

Prime Minister's  
Rural Development Fellows  
2012

Launch - April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Hyderabad

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Clockwise from Top Left: Mr. Jairam Ramesh , Hon'ble Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, addressing the house; PMRDFs registering for the event; PMRDFs sharing ; Inaugural welcome by Mr. Murganandam N. (JS, MoRD, GOI)

## Introduction

The Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows (PMRDFs) programme was formally launched on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at the Andhra Pradesh Academy of Rural Development (APARD) campus Hyderabad (where the interim campus of TISS Hyderabad is located). Through this landmark endeavour, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India (MoRD, GOI) is leading a paradigm shift in the approach to convergence of social sector programmes and schemes with a special focus on the poor and marginalised. The programme aims at inclusive growth with an emphasis on the empowerment and development of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Castes, women, adolescent girls, children and vulnerable groups in all spheres of life.

The Honourable Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation Mr. Jairam Ramesh, launched the programme. The occasion was graced by the Honourable' Union Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo. Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission was the guest of honour at the inauguration.



Honourable' Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Honourable' Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo and Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, India)

## **About the Programme**

The vision of the PMRDFs programme is to create a cadre of committed and motivated facilitators to foster community engagement in securing their entitlements to live a dignified life free from hunger and fear.

PMRDF seeks to identify, select and empower some of the brightest and most committed young people of this country to facilitate development and to ensure that welfare programmes reach the people. The idea is to bridge the gap between planning and execution and to build opportunities for young people to come forward and contribute to society. The fellowship offers a platform to 156 bright young professionals to commit a significant period - three years – of their life, to the development of the 78 Integrated Action Plan (IAP) districts.

## **Role of the PMRDFs**

The PMRDFs placed in these districts will support and anchor the development programs by bridging the gap between the system and the grassroots. The task of PMRDFs is to spread awareness on participatory preparation of micro-plans and perspective plans and eventually facilitate peoples' participation in decision-making and indirectly, policy implementation. The PMRDFs will strive to maximise the impact of the system's developmental efforts through convergence of the welfare programmes and schemes by the central and state governments.

## **Launch of PMRDF Programme, April 7<sup>th</sup> 2012**

The PMRDF programme was launched on April 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 at (APARD), Hyderabad. The programme started at 10.30 AM with the arrival of the Honourable' Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Honourable' Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo and Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, India), senior officials from Department of Rural Development of various state governments including Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Maharashtra, Bihar, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand. Few district collectors were also present at the launch.



Mr. Thomas George (Programme Manager at UNICEF), Dr. Pramath Raj Sinha (Founding Dean, Indian School of Business Founder and Managing Director, 9.9 Mediaworx Pvt Ltd), peace activist, Shri. K. Chandramouli (Secretary, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India), Vijay Mahajan (Social Entrepreneur and Chairman of BASIX); MoRD officials and representatives of different media houses were also present at the launch of the program.

Mr. N. Muruganandam (Joint Secretary, MoRD, GOI) welcomed the guests. While sharing the details of the programme he talked about the remarkable journey from the inception of an idea to a fully-fledged programme that might eventually become a platform that would give young professionals the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the development of the country.



Mr. Murganandam N. (Joint Secetary, MoRD, GOI welcome s the house, (from left – right) Dr. A.K Singh, IAS (DG CAPART, GOI); Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, IAS (Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, India); Honourable’ Mr. Jairam Ramesh (Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation), Honourable’ Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo (Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj); B.K. Sinha (retd. IAS) and Prof. S. Parasuraman (Director TISS)



Dr. A.K Singh (IAS, D.G. CAPART) felicitating the Guest of Honour Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo (Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj) during the welcome ceremony. Honourable Minister Shri Jairam Ramesh was welcomed by Mr. Muruganandam N. and Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia was welcomed by Dr. A.K. Singh.



