

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2415
ANSWERED ON- 10.12.2024

ROLE OF WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN PANCHAYATS

2415. SMT. POONAMBEN HEMATBHAI MAADAM

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has carried out any assessment of the role of women representatives in Panchayats, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has taken any steps to make women's participation effective, if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the Government is taking measures to eliminate the "Sarpanch Pati" practice in Panchayati Raj Institutions, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(PROF. S. P. SINGH BAGHEL)

(a) & (b) Panchayats are setup and operate through the respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. All Panchayat related work, including assessment of the role of women representatives in Panchayats, comes within the purview of State Government. However, the Ministry reviews performance of Panchayats, from time to time, through studies, review meetings, field visits, video conferencing, Information Technology applications, Common Review Missions etc.

Article 243D of the Constitution of India provides not less than one-third reservation for women 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 and 2 Union Territories have gone even further and have made provisions of 50% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts/Rules.

The Ministry holds extensive exercise of capacity building of Elected Representatives, including Elected Women Representatives, through Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan scheme. This Ministry focuses on developing the capacity of Elected Women Representatives of Panchayats to enable them to function effectively in Gram Panchayats and properly discharge their leadership roles.

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.

(c) 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.
