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**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2010-2011)**

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

SEVENTH REPORT

**‘EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH
PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS’**

[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2009-2010) on ‘Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions’]



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

MARCH, 2011/PHALGUNA, 1932 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 16th March, 2011

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 16th March, 2011



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NEW DELHI

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CONTENTS

PAGE

Composition of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-2011)

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I	Report
CHAPTER II	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.....
CHAPTER III	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.....
CHAPTER IV	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee
CHAPTER V	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.....

ANNEXURES

I-VIII of replies
-------------------	-------

APPENDICES

I	Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-2011) held on 10 th March, 2011
II	Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Third Report of the Committee (Fifteenth Lok Sabha)

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2010-2011)**

Shrimati Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson

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LOK SABHA

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3. Shrimati Ashwamedh Devi
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SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma Joint Secretary
2. Shri C.S. Joon Director
3. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Empowerment of Women having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Seventh Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions'.

2. The Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women was presented to Lok Sabha on 4th May, 2010 and laid in Rajya Sabha on 4th May, 2010. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has furnished the action taken replies to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report.

3. The Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-2011) considered and adopted the Seventh Report at their sitting held on 10th March, 2011. Minutes of the sitting are given at Appendix I.

4. An Analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix II.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI
10 March, 2011
19 Phalgun 1932 (Saka)

SMT. CHANDRESH KUMARI
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women on the subject 'Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions'. The Third Report of the Committee was presented to Lok Sabha on 4th May, 2010. The report was simultaneously laid in Rajya Sabha.

2. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj were, thereafter, requested to furnish action taken replies on the recommendations contained in the Report. Replies of the Government in respect of all the 16 recommendations/observations have since been received and are categorized as under:-

- i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.
Recommendation Para Nos:-70, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83 and 84. (Total-11)
- ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.
Nil.
- iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.
Recommendation Para Nos:- 71, 72 and 82 (Total-3)
- iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.
Recommendation Para Nos:- 75, 85 (Total-2)

3. The Committee trust that utmost importance would be given by the Government to the implementation of their recommendations. In case where it is not possible for the Government to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee with reasons for non-implementation. The Committee further desire that the Action Taken Notes on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter- I of this Report should be furnished by the Government expeditiously.

4. The Committee will now deal with those action taken replies of the Government which need reiteration or merit comments.

A. Data base on the socio-economic profile of Elected Women Representatives of PRIs

(Recommendation Para No. 71)

5. The Committee had observed that ever since the advent of Panchayati Raj system in the country, three rounds of elections had been conducted in most of the States. However, a proper compilation of the data pertaining to the socio-economic profile of the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) had not been done by many States. Most of the States had compiled only the data pertaining to the number and percentage of EWRs and their SC&ST bifurcation. However, the Committee had found that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj had got a nation wide survey carried out by the well-known firm AC Nielsen-ORG Marg which covered 23 States, 114 Districts, and 228 Blocks and 1368 Gram Panchayats (out of which 907 were women headed Gram Panchayats). Although a rough picture regarding the status of women could be drawn from such a survey, the exact and comprehensive data on age, education, primary occupation, economic category, etc. of EWRs all over the country was not available with the Government. Even the data on women multi-termers could not be provided by many States. As no survey findings could substitute a complete database, States should generate a complete data bank on the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs, especially women. The Committee, therefore,

had recommended that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should impress upon the State Election Commissions to prepare a comprehensive/complete data bank on the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs at the earliest under intimation to the Committee.

6. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in its action taken reply on the aforementioned recommendation has, inter-alia, stated as under:-

“All the States/ UTs were requested to provide the socio economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs. As on date, information has been received from the States of Sikkim, Rajasthan and Lakshadweep only.”

Comments of the Committee

7. **In view of the absence of a complete database on the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions, especially that of women, the Committee had recommended that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should impress upon the State Election Commissions to prepare a comprehensive data bank on the same at the earliest under intimation to the Committee. However, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in their Action Taken Reply has submitted that though all the States/ UTs had been requested to provide the socio economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs, so far only the States of Sikkim, Rajasthan and Lakshadweep have provided the information. In this connection, the Committee strongly feel that the exact and comprehensive data on age, education, primary occupation, economic category, etc. of elected representatives of the PRIs in the country would be a valuable document in itself. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should make concrete efforts in facilitating the preparation of a comprehensive data bank regarding the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions by constantly imploring the States to take up the exercise in a time bound manner.**

B. Need to enhance training facilities and capacity building programmes of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs)

(Recommendation Para No.72)

8. The Committee had observed that the Elected Representatives of the people, especially women, needed training to enable them to discharge their duties because of their lower literacy levels and limited exposure to public affairs. Though the Ministry of Panchayati Raj had some training modules under schemes like Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) and Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana, there was no separate scheme exclusively for the capacity building of women. Moreover, it was observed from the submissions of the Ministry that training was not being given to all elected women representatives within a year of their elections due to various constraints such as lack of institutional capacity, constraints in delivery methods etc. Above all, the allocation under the Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) scheme was too meagre. It was also seen that this scheme was not launched in Jharkhand, Orissa & Uttar Pradesh and in the Union Territories of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry. Moreover, the pattern of implementation of the Abhiyan showed that it was more focused on organizing 'sammelans' rather than offering training. This forum would no doubt strengthen bonding, networking and sharing of experiences among EWRs; but it could not act as a substitute for continuous and comprehensive training. The Committee, therefore, had recommended that a separate and exclusive training programme based on the principle of continuous and comprehensive training for women representatives should be devised. The Committee had also recommended that the Government should impress upon the State Governments to make it compulsory for EWRs to attend all such training programmes as a thorough understanding of their rights and responsibilities as well as training them continuously in the governance process could go a long way in the empowerment of EWRs. The Committee also desired that the infrastructure for training programmes should be considerably improved and resource centres for

capacity building must be established at every district, block and if required, for each cluster of village Panchayats.

9. In this regard, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has, inter-alia, submitted the following reply:

“The scheme of PMEYSA has been started in Uttar Pradesh and Lakshadweep. However, it could not be started in the State of Jharkhand because of absence of elected PRIs in that State. The State Government of Orissa has not adopted the scheme of PMEYSA asserting the reason that they have a similar type of scheme named ‘Dakshata’ with almost the same objective and mission in their State. MoPR is also seized of the necessity of a good training module for the newly elected representative of PRIs particularly women. In order to devise a suitable training module for this purpose, this Ministry had consulted/ sought feedback from the States of Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka about the training module being adopted by them.

Under the Capacity Building Component of Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) programme of this Ministry, assistance is being given to the States for setting up Block Resource Centres (BRCs) at Block Panchayat level. Under Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana (RGSY) also assistance has been given to Arunachal Pradesh for setting up Block Resource Centres. As per the guidelines of BRGF and RGSY, Study Tours or Exposure visits form an important component of Capacity Building component. Funds available under these Schemes, as on date, is more than the demand.”