Dr. S. Parasuraman (Director, TISS) sharing details of the programme with the guests

After the welcome ceremony, Dr. S. Parasuraman (Director, TISS) took the podium, to share the basic details<sup>1</sup> of the programme with the house. He stressed on the pressing need for engagement with the youth of this country through such endeavours. He further added that the *Prime Ministers Development Fellowship Scheme* provides highly qualified, young professionals from across India with an unparalleled opportunity to work with the people to enable them to access development and welfare programmes and schemes, and gain in-depth understanding of critical development challenges in conflict affected areas. He further stated that the program's training modules have been designed to impart critical skills to work in difficult social and geographical context. The *Prime Ministers Development Fellows* will be "change agents" who will engage with peoples' groups and civil society leaders, government

<sup>1</sup> Annexure I- PMRDF programme at a glance shared the basic details including the selection process and statistics dated April 7<sup>th</sup> 2012 and the upcoming trainings.

officials and policymakers, social entrepreneurs, journalists, environmentalists, and academics -with the goal of finding shared common purpose in the pursuit of creative and lasting solution to the region's diverse development needs and challenges.

The guest of honour Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo (Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj,GoI)) in his address to the house expressed his appreciation of the initiative by the Ministry of Rural Development as a new chapter in development that begins at the grassroots level. He also talked of how the question of inclusive growth is integrated with the rights of indigenous communities. He admitted that there is a need to have a greater degree of convergence among the Ministries of Rural Development and the Tribal Ministry for attainment of the desired objectives of inclusive growth. He also extended his best wishes to the programme and assured complete co-operation for the success of the programme.



Honourable' Union Cabinet Minister, Tribal Affairs and Panchayati Raj Shri V. Kishore Chandra Deo interacting with the Fellows.

Shri Jairam Ramesh (Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation, GoI) expressed his pleasure to meet the young minds of the country who wished to take up the challenge for engaging with development at the grassroots. The Minister expressed great appreciation for the Planning Commission Report, which talks about the development deficit in the areas where development conflict has also turned out to be violent. Using the planning commission's path breaking research on development and governance deficit in the areas and the need for change agents, he also termed the programme as "a leap in the dark" suggesting the evolving nature of the programme.





The minister added that the programme aims to extend support to the district administration, thus identifying the potential role of the fellows as being the eyes and ears of the collector who can bridge the gap between the administration and the masses. The Minister also suggested that there is a need for the PMRDFs to take initiative and efforts at their end as well to evolve the programme at the district level. The Minister also emphasised on the need to

have more flexibility with the State governments in defining the role and responsibility of the PMRDFs once they engage with the State government in their respective districts.

Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission, India) in his address to the house mentioned the need for the engagement with the extremist areas of the country and the need for anchoring development initiatives that reach out to the people.



The State Government representatives also shared their views and appreciation for the unique initiative. Mrs Aruna Sharma (Principal Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, government of Madhya Pradesh) said that the State was looking forward to welcome young people who would engage with communities and can help the government with its mission to reach the last person who needs to be engaged with mainstream initiatives of development. She also mentioned that there is need for greater flexibility to the State Government to determine the engagement of the PMRDF based on the assessed needs and requirements of the State. Also the need for determination of the roles and responsibilities of the PMRDFs was emphasised, which needs to cater to a greater engagement in the field. The need for the fellows to be dynamic in their engagement with the district administration and priorities was asserted as a very important aspect of the process in which the programme can take off to fulfill the desired goals. Mr. Jairam Ramesh also emphasised the need for flexibility to the State government and further suggested that the final engagement (district placement) would be determined by the respective State Governments as per the needs and requirements of the State.





Mrs. Aruna Sharma (PS Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Madhya Pradesh)

A high tea was organised for the participants after which the PMRDFs had an interaction with the guests which was an opportunity for them to express their insights and their concerns on the programme..

While addressing the house, Dr. Ajay Kumar Singh (IAS, DG CAPART) highlighted the overall objectives of the programme and the possibilities which the programme offers to a PMRDF. In a brief candid speech, Dr. Singh also voiced the need for such initiatives in our country where we are aiming at an inclusive growth model and wish to engage with comprehensive strategies to achieve it in equitable ways.

