

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO 1350
ANSWERED ON 11.02.2026

PROXY REPRESENTATION OF ELECTED WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES

1350. SHRI RAGHAV CHADHA:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has examined the extent to which elected women representatives in Panchayats are able to exercise independent decision-making powers and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of complaints or cases reported in this regard in the last five years, State-wise and year wise;

(c) what steps are being taken by the Government to strengthen the effective participation and leadership of elected women representatives;

(d) details on exact measures adopted by the Government for capacity building and protection against proxy governance; and

(e) outcomes achieved so far in improving women's effective representation in Panchayati Raj Institutions, State-wise and year-wise?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH)

(a) & (b) "Panchayat", being "Local Government", is a State subject and part of the State List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Therefore, any issue related to independent decision-making power by women representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) lies in the domain of the States.

(c) to (e) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has implemented a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) w.e.f. financial year 2022-23 with the major objective of Capacity Building & Training (CB&T) of Elected Representatives, Functionaries and other stakeholders of Panchayats across all States/UTs for improving Panchayat Governance. Under the RGSA scheme, Ministry provides support for CB&T of elected representatives, functionaries and other stakeholders of Panchayats in different categories viz. basic orientation and refresher training, thematic training, specialized training, panchayat development plan training etc. Total 28,60, 585 Women Elected Representatives (WERs) were trained from FY 2022-23 to FY 2025-26 (as on 31stDecember 2025) under the scheme.

Under the scheme, capacity building and training for elected representatives, functionaries, and other stakeholders of Panchayats is supported under different categories, viz. basic orientation and refresher training, thematic training, specialized training, Panchayat development plan training, etc.

The Ministry has launched a comprehensive specialized training module as a part of “Shashkta Panchayat Netri Abhiyan” for the capacity building of Women Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions. The focus of the training module is to build the capacity of the Women Elected Representatives on different aspects of rural governance, enhance the knowledge & practical skills for effective delivery of roles & responsibilities as elected representatives and also to develop the leadership, communication, managerial & decision making skills for effective women led governance. A total of 64,863 WERs (as on 31st December 2025) have been trained on this Specialized Module.

Further, on the direction of the Hon’ble Supreme Court, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj constituted an Advisory Committee in September 2023 to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related to proxy representation. The Committee has submitted its Report with recommendations to the Ministry in February 2025, and the same has been accepted by the Ministry.

The Advisory Committee recommended that the State Governments take necessary measures, including legal safeguards, capacity-building, women ombudspersons, public oath-taking, mentorship by women leaders, social audits and penal provisions to eliminate proxy leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and ensure real empowerment, autonomy and accountability of elected women representatives. Owing to the importance of this matter and its impact on women's leadership in PRIs, this Ministry has also constituted a Task Force on 17th April 2025 .