Comments of the Committee

10. The Committee in their Third Report had recommended that a separate and exclusive training programme based on the principle of continuous and comprehensive training should be devised for elected women representatives of PRIs. As the Committee strongly felt that only through such a training can they be empowered in the right sense by giving a thorough understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the governance process, the Committee had further recommended that the Government should impress upon the State Governments to make it compulsory for EWRs to attend all training programmes. The Committee had also desired that the infrastructure for training programmes should be

considerably improved and resource centers for capacity building must be established at every district, block and if required for each cluster of village Panchayats. However, in their Action Taken Replies, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is silent about any exclusive training programme for women. Though the Ministry is also seized of the necessity of a good training module for the newly elected representatives of PRIs, particularly women, and had sought feedback from the States of Kerala, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka about the training modules being adopted by them, they have not come up with any concrete proposals for an exclusive training programme for women. On the other hand, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj tends to project that the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) are given training under Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA). However, the Committee are of the strong opinion that the said Abhiyan is more focused on organizing 'sammelans' than training. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that a separate and exclusive training programme based on the principle of continuous and comprehensive training should be devised for elected women representatives of PRIs. The adequacy of infrastructure for training at each district, block and panchayat should also be ensured by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

C. Need to extend the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women

(Recommendation Para No. 75)

11. The Committee had observed that the provision for rotation (between constituencies) of the reserved seats generally affected women and their opportunities to craft political careers. Even if they had performed effectively in their first terms, they were unable to reap the benefits of these achievements in the next election, as the constituency they had nurtured in the first term got de-reserved and the woman candidates had to shift to another constituency. A study among the Elected Women Representatives in PRIs had shown that a large proportion (83.4%) of those interviewed had contested only one election in

their career while only a small proportion (12.4%) had attempted a second and third round (4.2%) of elections. The main reason cited by female respondents for not contesting elections for a second time was the de-reservation of their seats. A study needed to be conducted by the Panchayati Raj Ministry to find out a proper solution in regard to the question of extending the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women. At the same time, the Committee had desired that the rotation cycle of reservation of seats for women may be extended to two terms and the same methodology may be followed by all States. The Committee had also desired to be apprised of the actual number of women who had got elected for the second or third terms, state-wise.

12. Replying to the above recommendation, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has submitted as follows:

“The term period for rotation of seats while providing reservation for women in PRIs is decided by the concerned State Government in accordance with the provisions of their respective statutes. However, this Ministry is also of the view that there should be provision of rotation of seats after at least two cycles. The States/UTs have been apprised of the views of the Committee. This Ministry has also sought comments from the State on this issue and a firm view will be taken after taking into consideration the responses received.”

Comments of the Committee

13. In order to enable Elected Women Representatives in PRIs to reap the benefits of their achievements in their constituency in the subsequent election, the Committee had desired that the rotation cycle of reservation of seats for women may be extended to two terms and the same methodology be followed by all States. The Committee had also desired that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should conduct a study to find out a proper solution to the question of extending the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women. In this regard, the Ministry has submitted that though the term period for rotation of seats while providing reservation for women in PRIs is decided by the concerned State Governments in accordance with the provisions of their respective statutes, they have apprised States/UTs of the views of the Committee and have sought comments from them on this issue. The

Committee are happy that the Ministry also shares their stand on rotation of seats and about the steps the Ministry have taken so far in this direction. However, the Committee desire that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj may speed up the collection of responses from the States and a firm stand be taken without any further delay. At the same time, the Committee are unhappy to see that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj could not make available to the Committee the actual number of women who have got elected for the second or third terms, state-wise. They, therefore, once again desire that the data in this regard may also be collected and furnished to the Committee within a month's time from the date of presentation of this Report.

D. Devolution of functions, funds and functionaries to PRIs.

(Recommendation Para No. 82)

14. The Committee had found that the Panchayats generally existed as over-structured but under-empowered organizations lacking effective devolution of Functions, Funds and Functionaries (3Fs). They felt that mere enactment of Panchayati Raj laws without legal provisions for the devolution of the 3Fs would never serve any purpose. To ensure clarity and sustainability in the devolution of activities to Panchayats, States should undertake the Activity Mapping completely and sincerely. However, the Committee were informed that the assessment based on the 34 indicators of the Devolution Index of which 5 relate to 'functions' 15 to 'finances' and 14 to 'functionaries' revealed that the progress made by States other than Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Assam was not that promising. The Committee, therefore, had recommended that effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries (3Fs) to Panchayats should be ensured in all States. The Committee had also recommended that the Activity Mapping exercises should be completed by States.

15. In this regard, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has, inter-alia, replied as under:

“This Ministry has been continuously pursuing the matter relating to

devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries (3Fs) to PRIs with the State Governments. The recommendation of the Committee has also been sent to State Governments for compliance of the same”.

Comments of the Committee

16. The Committee, in their third Report has stated with conviction that a mere enactment of Panchayati Raj laws will not serve the purpose of actual decentralisation of powers without legal provisions for the devolution of the 3Fs, i.e. functions, funds and functionaries. They, therefore, had recommended that effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries (3Fs) to Panchayats should be ensured in all States. The Committee had also desired that Activity Mapping exercises should be completed by States and implemented through appropriate changes in laws, rules and regulations expeditiously within a time frame. However, the Action Taken Replies of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj expresses a sense of complacency, though the devolution of the said 3Fs is fundamental to the success of Panchayati Raj. Without achieving the same, the very purpose of PRIs will be defeated. Hence, the Committee desire that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should be very proactive in this regard and see to it that the Activity Mapping is completed and the actual devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries (3Fs) to PRIs is made in all States/UTs.

E. Updating National Panchayat Portal

(Recommendation Para No. 85)

17. The Committee had found that a National Panchayat Portal, a dynamic website for Panchayats had been developed by NIC with a versatile front-end in terms of information, content and services needed by people. This portal had envisaged to provide a single platform for information dissemination and exchange from all Zilla Parishads, Gram and intermediate Panchayats and allowed Panchayats to upload data directly. Since this portal could be used as a common platform by the State Panchayati Raj departments and other stakeholders, the Committee had desired that the Central and State

Governments should invest more in e-PRIs in order to facilitate the creation of accurate, updated and comprehensive data base in the portal.

18. Replying to the above recommendation, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has submitted as under:

“With the limited funds available with the Ministry under the head “Mission Project on e-Panchayats”, some preparatory work viz. Information and Service Needs Assessment (ISNA), Business Process re-engineering (BPR) and preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) (State wise) has been taken up.

The information and Service Needs Assessment exercise helps in identifying and prioritizing the information and service needs and expected service levels of citizens, State Governments, Central Ministries and other stakeholders from PRIs. For Business Process re-engineering is required to improve the delivery of services. DPRs provide the cost estimates for the project. ISNA, BPR and DPR reports have been prepared and are available on the website of MoPR. State-wise draft DPRs have been prepared and submitted to respective States/ UTs for their feed back. Accordingly, after incorporating their feedback, these reports will be finalized”.

Comments of the Committee

19. Since the National Panchayat Portal, a website for Panchayats developed by NIC has been viewed as a portal which can be used as a common platform by the State Panchayati Raj Departments and other stakeholders, the Committee had desired that the Central and State Governments should invest more in e-PRIs and facilitate creation of accurate, updated and comprehensive data base in the portal. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj in its replies has stated that with the limited funds available with it under the head “Mission Project on e-Panchayats”, some preparatory work viz. Information and Service Needs Assessment (ISNA), Business Process re-engineering (BPR) and preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) (State wise) has been taken up. The Committee while appreciating their efforts would like to reiterate that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj make all out efforts to realize the evolution of the National Panchayat Portal into an accurate, updated and comprehensive data base on Panchayati Raj Institutions.

