

Jehlum Post News|Srinagar| July 17, 2014|The High Powered Committee headed by Chief Secretary, Mohammad Iqbal Khandey, Thursday, discussed and finalized the Annual Plan 2014-15 of Rs 104.68 crore

under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) and Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF). To strengthen the Panchayat Raj System and address critical gaps, the plan envisages various activities including administrative and technical support, construction and repair of Panchayat Ghars, capacity building and training of Elected Representatives (ERs) at various levels, Information, Education and Communication activities, E-enablement of Panchayats and strengthening of the institutional structure. Secretary Rural Development, Sheikh Mushtaq presented a detailed overview of the status of panchayats in the State. He said the state has 4128 Halqa Panchayats out of which 2185 have Panchayat Ghar buildings. He said as many as 1678 Panchayat Ghars have been taken under the 13th Finance Commission and the remaining 265 Panchayat Ghars for which funds to the tune of Rs 795 crore are required will be taken once the proposal is approved. He said Rs 21 crore have been proposed during the current financial year for repair and renovation of 700 existing Panchayat Ghars at an average unit cost of Rs 3 lakh per Panchayat Ghar. He said that Rs 13.19 crore has been proposed under the Capacity Building and Training component during the current year's annual plan. It includes various training and orientation courses for ERs, exposure visits besides computer courses for ERs and official functionaries.

He said for providing administrative and technical support as many as 1032 Accountant-cum-Data Entry Operators, which were sanctioned by the cabinet yesterday will be engaged to maintain accounts of the Panchayats, area profiling, up-loading of plans, software etc. He said besides these during the current financial year an additional 1032 operators have also been proposed. In addition, he said with the establishment of additional 177 blocks in the State, there is a requirement of as many as 354 JEs/Technical Assistants which have been booked under the current year's plan with a fund requirement of Rs 6.37 crore for their recruitment. For strengthening the institutional structure for training, funds to the tune of Rs 50 lakh have been approved for establishing State Panchayat Resources Centre (SPRC) within J&K IMPARD in Srinagar besides the Union Ministry has also approved two District Panchayat Resources Centres (DPRCs) during 2013-14. He said two additional DPRCs have been proposed in the current plan with total fund requirement of Rs 6.55 crore for their establishment. Dr. S. N. Alam, Head Academics and Trainings J&K IMPARD said that the institute has already prepared brief modules/Calendar for the year 2014-15 for various training, refresher and orientation courses under the Capacity Building and Training component of RGPSA. The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary H&UD Mr. Satish Nehru, District Development Commissioners of Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar, Poonch, ADDC Kupwara and other officers.