

People's participation important to bring about a change: Narendra Modi



Narendra Modi also released a book-Scripting Change – which highlighted the essence of the work being done by PMRD Fellows across the country. Rural Development minister Chaudhary Birender Singh was also present on the occasion. (AP Photo)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi today pitched for people's involvement to bring about a change in rural areas as he interacted with over 200 youths working in these areas under a national scheme.

Modi invited comments and suggestions to further refine the Prime Minister's Rural Development Fellows (PMRDF) scheme and appreciated participants for working with dedication and devotion in rural and backward areas of the country, often withstanding peer and family pressures, an official statement said here.

After his interaction with 230 (PMRD) Fellows, he said people's participation emerges as a common theme among the presentations given today, as well as from the responses which he has received. He stressed this can be the most important aspect of bringing about a "change".

11 young participants presented brief account of their works in remote, rural, tribal and Left-Wing Extremism affected areas, on women empowerment, maternal and infant health-care, education, nutrition, livelihoods, Swachh Bharat, Ek Bharat-Shreshtha Bharat, and people's participation in governance, the statement said.

Later, in an interactive session with the Prime Minister, several participants shared their thoughts on themes such as development of the North-East, rural education, tribal development, organic farming and welfare of the disabled.

PMRDF is an initiative of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) implemented in collaboration with state governments. It focuses on poverty alleviation and improving the lives of the population in backward and isolated regions of India. It was announced in September 2011 and inducted its first batch of Fellows in April 2012.

During the two-year fellowship, the Fellows work closely with the District Collector of Additional Central Assistance and Integrated Action Plan districts and strive to bridge the gap between people's needs and the system's provisions by reducing developmental and governance deficits.

After successful completion of the fellowship, the PMRD Fellow is required to spend one year in public service in the State to which

she/he is assigned.

Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), as a knowledge partner of MoRD, facilitates the process of selection, recruitment, training, mentoring and monitoring the work of the Fellows.

The idea behind PMRDF is to provide fresh inputs and ideas to leverage support to the reform process, infuse optimism and instill confidence among key stakeholders, and provide decision-making support to the district leadership.

Recalling a letter that he had written to all Fellows, seeking their responses on the "Narendra Modi App", Modi appreciated the extensive responses that he had received from them, and especially emphasised that there was not a single complaint among the responses, the statement said.

Modi also released a book-Scripting Change – which highlighted the essence of the work being done by PMRD Fellows across the country. Rural Development minister Chaudhary Birender Singh was also present on the occasion.

Later, Modi tweeted, "Extensive interaction with PM Rural Development Fellows. Heard novel experiences on agriculture, rural development, education & other issues."

He added, "Our belief in people's participation is firm. It is our Jan Shakti that will take India to new heights of progress."