

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2161
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.03.2025

CHALLENGES IN PANCHAYATI RA INSTITUTIONS

2161 SHRI S NIRANJAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of Panchayati Raj be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the advisory committee constituted on the directions of the Supreme Court has recommended measures to curb proxy leadership in Panchayat Raj Institutions; and if so, the reasons for the delay in implementing these recommendations and the timeline for their enforcement;

b) the steps taken by Government to tackle the challenge of Pati Panchayats in PRIs; and

(c) whether it is a fact that there has been a significant reduction in untied grants for local bodies, from 13th Finance Commission to the 15 th Finance Commission, and if so, the reasons for this reduction?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

(a) & (b) On the directive of the Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj established an Advisory Committee in September 2023 to address the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by male family members and related concerns. The Committee submitted its report in February 2025, along with recommendations that have been accepted by the Government of India.

The Advisory Committee recommended that State Governments take necessary measures to eliminate proxy leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). Since, the committee has submitted its report in February 2025, there is no delay. Further, the committee has not set-up any specific timeline for implementation of these recommendations.

Since 'Panchayats' fall under the jurisdiction of State Governments, complaints regarding male interference in the responsibilities of Women Elected Representatives (WERs) are forwarded to the respective State Governments for grievance redressal. Additionally, the Ministry has issued advisories to State and Union Territory Governments to prevent such interference and uphold the autonomy of WERs in Panchayati Raj governance.

The Ministry is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) from the financial year 2022-23 in States and Union Territories. The primary objective is to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) by providing training to Elected Representatives (ERs), including Women Sarpanches,

functionaries, and other stakeholders. This initiative aims to enhance their governance capabilities and leadership skills, enabling Panchayats to function effectively. Additionally, the Ministry actively engages with Women Elected Representatives (WERs) through workshops, conferences, committees, and expert groups focused on women's empowerment and leadership. Insights from these interactions, along with recommendations from expert groups, inform the advisories issued by the Ministry to State Governments periodically.

Furthermore, the Ministry has partnered with Transform Rural India (TRI) as a Knowledge Partner to develop a comprehensive training module for the capacity building of Women Elected Representatives (WERs). This initiative is designed to strengthen their leadership and managerial skills, ensuring more effective governance at the grassroots level.

To promote gender-inclusive governance, the Ministry has also initiated efforts to transform selected Gram Panchayats into Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayats (MWFPGs) under Theme 9 of the Localized Sustainable Development Goals (LSGs). States and Union Territories have identified one Gram Panchayat per district for this transformation. In collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) as a Knowledge Partner, the Ministry is developing training modules and training a cadre of Master Trainers. This effort aims to build the capacity of grassroots-level Elected Representatives (ERs) and Panchayati Raj Functionaries (PRFs) to foster women-friendly governance and empower female leadership in rural governance structures.

(c) Central Finance Commission grants are continuously increasing from 13th Finance Commission to 15th Finance Commission grants for Rural Local Bodies. The allocations under 13th Finance Commission (FY 2010-15) were Rs.65160 Crore and the allocation under 15th Finance Commission (FY 2021-26) is Rs. 236805 Crore which is around 4 times of 13th Finance Commission allocation.
