



TOPIC OF THE WEEK

APR'18 (26 to 30)

Topic: Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)

History

The national level plan for improving the functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) is mapped out in the Roadmap for Panchayati Raj (2011–2017). The Roadmap logically delineates the issues and specific action plans within the larger governance framework for creating an effective Panchayati Raj structure. It highlights key aspects of empowerment, enablement and accountability of the PRIs for better governance and faster development, includes devolution of functions, funds and functionaries as envisaged in the Constitution, Capacity Building of the Panchayats and Functionaries, decentralized planning, effective implementation of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), empowered elected village councils in the Sixth Scheduled Areas and changes in the constitutional and legal framework.

The Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley announced the launch of new restructured scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) in his budget speech 2016-17 to

strengthen the Panchayati Raj system across the nation.

Subsequently, a committee under the Chairmanship of the Vice Chairman of NITI Aayog was constituted to restructure the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) Scheme as Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan Scheme.

Aim

The Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan will strengthen the Panchayati Raj system across the country and address critical gaps that constrain its success. RGSA seeks to:

- Enhance capacities and effectiveness of Panchayats and the Gram Sabhas;
- Enable democratic decision-making and accountability in Panchayats and promote people's participation;
- Strengthen the institutional structure for knowledge creation and capacity building of Panchayats;
- Promote devolution of powers and responsibilities to Panchayats according to the spirit of the Constitution and PESA Act;

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- Strengthen Gram Sabhas to function effectively as the basic forum of peoples participation, transparency and accountability within the Panchayat system;
- Create and strengthen democratic local self-government in areas where Panchayats do not exist;
- Strengthen the constitutionally mandated framework on which Panchayats are founded.

Implementation

Several responsibilities for the rural development are given to the gram panchayat leaders who work maintaining liaison with the state govt. The gram panchayats will be given skill development teaching under the RGSA scheme. Several capacity building and training centers will be formed for the training of the gram panchayats at several levels like gram panchayat level, block level, and Zilla Parishad level.

Expenditure to be incurred on Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan

The scheme will be implemented during the period from April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2022 at the total cost of Rs

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7255.50 crore. Of the total cost, the Central share will be Rs 4500 crore and the State share will be Rs 2755.50 crore.

The funding pattern of the Scheme has been 75% by the Central Government and 25% by the State Government.

Significance

- The scheme will help more than 2.55 lakh Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to develop e-governance capabilities for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through inclusive local governance.
- The key taglines of SDGs are- leaving no one behind, reaching the farthest first and universal coverage and gender equality to be instilled in all capacity building interventions including trainings, training modules and materials.
- The scheme seeks for programmatic union of the Mission Antyodaya's identified Gram Panchayats and 115 Aspirational districts identified by NITI Aayog.

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- The scheme will encourage Gram Sabhas to work as effective institutions with social inclusion of citizens particularly the vulnerable groups.
- It will establish the institutional structure for capacity building of PRIs at the national, state and district level with adequate human resources and infrastructure.

Conclusion

The Gram Swaraj Abhiyan moves back to the roots of the Panchayati Raj System taking into consideration the Gram Panchayats. When modernization and urbanization have hit various parts of the country which were otherwise backward and neglected, this scheme brings into light a major element of the governance system in these areas.

Gram panchayats are provided funds making them strong and the system more advance for e-governance. The structure will become more transparent and strong through this advancement. Also, the members will take the system more seriously with these techno additions to it.

Suggested Reading:

- ✓ <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=178826>
- ✓ <http://rgsa.nic.in/>
- ✓ <https://www.jagranjosh.com/current-affairs/ccea-approves-restructured-rashtriya-gram-swaraj-abhiyan-scheme-1524459881-1>
- ✓ <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/pm-modi-launches-rashtriya-gram-swaraj-abhiyan/articleshow/63894161.cms>