

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ  
**LOK SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO- \*254**  
ANSWERED ON- 18.03.2025

**EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN SARPANCHES**

**\*254. SMT. SMITA UDAY WAGH:**  
**MS KANGNA RANAUT:**

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

- a) the details of steps taken to sensitize local governance bodies and communities of the importance of allowing women sarpanches to function independently in Maharashtra especially in Khandesh and Jalgaon;
- (b) the details of steps being taken to create awareness among local administrative bodies and communities in order to enable women Sarpanches to function independently;
- (c) whether the Government has taken any steps in collaboration with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or Women's Rights Organizations to design programs that strengthen women's leadership in panchayats in the country particularly in rural areas of Maharashtra and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether any State Government, including Maharashtra has taken any independent measures/initiatives such as financial incentives or reserved administrative support to empower women sarpanches as administrative support, if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) whether there is any plan to implement special training and capacity-building programs for women sarpanches in Maharashtra, particularly in Khandesh and Jalgaon, to enhance their governance and leadership skills?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH *ALIAS* LALAN SINGH )

(a) to (e ) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (e) OF THE LOK SABHA  
STARRED QUESTION NO. \*254 FOR ANSWER ON 18.03.2025  
REGARDING “EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN SARPANCHES”**

**(a) & (b)** The State Government of Maharashtra has informed that the following steps have been taken to sensitize and create awareness to local governance bodies and communities in the State of Maharashtra:

- (i) Foundation training has been organized for newly elected Sarpanches and Refresher training has been organized after a period of 2 years under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan by State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), Pune.
- (ii) Krantijyoti Mahila Training module has been developed for soft skills training such as personality development, communication skill, leadership skill development for women elected representatives at the Gram Panchayat level in the State. The training of trainers (ToT) has been conducted at the State level by YASHADA and training at the Taluka levels has been conducted through the trained master trainers.
- (iii) Under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) training of Master trainers has been conducted by YASHADA for localization of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) and training at the District and Taluka levels have been conducted through master trainers.
- (iv) Special training has been provided to women Sarpanches of 27 blocks in the State under the Aspirational Block Development Program. Under this program, training of women Sarpanch from Nandurbar District of Khandesh is being conducted by YASHADA.
- (v) State Government has participated in the initiatives relating to empowerment of women sarpanches such as "Panchayat to Parliament" organized by the National Commission for Women.
- (vi) Virtual training programmes have been conducted for sarpanches as well as for presidents and secretaries of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) under SHG-PRI convergence training under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) in order to increase the participation of women SHGs at the Gram Panchayat level.
- (vii) Under the recent initiative of Ministry of Panchayati Raj, a two-days training programme has been conducted at the state level by YASHADA for Women and Child-friendly Gram Panchayats (one Gram Panchayat from each district). Further, special women's meetings have been organized in 34 Gram Panchayats on the occasion of International Women's Day on 8th March, 2025.

As far as Ministry of Panchayati Raj is concerned, the Ministry has taken continuous steps to sensitize and create awareness to local governance bodies & communities to 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:

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

Under Sashakta Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan, a unique training module has been 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.

(c) 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, including State of Maharashtra, 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.

With regard to State of Maharashtra, the State Government has informed that Krantijyoti training module has been developed with the help of Resource and Support Centre for Development (RSCD), a Non-Governmental Organisation, for elected women members of Gram Panchayat.

(d) 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.

With regard to State of Maharashtra, 30% reservation of seats has been given to women for all posts including the post of Panchayat Secretary. The State of Maharashtra has also informed that facilitation & mentoring is done by Extension Officers (Panchayat), Block Development Officers and Deputy Chief Executive Officers to enable the Women Sarpanch to function in their work.

(e) The State Government of Maharashtra has informed that the following trainings are proposed and will be organized for women Sarpanch of Maharashtra, including Khandesh and Jalgaon, under Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) during the year 2025-26:

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Name of the training</b>	<b>No. of participants to be trained</b>
1.	Elected Women Representative (GPs) under Krantijyoti Programme at Block level	15000

2.	Training of Women sarpanches of GPs in 27 Aspirational blocks by YASHADA.	945
3.	Training for Women Sarpanches of GPs	3400
4.	Virtual training-Elected women representatives (GPs) under Krantijyoti	17550
5.	SHG-PRI Convergence for Sarpanches, chairperson & secretary of village level SHG Federation (Gramsangh) & Gramsevak by YASHADA.	2808
6.	Virtual training for Sarpanches, President & Secretary of SHGs at Block Level.	35100

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