CHAPTER II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation Para No. 70)

50% Reservation of seats in Panchayats for women

The entry of elected women representatives (EWRs) into the grass root polity through elections to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in massive numbers is a relatively new political phenomenon in India. The 73rd Constitution Amendment Act or popularly known as the Panchayati Raj Act which came into force on 24th April 1993 provided for reservation of one-third of the total number of seats to women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Since then, women have moved forward and demonstrated their capacities and abilities in holding such positions and fulfilling the mandate of their constituency. With every succeeding Panchayat election, women have been able to enlarge their representation beyond the minimum 33 per cent prescribed by the Constitution. Out of nearly 28 lakhs elected Panchayat representatives in our country today, more than 10 lakh are estimated to be women. This takes the overall presence of women in Panchayats to approximately 36.7 per cent, thus changing the profile of rural leadership. With a view to further enhancing the participation of women in the public sphere and making Panchayats more inclusive institutions, the Government moved the Constitution (One Hundred and Tenth Amendment) Bill, 2009 in Parliament on 26th November 2009 for enhancing the reservation for women in Panchayats. This Amendment to Article 243 D of the Constitution envisages 50% reservation for women in the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in the offices of chairpersons and in seats/offices of chairpersons reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in all tiers of Panchayats. With this proposed amendment, the number of elected women representatives is expected to rise to more than 14 lakhs from the present 10 lakhs. However, the Committee find that after introduction, the said bill has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development for

examination and Report. Since the Committee strongly believe that gender equity and inclusiveness will lead to better delivery of public services, such as health, sanitation, early childhood care, drinking water etc. and make the PRIs more accountable to the rural populace, they desire that the Constitution (One Hundred and Tenth Amendment) Bill, 2009 providing for 50% reservation for women in the third tier of governance should be expeditiously enacted as a law on priority basis without much delay.

Reply of the Government

The report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development on constitution (One Hundred and Tenth Amendment) Bill, 2009 has been submitted to the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha on 28.7.2010. The Committee had recommended the proposal of enhancement of reservation of women in PRIs from the existing one-third to 50% with certain / minor modification.

Considering the recommendation of the Committee and as per the prescribed procedure for processing the recommendations of the Committee, this Ministry in consultation with Ministry of Law and Justice has started action to bring an official Amendment in the bill already referred to the Lok Sabha. A draft Cabinet note with the above intention is already under circulation. This Ministry is thus earnestly making all efforts to get the Bill enacted by Parliament at the earliest possible time.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 73)

Steps to ward off proxy participation of male members related to EWRs in panchayat meetings

The Committee note with serious concern that in many States, the relatives of elected women representatives interfere in the official activities of EWRs. Though in some cases the relatives of a newly elected representative might play a role in nurturing, encouraging and lending support to her, in many cases male relatives even participate in official proceedings on behalf of women sidelining them, a practice that can never be approved of. The answer might be

in changing mindsets, particularly of men through counseling and promoting the confidence of women in negotiating the space and independence they need in their official tasks. At the same time the Committee recommend that the officials of the Panchayats may be made responsible for preventing proxy participation and strict action may be initiated against them for violations in this regard.

Reply of the Government

This Ministry has already issued letters in this regard for considering the same by the State Governments with a clear mention that the officers/ Secretaries who allow the male relatives of lady members in official meetings of PRIs are equally guilty and they should be proceeded against departmentally. A copy of the letter is at **Annexure-III**. The Ministry is encouraging participation of EWR in matters relating to women issues. An example is the recommendation in the draft law on “Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace”. The suggestion of the Ministry is at **Annexure – IV**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 74)

Need to enforce special quorum of women in panchayat meetings

Reservation of seats alone cannot ensure the active participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Illiteracy, patriarchal values, inexperience, responsibilities at home, lack of access and control over income and other resources, restrictions to public spaces and insensitive legal system etc. keep women away from the Panchayat meetings and continue to impair their effective political participation. Many of the decisions are taken in their absence leaving their concerns unaddressed. To help them overcome such hurdles and to carry the concept of empowerment forward, certain provisions should be made which mandates a minimum quorum of women in every Gram Sabha meetings. The Committee are happy to note that the States of Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have provided for quorum for women in Gram Sabha meetings. Since the

Committee strongly feel that such acts of positive discrimination will help women to change their perceptions about themselves and to gain a sense of empowerment, they recommend that the Government should make necessary amendments in the law to provide for special quorum for women in the panchayat meetings, especially Gram Sabha meetings.

Reply of the Government

The provision of quorum for women in the Panchayat meetings, especially Gram Sabha meetings is regulated under the Panchayat Raj laws of the respective State. As per the information available some States have the provision of quorum requirement for participation of women in Gram Sabha. In Maharashtra the meeting of women members of Gram Sabha (Mahila Sabha) is convened before the main Gram Sabha meeting. As per the reports received from States/UTs about Gram Sabha meetings, it is understood that women issues are now discussed in the Gram Sabha meetings. However, the State Government has been informed about the recommendation of the Committee and they have been requested to dwell upon the same.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 76)

Special Additional honorarium for Elected Women Representatives

A major constraint of women from poor families in devoting time to Panchayat activities is lack of time as they have to work for long hours as wage earners. It may not be fair to expect them to devote time to the Panchayat activities sacrificing their income earning opportunities. Though remuneration in terms of honorarium, monthly / daily allowances, sitting fees, TA/HRA etc. are payable to all elected representatives as provided by different States, there is no provision for payment of a separate additional honorarium to Elected Women Representatives. The Committee find that the remuneration available to members of PRIs in most of the States is just nominal. To encourage active participation of women in Panchayat activities, the Committee recommend that special additional honorarium equal to minimum daily wages should be given to women representatives.

Reply of the Government

There is no separate provision for payment of Honorarium to Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of PRIs, however, the honorarium, monthly/daily allowances, sitting fee, TA/DA and remuneration as provided by different State Governments for Elected Representatives are also paid to Elected Women Representatives. This Ministry had also submitted a memorandum to 13th Finance Commission for an allocation of 4% of the divisible pool for PRIs which includes sitting fee/ honorarium for ERs. However, 13th Finance Commission has not made any specific recommendation for allocation of funds for providing amenities to the office bearers of Panchayats at different levels. The recommendation of the Committee had been sent to State Government for taking suitable measures in the matter. A copy of the letter sent to the States is enclosed at **Annexure V**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated
06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 77)

Disincentives in the population policies of states

The Committee find that the disqualifications mentioned in the Representation of the People Act, which are applicable to the members of legislatures, are equally made applicable to the Panchayat members. However, since Article 243F gives the state the leeway to prescribe additional grounds for disqualification beyond what is applicable to the members of the legislature, some States have brought in additional qualifications that apply only to persons who are, or who aspire to become members of PRIs. Accordingly, the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan at present have laws that disqualify persons having more than 2 children from becoming the members of Panchayats. The Committee feel that this norm has been particularly harsh on women as they rarely have a say in matters relating to number of children that they bear. This provision may also encourage sex selective abortions. Hence, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should pursue the matter with those States having such provisions in their Panchayati Raj Acts and

get them withdrawn at the earliest. At the same time, the Committee desire that the Government should launch a vigorous publicity cum educational campaign on the merits of family planning.

