

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO †1550
ANSWERED ON 29.07.2025

WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN PANCHAYATS

†1550. SHRI ARUN GOVIL:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether even after more than three decades of implementation of the Panchayati Raj system in the country, in many cases, elected women representatives are replaced by their husbands, brothers or sons in official meetings or functions, due to the inability of some women to understand or perform official duties, if so, the reasons thereof and steps taken by the Government to discourage such practices; and
- (b) Whether the Government has any such plan to make women Panchayat members capable of understanding and doing Government work by imparting them special training?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ
(PROF. S. P. SINGH BAGHEL)

(a) “Panchayat”, being “Local Government”, is a State subject and part of State List of Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Panchayats are set up and operate through the respective State Panchayati Raj Acts which may vary from State to State, subject to the provisions of the Constitution. Accordingly, all matters relating to Panchayats, including capacity building of Women Elected Representatives(WERs), fall within the purview of State Government.

Complaints pertaining to proxy representations in Panchayats are addressed to the States/Union Territories(UTs) concerned. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been made aware of the issues of proxy representations for WERs in Panchayats through print and mass media, legal notices, court cases, grievances and Public Interest Litigation (PIL). In this regard, the Ministry has issued advisories to States/UTs for the prevention of unnecessary interference by the husbands of elected women representatives in their duties.

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 thereto. The Committee has submitted the 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 to eliminate proxy leadership in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). Owing to the importance of this matter and its impact on Women's self-dependent leadership in PRIs, this Ministry has also constituted a Facilitation Committee on 17th April 2025 to ensure the practical execution and to oversee the implementation of the recommendations put forth by the Advisory Committee on the issues of Women Pradhan.

Further, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj through its thematic approach of Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) including Theme 9 – Women Friendly Panchayats is ensuring women's active participation in grassroots governance. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has also issued advisories to States to facilitate the holding of separate Ward Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings before Gram Sabha meetings.

(b) The Ministry has implemented Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Revamped Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) w.e.f. Financial Year(FY) 2022-23 in States/ UTs with main objective of capacitating Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) through imparting training to the Elected Representatives (ERs), including Women Panchayat Members, functionaries and other stakeholders to develop their governance capabilities for leadership roles and to function effectively. A total of 25,13,543 Women Panchayat Members have been trained from

FY 2022-23 to FY 2025-26 (till 24th July 2025). Increased capacity-building training in different subject matters pertaining to Panchayats, service delivery mechanisms and leadership skills has enhanced the capacities and capabilities of Women Panchayat Members in undertaking their assigned work as ERs. Women Panchayat Members are trained on different aspects of rural governance in multiple training programmes for effective delivery of their roles and responsibilities at the grassroots level.

Further, Ministry has launched comprehensive Specialised Training Module for assisting the States/UTs for building capacities of Women Panchayat Members to strengthen their leadership and managerial, communication and negotiation skills for effective delivery of good governance. The focus of the training module is designed to address the key challenges faced by the Women Panchayat Members in delivering their roles and responsibilities; enhance their knowledge and skills on different aspects of governance and equip them to drive local development.

Apart from these different trainings, the Ministry also supports exposure visits within & outside the States for cross-State learning experiences, etc. In addition, a new initiative has been taken to enhance the capacities of including women elected representatives and functionaries of Panchayats through institutes of excellence under the Leadership/Management Development Program.
