



सत्यमेव जयते

अनीता करवल
सचिव
भारत सरकार
स्कूल शिक्षा एवं साक्षरता
विभाग
शिक्षा मंत्रालय

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Dated 16th September 2021

D.O.No.F.27-7/2021-IS-9

Dear Chief Secretary,

Please refer to DO letter No. G-39011/212017-FD dated 10th of June, 2020 jointly issued by Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

In the above mentioned DO letter, in order to provide employment to persons in the rural area as per their skills and to strengthen community infrastructure, following instructions were issued in para (3) and para (6).

“..... it has been decided by Government of India to permit utilization of 14th Finance Commission (FC) grants available with Gram Panchayats (GPs) as well as the ensuing 15th FC untied grants (which they will be receiving shortly) during 2020-21 towards the construction of specific community assets like Gram Panchayat Bhawans apart from undertaking repair and maintenance of other Public Buildings/ Assets located in the Gram Panchayat by engaging and utilizing the services of the skilled/unskilled workers for the same.

Further, GPs may also **undertake repair and maintenance of other Public Buildings/ Assets located in the Gram Panchayat such as Primary/ Upper Primary Schools**, Health Sub Centers, Cooperative Stores selling seed and fertilizers etc., wherever necessary by utilizing the Finance Commission Funds”.

In the above context, it is pertinent to mention that schools are the place where the future of the children and nation takes shape and schools are the most important public buildings at the village level. So, provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure facilities is very essential to bring out-of-school children to schools, improve student attendance and to minimize the drop-out of girl students.

Therefore, it has been decided that the Gram Panchayats may be permitted to utilize 14th and 15th Finance Commission (FC) Grants available with them for maintenance and creation/ strengthening of basic infrastructure facilities in Primary/ Upper Primary/Secondary/Higher Secondary Schools on priority, such as:

- a. Maintenance of school buildings
- b. safe drinking water; piped water supply; hand washing units;
- c. boys & girls' toilets along with urinals;
- d. sanitary pad vending machines & incinerators;
- e. Divyang friendly toilets, ramps and other accessibility features;
- f. kitchen facilities and sheds for MDM; kitchen gardens;
- g. functional electricity connection;
- h. BharatNet Wi-Fi facilities;
- i. appropriate flooring in classrooms and toilets;
- j. repair of school doors/windows/fixtures; boundary walls along with gate, etc.;
- k. Preparation and maintenance of playgrounds.

Also, installation of rain water harvesting system in school buildings as per “Catch the Rain Campaign” may be taken up on priority under 15th FC Grants.

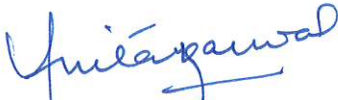
5. Convergence of SMCs with Gram Panchayats may also be done as suggested below:

- (i) As per Section 22 of RTE Act, 2009, the SMC has the mandate to prepare School Development Plan (SDP). SDP may be aligned with Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) in collaboration with VECs for faster implementation, smooth availability of funds and regular monitoring. The annual plan would be prepared as per norms/regulations issued by the State Education Department from time to time.
- (iii) The following targets: (i) Zero Dropout rate, (ii) 100% attendance of children in class and (iii) Fully literate GP (including adults and children), may be set up by the Education Department of the State/UT in consultation with Panchayati Raj Department. At Panchayat level, these targets would be part of SDP and GPDP.
- (iv) Under MDM scheme, cooked food is provided to the students. VEC may extend their support to provide food supplements.
- (v) VECs may also organize Annual Health checkups of all the students of the school, in collaboration with the Health Department.

6. In light of the above, we request that suitable instructions may be issued to the concerned departments/ local authorities to immediately work out their strategy in accordance with the above suggestions, read with DO letter No. G-39011/212017-FD dated 10th June, 2020 jointly issued by Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development (**copy of letter attached**), for arranging to **provide basic infrastructure facilities in all Government Schools in their jurisdiction** and share the progress with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,



Anita Karwal
Secretary
Department of School
Education & Literacy
Ministry of Education



Sunil Kumar
Secretary
Ministry of Panchayati Raj



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D. O. No. G-39011/2/2017-FD

10th June, 2020

Dear Chief Secretary,

In the last two months, the country has been faced with an unprecedented situation arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent lockdown. While the country has gained time during the lockdown to ramp up health facilities, prevent a rapid surge in COVID-19 cases and keep the mortality rate in check, the biggest challenge before Central and State Authorities in rural areas at this juncture is to provide employment opportunities to returning migrant labourers and rural labourers which is commensurate with their skill sets. However, at the same time there can be no let up in community vigil and strict adherence to guidelines issued by the Health Authorities to check spread of COVID-19.

