

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2654
ANSWERED ON-19.12.2023

CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

2654. SHRI MANOJ KOTAK:

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

- (a) the details of specific measures that the Government has implemented to increase the number of women actively participating in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) beyond the mandated reservation of seats; and
- (b) the manner in which the Government is addressing the challenges of women?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(SHRI KAPIL MORESHWAR PATIL)

(a) and (b) Panchayat, being “Local Government”, is a State Subject and part of the State List in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. Accordingly, Panchayats are set up and operate through the respective State Panchayati Raj Acts. The implementation of measures to increase the number of women actively participating in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) or to address the challenges of women, comes within the purview of State Governments. Article 243D of the Constitution of India provides not less than one-third reservation for women in PRIs. However, 21 States and 2 Union Territories have gone even further and have made provisions, in their respective State Panchayati Raj Acts/Rules, for 50% reservation for women in PRIs.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj has 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. The Ministry has been engaging with the elected women representatives (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, and also focusing on developing the capacity of EWRs of Panchayats to enable them to function effectively in Gram Panchayats and properly discharging their leadership roles. This Ministry has also issued advisories to States to facilitate holding of separate Ward Sabha and Mahila Sabha meetings prior to Gram Sabha meetings. Further, advisories have 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.