



# Panchayats should proactively tackle poverty, social issues and needs of vulnerable groups-Tomar

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Union Minister of Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and Drinking Water & Sanitation Shri Narendra Singh Tomar has said that the Panchayats have been performing well under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and underlined the importance of quality of training and use of technology by Panchayats. He suggested that National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj and State Institutes of Rural Development should coordinate with other institutes for imparting quality training to the elected representatives and functionaries of Panchayats. He was speaking at the Conference of State Panchayati Raj Ministers at Bhopal.

Shri Tomar highlighted that in the context of huge fiscal transfer to Gram Panchayats of about Rs.2,00,292 Crore in five years, by the way of the Fourteenth Finance Commission (FFC) award, recent years have seen a significant increase in public expenditure through Panchayats in the areas of sanitation, civic amenities etc. He pointed out the importance of peoples' participation and advised that Panchayats should take a proactive role in addressing poverty, social issues and needs of vulnerable groups. Through the local leadership of the Gram Panchayats, many villages have been able to successfully resolve difficult problems like availability of water, connectivity, open defecation, education for all and have brought about transformational changes in the lives of poor persons belonging to vulnerable groups. He also thanked State Ministers of Panchayati Raj for participating in the conference and assured that all their suggestions would be duly considered.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan highlighted the progress made by Madhya Pradesh and thanked Shri Narendra Singh Tomar for organizing the conference at Bhopal. He also pointed out that decisions taken through Panchayats are always fruitful and informed that he himself took decisions regarding various schemes by holding Panchayats with concerned stakeholders.

Panchayati Raj Ministers of ten States made presentations and shared their experiences and gave suggestions for future development of Panchayati Raj Systems. In the conference more than forty Sarpanches of Panchayats from different parts of country were felicitated in appreciation of their outstanding performance.

During the conference three panel discussions, one each on Water Conservation, Smart Villages for New India and Role of Panchayats in achieving Sustainable Development Goals were organized. Many recommendations emerged from these deliberations. Further, two books published by Ministry of Panchayati Raj with the support of United Nations Development Program (UNDP) were released. A set of twenty books published under collaborative projects of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, UNICEF and Tata Institute of Social Sciences was also released on the occasion.

Shri Parshottam Rupala, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj and Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shri Jitendra Shankar Mathur, Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Shri Basant Pratap Singh, Chief Secretary to the Government of Madhya Pradesh addressed the gathering. Ministers of Panchayati Raj of ten States, Senior Officers – in-charge of Panchayati Raj Department of States, Representatives of National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRD&PR), Directors and Faculty-Members of State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs), Officers of Social Sector Ministries, Representatives of multi-lateral organizations such as UNDP, UNICEF, leading NGOs working in this sector, and experts participated in the deliberations of the conference.

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