Reply of the Government

State Governments have been apprised of the recommendations of the Committee. Publicity Campaign on merits of family welfare is the subject matter allotted to Department of Family Welfare in the Government of India and they are publicizing the merits of family welfare through various means from time to time.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 78)

Special adult literacy programmes for Elected Women Representatives

Illiteracy is the most important hurdle that prevents the entry of rural women into mainstream politics. A Study conducted by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj among elected representatives of PRIs shows that about one fifth of them were illiterates, but the gender gap was significant (women 24%; men 6%). The Committee find from the study that the educational attainment of elected women representatives is generally up to middle school. It is also observed that among the female Pradhans 11.4% and among female Ward Members 26.6% are illiterates. Education being an important determinant of good performance, the Committee desire that the EWRs are made literate by reviving adult education centres and made knowledgeable through information sharing process in such a way that they could perform their duties confidently and efficiently. The Committee also desire that regular meetings between women sarpanches and panchayat secretary are arranged to enhance women's understanding and knowledge about the functioning of panchayats.

Reply of the Government

Under the scheme of PMEYSA of this Ministry there is provision of meetings at State and Divisional level where women representatives could come together and discuss their issues among themselves with possible solution to the

common problems faced by them. This Ministry has taken up the matter with Department of School Education and Literacy for a special focus of the Saakshar Bharat Scheme with EWR (copy at **Annexure-VI**). The basis for convergence is that the Saakshar Bharat Scheme can promote functional literacy of the Elected Women Representative and in turn the elected representative can contribute towards more effective implementation of the Saakshar Bharat scheme because the PRIs are the vehicles at the grass root level which have certain inherent centrality in implementation of the Scheme of Government which directly affect the rural population.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated
06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 79)

Committees for women and children under Panchayati Raj System

The Committee find that there are provisions for Standing Committees in the State Panchayat Raj Acts. In most of the States, Standing Committees exist at all levels, whereas in Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra, they function only at the District level. In Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, there is no provision for Standing Committees at any level. These Standing Committees meet and discuss issues on fixed dates. In the case of the West Bengal, Standing Committees have wide powers to call for information, to inspect the immovable properties of the Gram Panchayats and inspect any work in progress. Though such Standing Committees are there on different subjects such as Planning and Economic Development, Social Justice, Health, Nutrition and Education and representation of women in them are ensured, the Committee find that no Standing Committee exclusively for the welfare of women and children is generally available in most of the States. Since such a Committee can focus on issues pertaining to women and children, they recommend that States should be encouraged to constitute Committees for the welfare of women and children under Panchayati Raj System.

Reply of the Government

The State Governments/ UTs have been apprised of the recommendation of the Committee for making such provisions in their respective State Panchayati

Raj Act. Ultimately, it is for the States to adopt the model most suitable for them. Regarding special issues of children in disturbed areas an advisory has been issued about the role of PRIs (Copy is at **Annexure VII**).

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated
06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 80)

Incorporation of Women's Component Plan in the Budgets of PRIs

The notion of Women's Component Plan (WCP) as it was adopted in the Ninth Plan earmarked a clear unconditional minimum quantum of funds/benefits for women in the schemes run by all Ministries/Departments that were perceived to be "women-related" and recognized that prioritizing financial resources for programmes/schemes for women is critical for women's empowerment. WCP was a precursor to Gender Budgeting which is widely regarded as an approach to looking at the budget formulation process, budgetary policies, budget allocations and implementation from the gender lens. However, the Committee find that except in Kerala and West Bengal no other State is having the provision for a separate allocation for PRIs in their State budgets thereby leaving no scope for a women's component plan. In Kerala, there is a provision of setting apart at least 10% of the development fund devolved by the State Government as per the recommendations of State Finance Commission for schemes benefiting Women. In the case of West Bengal, there is a provision for Standing Committees for women and children in all the three tiers which prepare their own budget. Since a separate allocation for PRIs in state budgets and provision for Women's Component Plan in their budgets is a major step in empowering Panchayati Raj Institutions in general and women in particular, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should pursue with the States for making separate allocation for PRIs with women component plan expenditure separately in their Budgets.

Reply of the Government

The incorporation of women's component plan in the budget of PRIs can only be thought of once separate budget allocation for PRIs came in place. The

recommendation of the Committee in this regard along with provision of women's component plan in the State budget has been sent to State Government for taking necessary action at their end. A copy of this is at **Annexure V**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 81)

Involvement of NGOs and local women's groups in strengthening EWRs

Ignorance about the role, responsibilities and rights play a major role in preventing women representatives from performing the decision making roles they are supposed to fulfill. The Committee find that many States are involving NGOs to some extent in the Training/Capacity Building of elected representatives as well as in carrying out need assessment and preparing participatory plans at the Panchayat level. However, they feel that the involvement of local women's groups and NGOs are required in an extended level to help the women, particularly from poor households to come out into the main stream, overcome their limitations and contribute to grass root level development process. The Committee, therefore, recommend the same so that more NGOs and local Women's Groups can act as facilitators and catalysts in providing information, skill and resources to women. Pamphlets and booklets in local language can be used in community mobilization and awareness generation. The Committee also desire that the services of local agents like gram sevikas are used to enhance women's participation in meetings and other women's forums.

Reply of the Government

In the National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF) prepared and recommended to States by Ministry of Panchayati Raj for the training of ERs and officials of PRIs, NGOs/ CBOs have been involved in a larger way. The recommendation of the Committee regarding involvement of NGOs/ CBOs motivating the women representatives towards their active participation at grassroot level development process have been sent to State Government for taking suitable measures (copy at **Annexure V**)

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 83)

Strengthening of Gram Sabhas

As *Gram Sabha* occupies a central place in the entire scheme of local governance by providing an opportunity to the individual villager to be a part of the local decision-making process, the Committee strongly believe that the real strength of local governance is in strengthening Gram Sabhas. Though the Gram Sabha is supposed to meet twice a year, effective and vibrant governance at the local level can be realized only through more regular and meaningful meetings of Gram Sabhas. The Committee find that, in principle, Gram Sabhas are endowed with a lot of powers including social welfare, development, village management and monitoring. Social Audit is the most powerful tool that can make Gram Sabha more energetic and transparent in its functioning. As 2010 has been designated as the year of Gram Sabhas to spread awareness about good governance at the local level, the Committee recommend that all out efforts should be made in this year itself to empower Gram Sabhas through proper guidelines. This should include at least one meeting in two months; authorizing Gram Sabhas with powers to identify projects and beneficiaries; conduct of social audit and making mandatory the presence of government officials at the meeting of Gram Sabha. The Committee also desire that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should continue to urge the States to adopt the provisions of the draft 'Model Panchayat and Gram Swaraj Act' in order to strengthen the Gram Sabhas and also the grass root democratic process in the country.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Panchayati Raj had advised the State Government to ensure that at least 4 meetings of Gram Sabha be held with adequate participation in the meetings. As per the reports received from the State Government, it is apparent that mandatory meetings of Gram Sabha are held. The issues concerning women are also being discussed in these meetings. The period from 2nd October, 2009 to 2nd October, 2010 was held as the Year of Gram Sabha to focus on empowerment of Gram Sabha. A summary of the actions taken by various States

is at **Annexure VIII**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

(Recommendation Para No. 84)

