the Committee strongly recommend that the Ministry should take concerted efforts for increasing capacity building and training of women representatives of PRIs so that they can function independently without influence and help of others. In this regard, a fixed percentage of participation must be reserved for women ERs in all the capacity building programmes. The Committee firmly believe that Ministry would take proactive action in this regard and apprise the Committee in this regard.

5. Construction of Panchayat Bhawan in all PRIs

The Committee note that funds are provided to PRIs for construction of Panchayat Bhawans in the Gram Panchayats according to the Approved Action Plans of the States/UTs. However, the Committee are constrained to note that 51,512 Gram Panchayats are functioning without Panchayat Bhawans in various states. The Secretary, MoPR during the course of evidence informed the Committee that the majority of Gram Panchayats without Panchayat Bhawans are in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Since, the construction of Panchayat Bhawans are very much indispensable for the effective functioning of Panchayats, the Committee, strongly recommend that MoPR should take concrete steps for the construction of Panchayat Bhawans in a time bound manner to ensure that every Gram Panchayat has a Panchayat Bhawan to enable them to avail full benefits of the scheme launched by the Government for Rural Development.

6. Renovation of Dilapidated/old Panchayat Bhawans

Panchayat Bhawans are basic infrastructure requirements for efficient functioning of PRIs. Panchayat Bhawan works as a point of contact between citizens and panchayat functionary and permanent address for the Panchayat. However, the Committee during Study Visits have noticed that in many Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Bhawans are in dilapidated condition. Further, many panchayats are functioning from old buildings which is not only hampering the functioning of the PRIs but also endangering the lives of ERs and Panchayat Functionaries who are working there. The Committee, therefore, recommend that

a survey of such dilapidated/old Panchayat Bhawans should be conducted and be ensured that renovation of those Panchayat Bhawans be completed in a time bound manner on priority. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

7. Incentivization of Panchayats scheme

The Committee appreciates that the Ministry is incentivizing the best performing Panchayats through National Panchayat Awards. These awards have been revamped w.e.f. 2022 to assess the performance of PRIs in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals through nine identified Localization of SDG themes. Total five awards are given, in which Gram Panchayats are chosen under each award. Perusal of the information given by the Ministry shows that Madhya Pradesh received Rs.5.13 Crore as maximum incentive under these awards during the last three years and the current year. Total incentive given to all States/UTs was Rs.52.49 Crore during 2021-22. Moreover, the some States/UTs viz. Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Andaman & Nicobar, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh are least performing States/UTs. While acknowledging the importance of these awards which endeavours to develop healthy competition among PRIs to work towards effective, efficient and transparent governance of PRIs, the Committee strongly recommend that number and quantum of awards under each category should be increased so as to encourage more and more Panchayats to come forward to fulfill the SDGs. Moreover, the Ministry should also impress upon the least performing States/UTs to perform better so as to

achieve the objectives of the award scheme. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

8. Unavailability of Computers in Gram Panchayats (GPs)

The Committee are concerned to note that out of 271102 Gram Panchayats in the country, only 219889 GPs have computers in them. Availability of computers is a prerequisite for using internet service facilities. Perusal of information provided by the Ministry shows that the Gram Panchayats in some states have not even one computer. The Ministry has formulated e-Panchayat project which is a mission mode project under Digital India Programme to make the working of PRIs more transparent, accountable and effective through information and communication technology. But in the absence of adequate computer infrastructure, effective implementation of this project may not be possible. The Committee therefore, recommend that the Ministry in coordination with State Governments/UTs should take steps for installation of at least two computers with internet service in each Gram Panchayat in the country in a time bound manner.

9. Lack of Internet Connectivity in Gram Panchayats

The Committee note that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj aims at „Digitization of Gram Panchayats“ by providing broadband connectivity to more than 2.55 lakh GPs of the country in collaboration with the Ministry of Telecommunications and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). It is imperative for a

„Digitally Inclusive and Empowered Society“ envisaged under the flagship programme of Digital India. However, the Committee acknowledge that progress of the „BharatNet Project“ is not encouraging. Only 80,742 rural local bodies have active internet connection as on 21-01-2023 out of 2,71,102 rural local bodies even though 1.92 lakh Gram Panchayats have been made service ready. The Committee have also observed lack of broadband connectivity in the Gram Panchayats and use of private cellular data for public service delivery during its Study Visits undertaken to States such as Maharashtra. Considering the significance of the project, the Committee urge the Ministry to take concrete steps in coordination with other two Ministries to make all the 1.92 lakh service ready GPs to have active internet connection during 2023-24 and to connect all GPs with Broad Band connectivity by 2024-25. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

