

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2972
ANSWERED ON 26.03.2025

EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN SARPANCHES

2972: Shri Sadanand Mhalu Shet Tanavade:
Smt. Kiran Choudhry:
Shri Madan Rathore:

Will the Minister of Panchayati Raj be pleased to state:

- (a) measures being taken to sensitise local governance bodies and communities about the importance of allowing women sarpanches to function independently;
- (b) whether Government collaborated with NGOs or women's rights organizations, to design programmes that strengthen women's leadership in panchayats, if so, the details thereof, and
- (c) whether any State Government have taken independent steps, such as financial incentives or reserved administrative support, to empower women sarpanches, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

- (a) Ministry of Panchayati Raj has taken continuous steps to sensitize and create awareness to local governance bodies & communities of the States & Union Territories (UTs) and reviews performance of Panchayati Raj Institutions, from time to time, through studies, review meetings, field visits, video conferencing, Information Technology applications etc.

The Ministry has implemented Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) as a Centrally sponsored Scheme to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions. The scheme has been approved for implementation for the period of FY 2022-23 to 2025-26 with the main objective of capacitating Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) through imparting training to the Elected Representatives (ERs) including women sarpanches, functionaries and other stakeholders to develop their governance capabilities for leadership roles to enable the Panchayats to function effectively. The scheme has provisioned for the training of ERs including women ERs on General Training including functioning of PRIs covering 29 Subjects envisaged under XI Schedule of the Constitution of India, Refresher Training, Thematic Training on 09 subject of Localization of SDGs, Panchayat Development Plan Training and Specialized Training.

The number of Women Elected Representatives, including women sarpanches, trained under revamped RGSA during 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 are as under:

Year	Number of Women Elected Representatives, including women
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	sarpanches, trained under revamped RGSA
2022-23	973,401
2023-24	808,032
2024-25	534910

Under Sashakta Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan, a unique training module has developed by the Ministry for developing relevant leadership skills among the women elected representatives to make them self-reliant, aware and efficient leaders.

Apart from training under RGSA, the Ministry also provides support to the States/UTs to establish institutional mechanism for the Capacity Building & Training and to create Panchayat infrastructure like Gram Panchayat Bhawan, Computer and co-location of Common Service Centres in Gram Panchayat Bhawan on limited scale. The Ministry also supports for exposure visits, development of training modules and materials, etc.

In addition, a new initiative has been taken for capacity building and training of elected representatives and functionaries of Panchayats through institutes of excellence under Leadership/Management Development Program.

The Ministry has also issued advisories to States to facilitate holding of separate Ward Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings prior to Gram Sabha meetings. Advisories have also been issued to States for enhancing the presence and participation of women in Gram Sabha and Panchayat meetings, allocation of Panchayat funds for women-centric activities.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj undertakes sustained efforts to raise awareness and empower women Sarpanches to function independently through a multi-pronged media and Information, Education & Communication (IEC) strategy. Extensive coverage is ensured across print, digital, and social media platforms, highlighting women's leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Audio-visual films on best practices and achievements of the women sarpanches are widely disseminated through social media to inspire grassroots leadership.

(b) The Ministry has collaborated with Transform Rural India (TRI) as Knowledge Partner in developing comprehensive Training Module for assisting the States/UTs for the Capacity Building of Women Elected Representatives (WERs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions to further strengthen their leadership & managerial skills for effective delivery of good governance.

Further, this Ministry has initiated the process of assisting the States/UTs in transforming the selected Gram Panchayats (GPs) by saturating these GPs in 'Theme 9- Women Friendly Gram Panchayat' of Localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs). In this regard, State/UTs have identified and selected one GP in each district for transforming these GPs into Model Women Friendly Gram Panchayats (MWFGP).

The Ministry has also collaborated with the United Nations Population Fund (formally the United Nations Fund for Population Activities-UNFPA) as Knowledge Partner to develop the training modules and to train cadre of Master Trainers so as to assist States/UTs in building the capacity of their grassroots level Elected Representatives (ERs)

and Panchayati Raj Functionaries on different features of Women Friendly towards developing Model Women Friendly Gram Panchayat.

(c) As per the information available with the Ministry, the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand have made provisions of reserved administrative support i.e., Women's reservation for the post of Panchayat Secretary, to empower women sarpanches as administrative support.
