

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1986
ANSWERED ON 20.12.2023

EMPOWERING PANCHAYATS

1986 # SMT. SEEMA DWIVEDI:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) the significant policies and accomplishments of the Ministry;
- (b) the details of measures that Government has implemented or is currently implementing to empower Panchayats; and
- (c) the details of strategies that Government has implemented to increase the participation of women and marginalized groups in Panchayats?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL)

(a) Enabling the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to prepare and execute need-based Panchayat Development Plans, particularly preparation of almost 100% Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP) for development of the Gram Panchayats and thus the rural India to achieve the sustainable development goals through capacity building and training of the elected representatives of the PRIs and their functionaries (about 2 crore participants since 2018-19) ; building digital infrastructure through various digital interventions like eGramSwaraj and AuditOnline like applications, integration of eGramSwaraj with e-Payment module- Public Finance Management System (PFMS) and Government e Market Place (GeM) application for ensuring efficiency, accountability and transparency in the functioning of PRIs and public dealings; e-enablement of delivery of various public services; incentivising the best performing PRIs in delivery of public services through effective planning and execution are some of the major policy driven achievements of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj during the recent years. In addition, the Ministry, under its scheme SVAMITVA, has provided about 1.63 crore property cards as record of rights to the inhabitants in the rural areas of the country.

(b) Panchayat being a State subject, empowering and strengthening them is the responsibility of the State Governments. This is a continuous process. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been supplementing and complementing the efforts of the State Governments in this direction. To empower the Panchayats, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is implementing the (i) Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) with the primary objective of strengthening PRIs by way of capacity building and training of the elected representatives and their functionaries to build their governance capability, plan and execute socio-economic scheme and programmes of Central and State Governments; (ii) Mission Mode Project on e-Panchayat scheme under which various e-governance projects are funded towards digitalization of Panchayats to bring efficiency, accountability and transparency in the functioning of the PRIs for overall transformation of PRIs and (iii) Incentivization of Panchayats (IoP) scheme to encourage competitive spirit among PRIs under which, Awards including financial incentives are given to best performing Panchayats in recognition of their good work for improving delivery of services and public good. In addition to the building capacity of the Panchayats to mobilise their own sources of revenue, grants under the Central Finance Commission Awards are provided to the Panchayats to enable them to plan and spend for the developmental activities. Under the latest Fifteenth Finance Commission award, all three tiers of Panchayats, traditional local bodies and sixth schedule areas in the country are eligible for finance Commission Grants.

(c) In addition to continuous follow-up actions with the States for implementation of constitutional provisions for reservations for the marginalised groups SCs, STs and women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been encouraging increased involvement of women in the functioning of Panchayats through active participation in the Gram Sabha meetings for preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plans and various schemes being implemented by the Panchayats. This Ministry has also issued advisories to the States to facilitate holding of separate Ward Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings prior to Gram Sabha meetings, enhancing the presence and participation of women in Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings, allocation of Panchayat funds for women centric activities, combating the evil of women trafficking, female foeticide, child marriage etc. The Ministry is also conferring awards, inter alia, for the women friendly Panchayats.