10. Non-delivery of services by Panchayats

The Committee note that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj have launched “Digitization of Gram Panchayats” programme in 2019 to achieve the objective of Smart Governance and provision of various online G2G, B2B and B2C services to the Rural Populace. However, the Committee are constrained to note that during its recent Study Visits undertaken to States of Maharashtra and Sikkim, it has been noted that most of the GPs provide only few online services related to birth and death certificates. The Ministry envisaged to bring all Panchayat related public services online. However, most of the online envisaged services are not being provided by the Panchayats to its citizens. The Committee are given to

understand that, the people rely on private service providers for such services and have to pay extra charges. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Ministry to look into this matter and ensure that all Gram Panchayats provide all mandated online assured services instead of confining only birth and death certificates etc. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

11. SVAMITVA

The Committee note that the SVAMITVA scheme aims at providing the „record of rights“ to village household owners possessing houses in inhabited rural areas in villages and issuance of property cards to the property owners. The scheme has a wide ranging socio-economic impact on rural areas. However, the Committee are constrained to note that the Ministry could not achieve its physical targets for the financial years of 2020-21 and 2021-22. The Ministry in its reply have submitted that the targets could not be achieved due to issues such as minimal number of drones available with Survey of India, climatic conditions among others. The Committee, therefore recommend the Ministry to prepare a action plan and set realistic targets, so that the scheme can achieve its targets by 2025-26. It is a matter of serious concern that some States are even not on board of the scheme due to local conditions. These states may be requested to establish a CoRS network or any other alternate remedy which will be helpful for surveying purposes.

12. Auditing of the Finance commission funds

The Committee have been informed that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj have provided the platform of AuditOnline for carrying out online audits of annual accounts of Rural Local Bodies (RLBs), as the Central Finance Commission has been emphasizing on ensuring availability of audited Panchayat Accounts. Needless to mention here that audit is a significant tool in the hands of the Government to determine how the funds provided by the Government were actually and prudently used as per the prescribed norms by the Panchayats and to identify factors that contribute to suboptimal use. However, the Committee notice that audit report have been generated for only 46 per cent and 70 per cent Gram Panchayats for 2019-20 and 2020-21, respectively. During its various Study Visits in different parts of the Country, the Committee have observed that neither audit of panchayats are being conducted in a time bound manner nor audit report were provided to the Committee. The Committee appreciate that 15th Finance Commission (FFC), has mandated that with effect from 2023-24 onwards all accounts of Panchayats are to be audited for the preceding two years i.e. 2021-22. The commission has also mandated that they be placed in public domain as well. Since it has been made mandatory to conduct audit of all the accounts of Panchayats, the Committee, recommend that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should take up the matter with State Governments at the highest level and impress upon them to conduct audit of accounts of Gram Panchayats in a time bound manner with the Audit Online application of MoPR and fulfill the conditions of FFC. For transparency of the expenditure of funds, results of the audit should

also be placed in the public domain as directed by FFC. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

13. Constitution of State Finance Commissions (SFCs)

The Committee note that out of 26 states for which information was given by the Ministry, only nine states have constituted 6th State Finance Commissions and out of them only two are active. Some states have not even constituted 4th and 5th Finance Commissions. Since it is necessary that State Finance Commissions are constituted regularly for the devolution of funds to PRIs from state finances, the Committee, therefore recommend that the MoPR should impress upon the State Governments to constitute SFCs regularly and this matter may be taken up at the highest level with them. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

NEW DELHI;
13 March, 2023
22 Phalgun, 1944 (Saka)

NARANBHAI J. RATHWA
Chairperson (Acting),
Standing Committee on Rural Development
& Panchayati Raj

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND PANCHAYATI RAJ
(2022-2023)

MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
FRIDAY, 10th FEBRUARY, 2023

The Committee sat from 1600 hrs. to 1733 hrs. in the Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe Building, (PHA), New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Kanimozhi Karunanidhi - **Chairperson**