Mr. Thomas George (UNICEF) shared his experiences with the district facilitators model and the learning and possibilities which the programme offers to young professionals. Mr. Vijay Mahajan (BASIX) talked about the need for PMRDFs to be a catalyst of change and emphasised on an engagement with the system for engaging into development for the masses.

The Activist (Shashi ji and group) shared the need for a people's approach to peace building and retaliating violence. The need for a positive engagement with the people and stakeholders (including civil society) was emphasised for a sustainable model for inclusive development which can offer peace a fair chance.

Finally, Dr. Sattnam Singh (Director, PMRDF, CAPART) offered a vote of thanks to all who supported the programme and made it a success. In the end one would like to acknowledge the able anchoring done by Ms Mallika Ahluwalia of the day long programme and her efforts to ensure that the inauguration met its desired objectives and time line.

## *Interactions*



*(From left to right) –*

*Shri Jairam Ramesh (Union Minister of Rural Development and Minister for Drinking Water and Sanitation), Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, GoI), Shri Jairam Ramesh and Shri Kishore Chandra Deo interacting.*

*Dr. Pramath Raj Sinha (Founding Dean, Indian School of Business Founder and Managing Director, 9.9 Mediaworx Pvt Ltd) & Mr. Thomas George (Programme Manager at UNICEF) interacting with the house.*

*Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia addressing the house PMRDF fellows;*

*Dr. Ajay Kumar Singh (IAS, DG CAPART, New Delhi) addressing the fellows and Dr. S. Parasurman (Director, TISS)*

*Mr. B.K. Sinha (retd. IAS) interacting with the fellows Mrs. Aruna Sharma (Principal Secretary, Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Government of Madhya-Pradesh) interacting with the fellows; and*

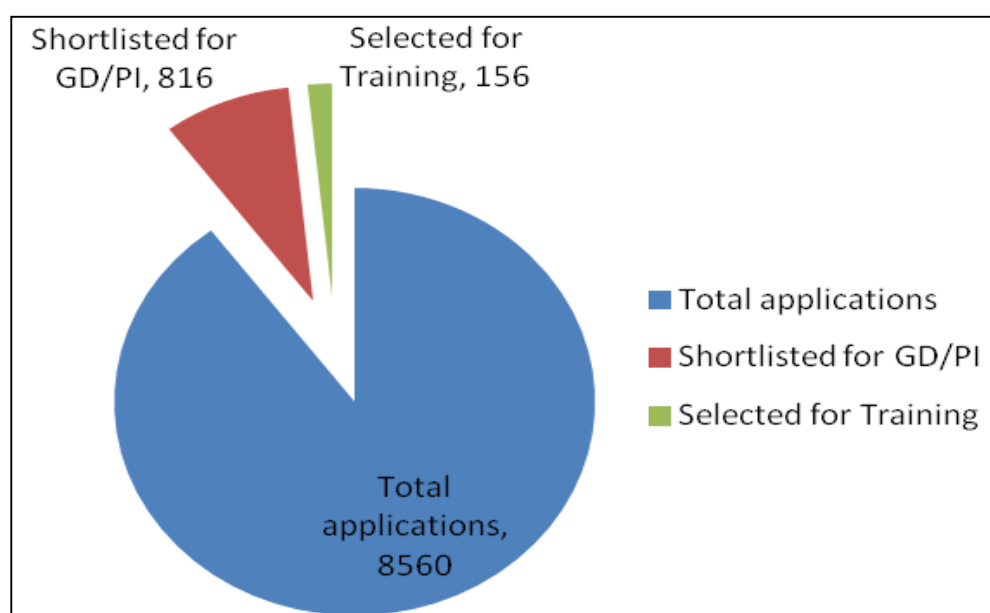
*Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia (Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, GoI), Shri Jairam Ramesh sharing a candid moment during the interaction with the fellows*