Involvement of PRIs in the implementation of central schemes

The Committee note with concern that the Central Ministries/State Ministries/ Departments have created various Parallel Bodies (PBs), Committees and Missions for the implementation of specific schemes instead of assigning the planning and implementation functions to PRIs as per the Constitutional mandate. These Parallel Bodies are apparently created for speedy implementation of the schemes and greater accountability. However, the Committee observe that these 'Missions', often create disconnect, duality and alienation between the existing and the new structures and functions. As flow of funds for implementation of the schemes is through these PBs, they take away the legitimate space of PRIs. Doubts are also often expressed about the capacity and accountability of PRIs. With advances in core banking systems, computerization of treasuries etc, timely transfer of funds directly to implementing PRIs can be made possible. Expenditure by PRIs can also be monitored on a real time basis, thus, doing away with the need for intermediate parallel bodies to manually transfer funds and collect, pool and analyze data on expenditure. The Committee, therefore, are of the opinion that empowering Panchayats with clear roles and authority assigned to different levels through activity mapping, is a strong incentive to build capacity and also to get other pre-requisites for effective performance into place. This is amply proved by the implementation of NREGA through the Panchayats, which after some initial difficulties has now stabilized. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the various central Ministries should be asked to formulate operational guidelines for the involvement of PRIs in the implementation of central Schemes without fail and without any delay. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj may also pursue with Ministries / States to consider phasing out existing Parallel Bodies, if any, from their schemes thereby ensuring the Centrality of PRIs in Central schemes.

Reply of the Government

1. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has, from time to time, impressed upon the Central Ministries to provide central role to PRIs in planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme implemented by them. This Ministry has also urged the Central Ministries to abolish the parallel bodies that exist in their schemes and entrust the task to Committees under PRIs because PRIs are the vehicle at grassroot level to implement the scheme. This advocacy has yielded positive results.

2. **National Rural Health Mission (NRHM):** “Frame work for implementation of NRHM” approved by the Union Cabinet clearly articulates the leadership of PRI and the PRI framework for decentralized management of health. The various institutional set up constituted under NRHM, are facility specific bodies which have representation of PRIs and cannot be considered as parallel bodies.

3. **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):** The SSA Framework of Implementation provides that:

- There should be a Standing Committee or a sub-committee for education under the Gram Panchayat (GP), which would be the nodal body for all matters relating to elementary education.
- The school wise or village wise committees responsible for elementary education/ SSA should be linked with the Sub-Committee of the GP in-charge of Education, as in (i) above, so that overall supervision of PRI is there over the elementary education/ SSA programmes.
- All tiers of the PRIs (village, block, and district) should be given roles of supervision over the elementary education programmes/ SSA. This can be done by State Governments by defining the roles of Sub-Committee on Education of the GP; the Block Level Education Committee and the Education Sub-Committee of the Zila Parishad.

4. **National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP):** NRDWP ensures the centrality of Zila and Gram Panchayats in the programme Guidelines. At the district level the District Water and Sanitation Mission should function under the supervision control and guidance of Zila Panchayat Parishad. At the village level

the Gram Panchayats “should be empowered with funds, functions and functionaries and capacity building to plan, monitor, implement and manage rural drinking water supply or schemes within their jurisdiction”.

4.1 In order to further decentralize powers and responsibilities and to give greater focus on water and sanitation issues, a Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) is to be set up in each GP/Village/Ward. At least 50% of VWSC members should be women. The VWSC shall function as a Standing Committee on Water and Sanitation of the GP and should be an integral part of the GP/BP for which, if necessary, appropriate amendments in the State Panchayati Raj Act/ Rules/ Byelaws may be made”.

4.2 Under para 9.4 (dealing with criteria for allocation of funds) of NRDWP guidelines 10% weightage has been given to rural populations managing rural drinking water supply schemes. This provision has been made in the guidelines for encouraging the States to transfer Operation and Management (O&M) of rural water supply schemes to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The States which have not transferred the O&M of water supply schemes to PRIs, will not be given funds out of 10% component while releasing funds under NRDWP. NRDWP Guidelines thus fully provide for involvement of PRI's in their implementation and ensure their centrality in the scheme.

5. Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC): Gram Panchayats have a pivotal role in the implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign. The TSC will be implemented by the PRIs at all levels. They will carry out the social mobilization for the construction of toilets and also maintain the clean environment by way of safe disposal of wastes. Community Complexes constructed under the TSC will be maintained by the Panchayats/ Voluntary Organizations/ Charitable Trusts. Panchayats can also contribute from their own resources for School Sanitation over and above the prescribed amount. They will act as custodian of the assets such as the Community Complexes, environmental components, drainage etc. constructed under the TSC. Panchayats can also open and operate the Production Centre Rural Sanitary Marts. Panchayats can play a key role in promoting regular use, maintenance and up gradation of toilets and inter-

personal communication for hygiene education.

6. In the Scheme of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), PRIs have been given absolute centrality.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated
06.01.2011)

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

-NIL-

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation Para No. 71

Data base on the socio-economic profile of Elected Women Representatives of PRIs

Since the advent of Panchayati Raj system in the country, three rounds of elections have been conducted in most of the States. However, a proper compilation of the data pertaining to the socio-economic profile of the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) has not yet been done by many of the States. Most of the States have compiled only the data pertaining to the number and percentage of EWRs and their SC&ST bifurcation. However, the Committee find that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has got a nation wide survey carried out by the well-known firm AC Nielsen-ORG Marg which covered 23 States, 114 Districts, and 228 Blocks and 1368 Gram Panchayats (out of which 907 were women headed Gram Panchayats). Although a rough picture regarding the status of women could be drawn from such a survey, the exact and comprehensive data on age, education, primary occupation, economic category, etc. of EWRs all over the country is not available with the Government. Even the data on women multi-termers could not be provided by many States. As no survey findings can substitute a complete database, States need to generate a complete data bank on the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs, especially women, without any further delay. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj should impress upon the State Election Commissions to prepare a comprehensive/complete data bank on the socio-economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs at the earliest under intimation to the Committee.

Reply of the Government

All the States/ UTs were requested to provide the socio economic profile of elected representatives of PRIs. As on date, information has been received

from the States of Sikkim, Rajasthan and Lakshadweep only. The information received from States is at **Annexure-I**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 7 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 72

Need to enhance training facilities and capacity building programmes of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs)

The Elected Representatives of the people, especially women, need training to enable them to discharge their duties because of their lower literacy levels and limited exposure to public affairs. Though the Ministry of Panchayat Raj has some training modules under schemes like Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) and Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana, there is no separate scheme exclusively for the capacity building of women. Moreover, it is observed from the submissions of the Ministry that training is not being given to all elected women representatives within a year of their elections due to various constraints such as lack of institutional capacity, constraints in delivery methods etc. Above all, the allocation under the scheme Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan(PMEYSA) is too meagre . It is also seen that this scheme has not been launched so far in the States of Jharkhand, Orissa & Uttar Pradesh and in the Union Territories of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry. Moreover, the pattern of implementation of the Abhiyan shows that it is more focused on organizing 'sammelans' rather than offering training. This forum would no doubt strengthen bonding, networking and sharing of experience among EWRs; but it cannot act as a substitute for continuous and comprehensive training. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a separate and exclusive training programme based on the principle of continuous and comprehensive training for women representatives should be devised. The Committee also recommend that the Government should impress upon the State Governments to make it compulsory for EWRs to attend all such training

programmes as the Committee feel that imparting them with a thorough understanding of their rights and responsibilities as well as training them continuously in the governance process can go a long way in the empowerment of EWRs. The Committee also desire that the infrastructure for training programmes should be considerably improved and resource centres for capacity building must be established at every district, block and if required for each cluster of village Panchayats. Allocation for such training and capacity building schemes should be adequate enough to achieve the goals. Exchange programmes and study tours must also form an important component of capacity building.