2. A sample of skill mapping data of migrant labourers undertaken by some States in the past few days/weeks reveals that majority of workers have skills relating to construction industry. It is understood that these skilled workers may not be willing to work as unskilled labourer on Mahatma Gandhi NREGS work sites. Further, as per available information, in several States, a large number of isolation /quarantine centres in rural areas have been set up in Primary/Upper Primary School buildings. These will need to be vacated once the schools reopen. As per available information, it appears that the effect of COVID-19 pandemic is likely to continue for some time at least. Hence, the requirement for continued establishment of isolation / quarantine centers in rural areas is likely to persist in the near foreseeable future.

3. With a view to provide employment to persons in rural areas as per their skill sets and also to strengthen community infrastructure to enable Gram Panchayats (GPs) to effectively meet the challenges, it has been decided by Government of India to permit utilization of 14th Finance Commission (FC) grants available with Gram Panchayats as well the ensuing 15th FC untied grants (which they will be receiving shortly) during 2020-21 towards construction of specific community assets like Gram Panchayat Bhawans apart from undertaking repair and maintenance of other Public Buildings/Assets located in the Gram Panchayat by engaging and utilizing the services of the skilled/unskilled workers for the same.

4. According to available information, there are about 60,346 Gram Panchayats which do not have Panchayat Bhawans. A statement showing State wise availability of unspent 14th FC Funds (as per information available in PRIASoft), likely allocation under 15th FC, deficit GP Bhawans is enclosed.

800373/2021/IS-9 Section

5. The maximum approved unit cost for Gram Panchayat Bhawan by Ministry of Panchayati Raj is Rs. 20 lakh. It has been decided to meet 50% cost of Panchayat Bhawan through Finance Commission Funds and 50% of the cost from Mahatma Gandhi NREGS funds. In case the available unspent balance under 14th FC available with GP is insufficient to meet the 50% cost of Panchayat Bhawan, the deficit may be met by utilizing the 'untied funds' likely to be made available to GPs under 15th FC or State Finance Commission (SFC) Grants or Own Sources of Revenue(OSR).

6. "Further, GPs may also undertake repair and maintenance of other Public Buildings/Assets located in the Gram Panchayat such as Primary/Upper Primary Schools, Health Sub Centres, Cooperative Stores selling seed and fertilizers etc., wherever necessary by utilizing the Finance Commission funds. "

8. It is reiterated that the aforesaid decision has been taken to meet the key infrastructure deficit in rural areas and to provide immediate employment opportunities to skilled and unskilled manpower currently available in rural areas through convergence of Central Finance Commission and Mahatma Gandhi NREGS funds. **These works need to be initiated immediately and completed within this financial year in a mission mode.** Further, this decision is valid ONLY for the current financial year.

9. We believe that if the State Authorities also decide to permit utilization of funds made available under State Finance Commission recommendations, Own Sources of Revenue (OSR) of the Panchayats and/or State schemes to meet any deficit, it should be possible to fully wipe out the key infrastructure deficit in rural areas for Gram Panchayat Bhawans.

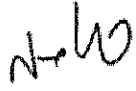
10. Efforts may also be made by Gram Panchayat to converge Finance Commission funds with Mahatma Gandhi NREGA for taking up other works which are permissible under Mahatma Gandhi NREGA and Finance Commission guidelines, including those for the SHG Collectives at village levels(Maximum Cost Limit-Rs15 lakh), esp. in villages not having Panchayat Bhawan or any other community infrastructure. It is suggested that the same may be made available for community events at a charge decided by the Collective. The cost of such works should be shared between the Mahatma Gandhi NREGA funds and FC funds & other Panchayat Funds equally.

11. In light of the above, we request that suitable instructions may forthwith be issued to officers of concerned Departments to immediately work out their strategy for each District and communicate the same to Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Rural Development the number of GP Bhawans proposed to be constructed during current financial year under this special dispensation at the earliest. All the provisions and guidelines of Mahatma Gandhi NREGA should be adhered to during implementation of works taken under convergence with Mahatma Gandhi NREGS.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,


10.6.20
(Sunil Kumar)


(Nagendra Nath Sinha)

Encl. a/a

All Chief Secretaries, States. . . (As per list attached)