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Vijay Kumar Dubey
3. Shri Sukhbir Singh Jaunapuria
4. Shri Janardan Mishra
5. Smt Gitaben Vajesinhbhai Rathva
6. Smt Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
7. Dr Alok Kumar Suman
8. Shri Shyam Singh Yadav

Rajya Sabha

9. Shri Dineshchandra Jemalbai Anavadiya
10. Smt Shanta Chhetri
11. Shri Iranna Kadadi

Secretariat

1. Shri D. R. Shekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri C. Kalyanasundaram - Director
3. Shri Vinay P. Barwa - Deputy Secretary

Secretariat

Representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj

1. Shri Shailesh Kumar Singh : Secretary, Rural Development
(Additional Charge-Panchayati Raj)
2. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar : Additional Secretary
3. Shri K.R. Meena : Additional Secretary &
Financial Adviser
4. Ms. Mamta Varma : Joint Secretary

5. Shri Alok Prem Nagar : Joint Secretary
6. Dr. Bijaya Kumar Behera : Economic Advisor (Parl.)

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened for taking the evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in connection with the examination of Demands for Grants (2023-24) relating to Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

[Witnesses were then called in]

3. After welcoming the witnesses, the Chairperson drew the attention of the Ministry that the discussions held here would be treated as confidential and not to be made public till the Report of the Committee is presented to Parliament. The Chairperson then broadly mentioned about the scheme-wise funds allocation of the Ministry for the year 2023-24 and requested the Secretary to brief about the variations in the budgetary allocation as compared to previous financial year alongwith other issues afflicting the implementation of the schemes. Thereafter, the Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj made a Power Point Presentation *inter-alia* highlighting allocations viz. utilisation of funds in different years so far along with the budgetary allocation for the year 2023-24 and the progress made under different schemes like Umbrella Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, SWAMITVA etc.

4. Thereafter, the Members raised queries on issues ranging from in adequacy of budget for different schemes/projects, its impact on the implementation of the schemes and the progress made by the Ministry for the attainment of targets under various schemes, which were responded to by the witnesses.

5. The Chairperson then thanked the representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and asked them to furnish written information on points raised by the Members on which the replies were not readily available within three days, to this Secretariat.

[The Witnesses then withdrew]

A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT & PANCHAYATI RAJ
(2022-2023)

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY, THE 13 MARCH, 2023

The Committee sat from 1530 hrs. to 1555 hrs. in New Committee Room No.,1', Parliament House Annexe Extension Building, Block - 'A' (PHA-Ext. 'A'), New Delhi.

Shri Naranbhai J. Rathwa -- *Chairperson (Acting)*

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri A.K.P. Chinraj
3. Shri Rajveer Diler
4. Dr. Mohammad Jawed
5. Shri Narendra Kumar
6. Shri Janardan Mishra
7. Smt. Gitaben Vajesingbhai Rathva
8. Smt. Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah
9. Shri Vivek Narayan Shejwalkar
10. Dr. Alok Kumar Suman
11. Shri Shyam Singh Yadav

RAJYA SABHA

12. Shri M. Mohamed Abdulla
13. Shri Dineshchandra Jemalbai Anavadiya
14. Smt. Shanta Chhetri
15. Shri Ram Shakal
16. Shri Ajay Pratap Singh

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri D. R. Shekhar - Joint Secretary
2. Shri C. Kalyanasundaram - Director
3. Shri Vinay P. Barwa - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, in the absence of Chairperson, the Committee under Rule 258 (3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha chose Shri Naranbhai J. Rathwa, MP to act as Chairperson for the sitting. The Acting Chairperson welcomed

the Members to the sitting of the Committee convened for consideration of following three Draft Reports of the Committee:-

- (i) XXX XXX XXX XXX
- (ii) XXX XXX XXX XXX
- (iii) Draft Report on Demands for Grants (2023-24) of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj;

3 Draft Reports were taken up for consideration one-by-one and after discussion, the Committee adopted the above Draft Report without any modifications. The Committee then authorized the Acting Chairperson to finalize the aforesaid Draft Reports and present the same to the Parliament at the earliest as the concerned Ministries have been listed in Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha for discussion.

The Committee then adjourned.

XXX Not related to the Draft Report