## Annexure I

### Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellowship Programme at a glance

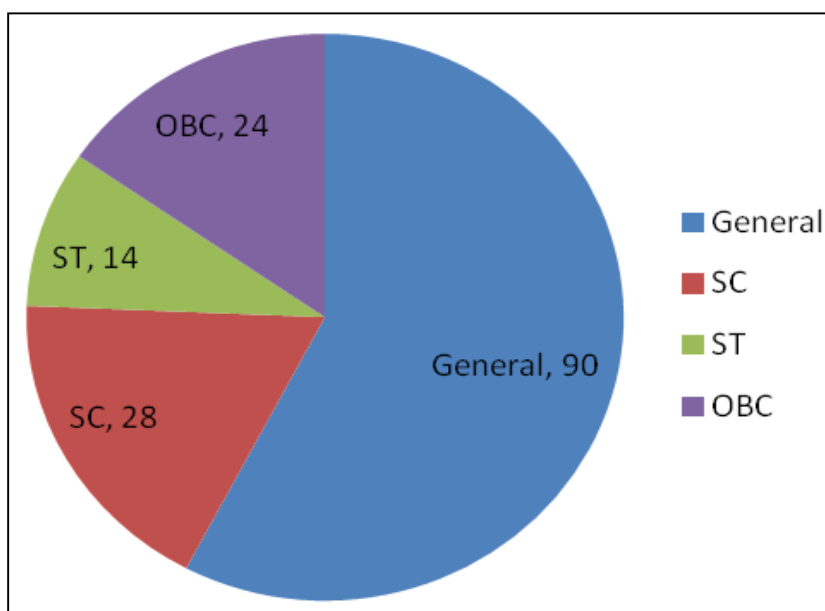
#### Selection process at a glance:

Total applications	: 8560
Candidates shortlisted for GD/PI	: 816
Candidates finally shortlisted	: 156



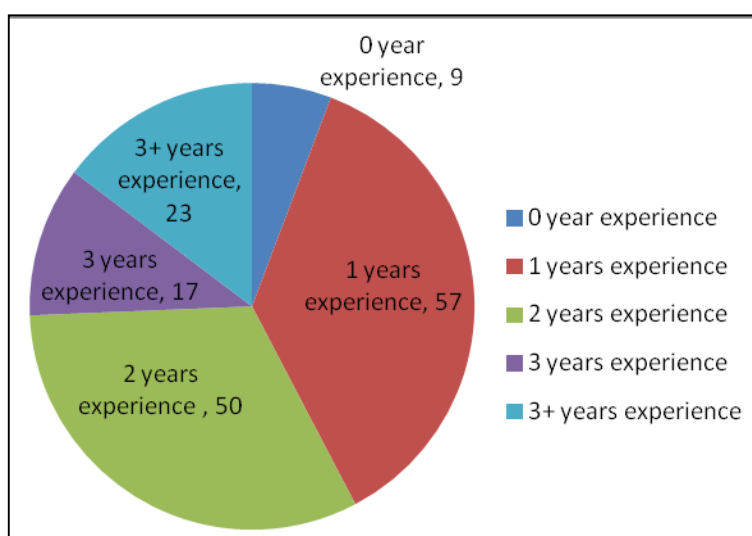
**Selected Candidates at a glance:**

Total Number	: 156
Males	: 116
Females	: 40
General	: 90
SC	: 28
ST	: 14
OBC	: 24





### Candidate profile by Work experience



## Training

The training programme is of 9 weeks' duration. It has the following structure

<b>Orientation</b>	<b>: 4 weeks</b>
<b>Field immersion in the IAP districts</b>	<b>: 1 month</b>
<b>Experience sharing</b>	<b>: 1 week</b>
<b>Assessment and preparation for graduation</b>	<b>: 2 weeks</b>

The training would involve classroom based training and rigorous field-based training in the IAP districts. Overall, the PMRDFs undergo a two-month training programme including a month long immersion in an IAP District.