Reply of the Government

This Ministry has already issued letters in this regard for considering the same by the State Governments with a clear mention that the officers/ Secretaries who allow the male relatives of lady members in official meetings of PRIs are equally guilty and they should be proceeded against departmentally. A copy of the letter is at **Annexure-III**. The Ministry is encouraging participation of EWR in matters relating to women issues. An example is the recommendation in the draft law on “Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace”. The suggestion of the Ministry is at **Annexure – IV**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 10 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 82

Devolution of functions, funds and functionaries to PRIs.

It is often said that the Panchayats exist as over-structured but under-empowered organizations lacking effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries (3Fs). Mere enactment of Panchayati Raj laws without legal provisions for the devolution of the 3Fs will not serve the purpose. To ensure clarity and sustainability in the devolution of activities to Panchayats, States should undertake the activity mapping completely and sincerely. However, the

Committee are informed that the assessment based on the 34 indicators of the Devolution index of which 5 relate to 'functions' 15 to 'finances' and 14 to 'functionaries' reveal that the progress made by States other than Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Assam is not that promising. The Committee recommend that effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries (3Fs) to Panchayats should be ensured in all States. The Committee also recommend that Activity mapping exercises should be completed by States and implemented through appropriate changes in laws, rules and regulations expeditiously within a timeframe.

Reply of the Government

This Ministry has been continuously pursuing the matter relating to devolution of Funds, Functions and Functionaries (3Fs) to PRIs with the State Governments. The recommendation of the Committee has also been sent to State Governments for compliance of the same, vide **Annexure V**.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 16 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

CHAPTER V

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES

Recommendation Para No. 75

Need to extend the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women to two terms

The provision for the rotation (between constituencies) of the reserved seats means that these change from one election to the next. This generally works to the detriment of women and their opportunity to craft a political career. Even if they have performed effectively in their first term, they are unable to reap the benefits of these achievements in the next election, as the constituency they nurtured in the first term gets de-reserved and the women candidate may have to shift to another constituency. A study among the Elected Women Representatives in PRIs shows that a large proportion (83.4%) of those interviewed have contested only one election in their career while only a small proportion (12.4%) have attempted a second and third round (4.2%) of elections. The main reason cited by female respondents for not contesting elections for a second time was the de-reservation of their seats. A study needs to be conducted by the Panchayati Raj Ministry to find out a proper solution in regard to the question of extending the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women. At the same time, the Committee desire that the rotation cycle of reservation of seats for women may be extended to two terms and the same methodology may be followed by all States. The Committee also desire to be apprised of the actual number of women who have got elected for a second or third term, state-wise, within three months from the date of presentation of this Report.

Reply of the Government

The term period for rotation of seats while providing reservation for women in PRIs is decided by the concerned State Government in accordance with the provisions of their respective statutes. However, this Ministry is also of the view that there should be provision of rotation of seats after at least two cycles. The States/UTs have been apprised of the views of the Committee. This Ministry

has also sought comments from the State on this issue and a firm view will be taken after taking into consideration the responses received.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj, O.M. No. R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 13 of Chapter 1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 85

Updating of National Panchayat Portal

The Committee find that a National Panchayat Portal, a dynamic website for Panchayats has been developed by NIC with a versatile front-end in terms of information, content and services needed by people. This portal envisages to provide a single platform for information dissemination and exchange from all Zilla Parishads, Gram and intermediate Panchayats and allows Panchayats to upload data directly. Since this portal can be used as a common platform by the State Panchayati Raj departments and other stakeholders, the Committee desire that the Central and State Governments should invest more in e-PRIs in order to facilitate the creation of accurate, updated and comprehensive data base in the portal.

Reply of the Government

With the limited funds available with the Ministry under the head “Mission Project on e-Panchayats”, some preparatory work viz. Information and Service needs Assessment (ISNA), Business Process re-engineering (BPR) and preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) (State wise) has been taken up. The information and Service Needs Assessment exercise helps in identifying and prioritizing the information and service needs and expected service levels of citizens, State Governments, Central Ministries and other stakeholders from PRIs. For Business Process re-engineering is required to improve the delivery of services. DPRs provide the cost estimates for the project. ISNA, BPR and DPR

reports have been prepared and are available on the website of MoPR. State-wise draft DPRs have been prepared and submitted to respective States/ UTs for their feed back. Accordingly, after incorporating their feedback, these reports will be finalized.

(Ministry of Panchayati Raj,O.M. No.R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA dated 06.01.2011)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 19 of Chapter 1 of the Report)

NEW DELHI
10th March, 2011
19 Phalguna, 1932 (Saka)

SMT.CHANDRESH KUMARI
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

Sikkim

Social Background of EWRs (number & %)

Category	Total no.	General		SC		ST		OBC	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1. Village Panchayat									
Male	535	133	25%	30	6%	238	44%	134	25%
Female	356	86	24%	22	6%	161	45%	87	24%
2. Intermediate Panchayat									
Male	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Female	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
3. District Panchayat									
Male	57	14	25%	5	5%	27	47%	13	23%
Female	38	8	1%	2	5%	20	53%	8	21%

Number of Panchayati Raj Institutions at different tiers of Panchayats (as on 31st March of each financial year)

State : - Rajasthan

Year	Gram Panchayat	Panchayat Samities (Intermediate Panchayat)	Zila Parishad (District Panchayat)	Remark
2007-08	9188	237	32	
2008-09	9184	237	32	
2009-10	9166	249	33	

Year	Gram Panchayats							Panchayat Samities (Intermediate Panchayat)							Zila Parishad (District Panchayat)					
	Gen (Non SC / ST / OBC)	SC	ST	OBC	Un- filled + Term no due	Total	Wom en out of total	Gen (Non SC / ST / OBC)	SC	ST	OBC	Un- filled	Total	Wome n out of total	Gen (Non SC / ST / OBC)	SC	ST	OBC	Total	Wom en out of total
2007-08	1763	1692	2030	3699	-	9184	3341	1190	1058	980	2029		5257	2014	3	6	6	17	32	14
2008-09	1763	1692	2030	3699	-	9184	3341	1190	1058	980	2029		5257	2014	3	6	6	17	32	14
2009-10	1763	1681	1970	3690	2+10	9166	4819	1240	1034	956	2041	2	5273	2686	253	190	185	385	1013	541

Lakshadweep

Social Background of EWRs (number & %)

Proforma 1

Category	Total no.	General		SC		ST		OBC	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1. Village Panchayat									
Male	53	*3	3.53 %	--	--	50	58.82 %	--	--
Female	32	--	--	--	--	32	37.64 %	--	--
2. Intermediate Panchayat									
Male	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Female	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3. District Panchayat									
Male	16	1	4%	--	--	15	60%	--	--
Female	9	--	--	--	--	9	36%	--	--

* The representatives elected from General seats also belongs to ST.

