

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 2971
ANSWERED ON 18.03.2026

**CAPACITY BUILDING OF WOMEN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN ODISHA
PANCHAYATS**

2971. SHRI MANAS RANJAN MANGARAJ:

Will the Minister of **PANCHAYATI RAJ** be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of women elected representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the State of Odisha;
- (b) the details of training and capacity-building programmes conducted for them during the last three years;
- (c) whether Government has any proposal to introduce special leadership and digital training modules for women PRI members in Odisha; and
- (d) the steps taken to ensure effective participation of women in planning and implementation of Panchayat works?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH)

(a) As per the information provided by the State Government of Odisha, the number of Women Elected Representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions in Odisha, as on date, is 57,001.

(b) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has implemented a Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) w.e.f. Financial Year (FY) 2022-23 to 2025-26 with the major objective of Capacity Building & Training of Elected Representatives including Women Elected Representatives, Functionaries, and other stakeholders of Panchayats, across all States/Union Territories for improving Panchayat Governance. A total of 24,12,990 Women Elected Representatives had been trained during the last three years from FY 2022–23 to 2024–25 under this scheme, out of which 1,22,438 Women Elected Representatives are from the State of Odisha.

The RGSA scheme also supports exposure visits for the elected representatives & functionaries of Panchayats to the Beacon Panchayats for exchange of learning of the exemplary practices on various development sectors. In addition to this, training modules and materials are developed to augment the knowledge on different subjects of rural governance. Further, under this scheme, capacity building of elected representatives and functionaries has

been rolled out through institutes of excellence such as IIMs/IITs under the Leadership/Management Development Programme (MDP) to enhance the knowledge & skills of leadership of elected representatives & functionaries of Panchayati Raj Institution, including Women Elected Representatives. A total of 2,39,943 Elected Representatives, Functionaries of Panchayats, and Officials of the Panchayati Raj Institution have been trained on the Own Sources of Revenue (OSR) Module during FY 2025-26, out of which 6,967 participants are from State of Odisha.

(c) and (d) To strengthen the Women-Led Initiatives, the Ministry has launched a comprehensive Specialized Training Module “Championing Change-Empowering Women Leaders in Local Governance and Beyond” as a part of “Shashkta Panchayat Netri Abhiyan” Campaign for the capacity building of Women Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj System. 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 their roles & responsibilities as elected representatives, and also to develop the leadership, communication, managerial, & decision making skills for fostering women-led governance. A total of 1,05,966 Women Elected Representatives (as on 28th February 2026) have been trained on this special module, including from State of Odisha.

In furtherance of this initiative under “Sashakt Panchayat Netri Abhiyan”, the Ministry has launched Model Women Friendly Gram Panchayat (MWFGP) to promote an inclusive and gender- sensitive local governance system that ensures women’s participation, safety, rights, and empowerment at the grassroots level. States/UTs have been guided to commence with Theme 9: Women Friendly Panchayat, by identifying one Gram Panchayat in each district for transformation into MWFGP. These Gram Panchayats will act as learning centres for replication of the interventions made by them among other Gram Panchayats subsequently. As per information provided by the Government of Odisha, the State has identified 30 MWFGPs in each district and imparted training to the Panchayati Raj Institution Members & officials of these identified MWFGPs, including Women Elected Representatives.

Article 243D of the Constitution of India provides not less than one-third reservation for women in PRIs out of ‘total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat’ and ‘total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level’. However, 21 States namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand and West Bengal and 2 Union Territories (UTs) namely, Lakshadweep and Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, have gone even further and have made provisions of upto 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts/Rules encouraging increased participation in grassroots governance.

In addition, to strengthen women’s participation in grassroots governance, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has advised to conduct Mahila Sabhas before Gram Sabhas, encouraging greater involvement of women in decision-making processes across States/UTs, including Odisha.
