

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ  
**LOK SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 612**  
ANSWERED ON 06.02.2024

**PRACTICE OF PROXY REPRESENTATIVE**

612. SHRI VISHNU DAYAL RAM

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

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the practice of “sarpanch pati” or proxy representative wherein a male member of the female sarpanch's family takes over the powers and duties of the sarpanch and the female sarpanch becomes only a nominal head of the village;
- (b) if so, the actions taken/proposed by the Government to empower female sarpanches and reduce their exploitation; and
- (c) the details of the number of women sarpanches, State/UT-wise including Jharkhand?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ  
(SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL)

(a) & (b) The practice of sarpanchpati/pradhanpati highlights the necessity and importance of capacity building of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) and generating awareness among them. In this regard, besides extensive exercise of capacity building of Elected Representatives, including EWRs, through the scheme of Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, the Ministry has been engaging with the EWRs through a series of workshops, conferences, committees and expert groups on the issues of women empowerment and women leadership. Based on the experiences of best practices gained from the interaction during these workshops and interaction as well as recommendations given by various committees and expert groups the Ministry has been issuing advisories to States from time to time.

Accordingly, this Ministry has 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, combating the evil of women trafficking, female foeticide, child marriage etc.

In addition, this Ministry focuses on developing the capacity of EWRs of Panchayats to enable them to function effectively in Gram Panchayats and properly discharge their leadership roles. The Ministry has also 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.

(c) The number of women sarpanches in respect of 28 States/UTs including Jharkhand is as under:-

S.No.	State/ Union Territory Name	Count
1	Andhra Pradesh	7514
2	Arunachal Pradesh	183
3	Assam	1205
4	Bihar	4433
5	Chhattisgarh	5585
6	Goa	65
7	Gujarat	6322
8	Haryana	2875
9	Himachal Pradesh	1942
10	Jammu And Kashmir (UT)	473
11	Jharkhand	1462
12	Karnataka	3640
13	Kerala	597
14	Ladakh (UT)	15
15	Madhya Pradesh	5075
16	Maharashtra	15744
17	Manipur	2
18	Mizoram	24
19	Odisha	3990
20	Punjab	4627
21	Rajasthan	5221
22	Sikkim	35
23	Tamil Nadu	6977
24	Telangana	7098
25	Tripura	315
26	Uttarakhand	3735
27	Uttar Pradesh	25932
28	West Bengal	2180
Total		117266

[Source: Information furnished by States/UTs on eGramSwaraj

Portal (<https://egramswaraj.gov.in>) as on 29.1.2024]

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