Lakshadweep

Educational Background of EWRs (number & %)

Proforma 2

Category	Total no.	illiterate		Upto Primary School		Upto Middle School		Upto Higher school	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1. Village Panchayat									
Male	53	-	--	3	3.52%	9	10.58%	41	48.23%
Female	32	--	--	0	-	4	4.70%	28	32.94%
2. Intermediate Panchayat									
Male	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Female	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3. District Panchayat									
Male	16	-	-	--	--	2	8%	14	56%
Female	9	--	--	--	--	2	8%	7	28%

Lakshadweep

Proforma 3

Economic Status

Category	Total no.	Below poverty line				Above poverty line			
		General	SCs	STs	OBC	Gen	SCs	STs	OBC
1. Village Panchayat									
Male	53	-	--	6	-	-	-	47	-
Female	32	--	--	5	-	-	-	27	-
2. Intermediate Panchayat									
Male	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Female	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
3. District Panchayat									
Male	16	-	-	1	--	-	-	15	--
Female	9	--	--	1	--	-	-	8	--

Annexure-II

S.No.	State	Block Resource Centres sanctioned (BRGF)	Block Resource Centres Sanctioned (RGSY)
1	Andhra Pradesh	656	-
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	75
3	Assam	87	-
4	Bihar	-	-
5	Chhattisgarh	30	-
6	Gujarat	48	-
7	Haryana	-	-
8	Himachal Pradesh	13	-
9	Jammu & Kashmir	25	-
10	Jharkhand	44	-
11	Karnataka	32	-
12	Kerala	16	-
13	Madhya Pradesh	144	-
14	Maharashtra	126	-
15	Manipur	9	-
16	Meghalaya	16	-
17	Mizoram	6	-
18	Nagaland	16	-
19	Orissa	314	-
20	Punjab	5	-
21	Rajasthan	83	-
22	Sikkim	19	-
23	Tamil Nadu	90	-
24	Tripura	5	-
25	Uttar Pradesh	391	-
26	Uttarakhand	3	-
27	West Bengal	-	-
	Total	2177	75
	Grand Total	2252	

N-11015'4/2010-1:1311
Government of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Sardar Patel Bhawan
New Delhi 110001

Dated the 16th day of February, 2010

To

**Subject: Functioning of Panchayati Raj Institutions - Prevention of
 interference by the spouses etc. of Elected Women Representatives
 (EWRs) — action for.**

Sir,

I draw your kind attention to our instructions vide No.MoPR/AS (JMP)/PS/0 I/2009, dated 9th November, 2009. In this letter we had recommended the policy followed in Maharashtra that the lady office bearers should discharge their official duties themselves and their close relatives should not interfere in their work. In particular, the relatives must not sit in the office of the lady as a matter of routine. A conduct violating this should be treated as misconduct under the relevant PRI Act and disciplinary authority should take action against lady office bearers to allow their relatives to interfere in office. We now find that the Government of Uttar Pradesh had also issued similar orders about ten years ago that husbands of women Pradhans will not be allowed to enter their wife's office (except for urgent work) and in the meetings of the Village Panchayat or to accept memorandum from villagers and to travel in official vehicles.

It is now felt that it is also the responsibility of the Panchayat officers. Secretaries not to allow the relatives to attend Panchayat meetings by proxy. Officers Secretaries who allow relatives to attend instead of office bearers are also equally guilty of allowing such interference. The defaulting officers/secretaries should be proceeded against departmentally.

3 The State Government may consider issuing instructions according to officers/Secretaries of the Panchayats.

Yours faithfully

(Maha Bir Pershad)
Deputy Secretary
Tel: 2374 6567

OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject : The Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill, 2010 -
Draft Cabinet Note for comments - reg.

The undersigned is directed to refer to the D. O. No. 19-5/ 2004-VVW(Vol. III) dated 24th September, 2010 from the Ministry of Women & Child Development on the above mentioned subject and to say that after considering the matter this Ministry is of the view that the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) has to be included in both the Internal Complaints Committee in Chapter - II and the Local Complaints Committee in Chapter - III.

2. Therefore, it is suggested that in Para 4 (2) after sub para (c), the following sub para may be added:

(d) An elected women representative of a local Panchayati Raj Institution of a level to be chosen by the employer. The member will be selected by the Panchayati Raj Institution.

3. Since the Local Complaints Committee is proposed to be set up at the District level, it would be appropriate that the elected women representative should be from the District Panchayat level. Therefore, it is suggested that the Section 7 (1) (b) should be replaced with the following:

7 (1) (b) : One elected woman representative from and chosen by the District level Panchayat.

4. The Ministry of W&CD may please see for information and necessary action.
5. This issues with the approval of Hon'ble Minister of Panchayati Raj.



(Maha Bir Pershad)
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
A' 2374 6567

To

The Ministry of Women & Child Development
(Kind Attention : Ms Sangeeta Verma, Economic Adviser)
Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi

Annexure-V

PRIORITY

ACTION TAKEN REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS OF LOK SABHA
COMMITTEE

R-12012/25/2010-PMEYSA

Government of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Sardar Patel Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated : 9th June, 2010

To
Principal Secretary,
Department of Panchayati Raj, All States/ UTs

Subject: Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on
Empowerment of Women (2009-10) on the subject
'Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions'.

Sir/ Madam,

I am directed to say that the Lok Sabha Secretariat has sent to this Ministry a copy of Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2009-10) on the subject 'Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions' for furnishing Action Taken Reports (ATRs) on the recommendations made by the Committee. Paras No. 70 to 85 of the enclosed Report refers.

2 Action is required by the States / UTs particularly on the following paras:-

71. Attention is invited to this Ministry's communication No.R.12012/3/ 2010-PMEYSA dated 19.2.2010 in which socio-economic profile of EWRs was sought. As desired by the Committee now the data relating to elected representatives including Elected Women Representatives may be prepared in respect of each candidate which should include the information about their age, gender, category (SC / ST/ OBC / General), education, primary occupation, economic category, the

number of Election won etc. Consolidated information in respect of your State/ UT may be sent to this Ministry in the Performa 7-5 (Enclosed).

72. A separate and exclusive training programme based on the principle of continuous and comprehensive training for EWRs should be devised and made compulsory for EWRs and also to train them continuously in the governance process and for their empowerment. Besides, resource centers for capacity building must be established at every district & block. Action may also be taken for preparation of module of training / capacity building of EWRs etc. under PMEYSA as requested vide this Ministry's letter No. R.12012/12/2010-PMEYSA dated 18.3.2010 (copy enclosed).

73. Panchayats officials may be made responsible for preventing proxy participation and strict action may be initiated against them. Attention is also invited to this Ministry's communication no. N-11015/4/2010-RBIT dated 19.01.2010 and 16.02.2010 (copies enclosed).

74. The matter may be processed and necessary action taken to make necessary amendments in the law to provide for special quorum for women in the Panchayat meetings, especially Gram Sabha meetings.

75. Please give your views on extending the rotation cycle of reserved seats for women., Also as desired by the Committee, the details about actual number of women who have got elected for a second or third term in your State / UT may be sent.

76. Encourage active participation of women in Panchavat activities by prescribing special additional Honorarium equal to minimum daily wages to EWRs at all levels.

77. Reconsider the provision in the Panchayati Raj 'Act of disqualifying persons having more than two children from becoming the members of Panchayats. The concerned authorities may also be requested to launch a vigorous publicity cum educational campaign on the merits of family planning.

78. Reviving adult education centre and for instituting information sharing process to make the EWRs literate in such a way that they could perform their duties confidently and efficiently. The State Government may also issue directions to all concerned that the elected representatives (particularly EWRs) should actively avail themselves of the facilities provided under "Saakshar Bharat" - a CSS Scheme. The details of the Scheme can be downloaded from the website <http://www.education.nic.in>. Also devise a system by which regular meeting between women sarpanches and Panchayat secretary are arranged to enhance women's understanding and knowledge about the functioning of Panchayats.

79. Constitute Committees for the welfare of women and children under Panchayati Raj System. There should be no parallel body to such (1) n unittees and the Committees for the welfare of women and children should function under the guidance and supervision of the respective PRIs.

80. To take further steps in empowering PRIs in general and women in particular. Take necessary action for making separate allocation for PRIs with women component separately in the State Budgets.

81. Take necessary action for involving local women groups and NGOs to help the women, particularly from poor households to come out into the main stream, overcome their limitations and contribute to grass root level development process. In this connection, it is pointed out that one of the aims of Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan for this. As per the same each State Government has to constitute a Core Committee comprising activists, feminists,

social workers, NGO workers, EWRs and those interested in issues of participatory governance who should first meet, discuss the issues relating to the EWRs and draft a Women's Charter listing both their commitments, their issues and their demands. The State specific charter will lay down the road map for taking forward the Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan in the State. Pamphlets and booklets in local language can be used in community mobilization and awareness generation and the services of local agents like gram sevikas may be used to enhance women's participation in meetings and other women's forums.

82. Necessary action for effective devolution of 3 Fs to Panchayats may be taken urgently for realizing this goal in totality. Besides, activity mapping exercises should be completed by States and implemented through appropriate changes in laws, rules and regulations expeditiously within a timeframe.

83. In view of the observations made by the Committee and also the 'act that year 2010 has been designated as Year of the Gram Sabha, take all necessary action to empower Gram Sabha through proper guidelines inter-alia to the effect that at least one meeting in every two months should take place, authorizing Gram Sabhas with powers to identify projects and beneficiaries; conduct of social audit and making mandatory the presence of government officials at the meeting of Gram Sabha. Besides adopt the provisions of the draft 'Model Panchayat and Gram Swaraj Act' in order to strengthen the Gram Sabhas.

85. To take action for periodically updating National Panchayat Portal and also to invest more in e-PRIs in order to facilitate the creations of accurate, updated and comprehensive database in the portal.

The above gives a gist of recommendations. However, you are requested kindly to go through all the recommendations carefully and take necessary action besides the ones that have been indicated in the preceding paragraphs. **The Action Taken Report with correct figures, data and information with copies of requisite documents, may be sent to this Ministry within 3 months except in respect of Para no. 75 about which the information may be sent within six weeks.**

Yours faithfully

-

(Maha Bir Pershad)
Deputy Secretary to the Government of India
Tele No. 23746567

3. Proforma
Economic Status

Category	Total No.	Below Poverty Line				Above Poverty Line			
		General	SCs	STs	OBCs	General	SCs	STs	OBCs
1. Village Panchayat Male Female									
2. Intermediate Panchayat Male Female									
3. District Panchayat Male Female									

4. Proforma
Number of Election won in PRIs

Category	Total No. of ERs	No. of <u>Election won in PRIs</u>			
		General	<u>SCs</u>	STs	OBCs
1. Village Panchayat Male Female					
2. Intermediate Panchayat Male Female					
3. District Panchayat Male Female					

Dr. Hrusikesh Panda Additional Secretary
Tel.No.23747911
Fax: 23747912



Annexure VI
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SARDAR PATEL BHAWAN, NEW DELHI
Dated the 30th July, 2010

D.O. No. R-12012/21/2010-PMEYSA

Dear Shri Raju,

Please refer to your D.O. No. F-11011/66/09-AE-II (JS) dated 17.06.2010 to my predecessor Dr. J.M. Phatak, regarding need of convergence of the Saakshar Bharat Scheme of the Department of School, Education and Literacy (D/o SE&L) with the PMEYSA, a Central Sector Scheme of this Ministry. One of the components of PMEYSA is sensitization programme for the Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) and Elected Youth Representatives (EYRs) which is primarily aimed at enhancing the capacities of EWRs and EYRs to take up their new responsibilities as Local Legislatures and decision makers under Panchayati Raj. Such sensitization orientation program inter alia includes PRI dynamics, management, participatory skills, leadership skills, legal rights, conflict resolution, record keeping and accounts including mastery over muster roles, social audit, UCs, RTI etc. Sensitization programme would normally be a specialized programme for the Elected Representatives who had been elected more than once, have demonstrated leadership skills and have the potential to carry forward the goal of democratic decentralization through PRIs as envisaged under 73rd Constitution Amendments.

2. It is, however, observed that many EWRs/EYRs lack basic literacy skill. This fact has also been noted by the Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women who have desired that the EWRs should be made literate by reviving adult education centers and made knowledgeable through information sharing process in such a way that they could perform their duties confidently and efficiently. Therefore, it is felt that the facilities under Saakshar Bharat Scheme will be very effective for providing functional literacy to the above representatives.

3. In turn, the Elected Representatives of the PRIs can also contribute towards more effective implementation of Saakshar Bharat Scheme because the PRIs are the vehicles at grass roots level which are to be accorded centrality to implement the schemes of Government. Please let me know as to when I can come over to discuss the matter with you.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Shri J.S. Raja
Joint Secretary
Department of Secondary Education and Literacy,
Ministry of Human Resource Development,
Shashi Bhawan, New Delhi.

(Dr. Hrusikesh Panda)

e/c
J.S. Raja
J.S.R.

N-11012/33/2008-P&J
Government of India
Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Sardar Patel Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated : 20th August, 2010

To

The Chief
Secretaries
All State/
UTs.

Subject : "Protection of Children's Rights in Areas of Civil

Unrest". Sir,

I am directed to say that National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has visited some States etc., particularly those affected by civil unrest, and have come out with a Policy Document delineating various factors that affect the conditions of children in the areas of unrest, their impact on the children and remedial measures which can ameliorate the plight of children in such circumstances. This Ministry has carefully examined the observations /recommendation of the *Commission brought out in the Report from the perspective of the role that the Panchayati Raj Institutions can play for providing relief and effective service deliveries to the children in such areas. Some of the areas in which the PRIs can be accorded centrality for making all possible efforts to achieve the above objectives are cited below:-*

- (i) To build the capacity of PRI members in particularly in skills in relief management and service delivery in difficult situation. This capacity building can be imparted through non-governmental and inter-governmental agencies
- (ii) Panchayats should play a lead role in raising awareness through school teachers, health workers, parents etc. to keep the childrens' names, address and the other details to facilitate their tracing in case of their being separated due to any serious insecurity or emergent situation
- (iii) District and Panchayat Authorities should institute special measures to protect children, particularly girls from sexual violence.
- (iv) District Authorities should liaise with Panchayats in identifying children in different age groups and their specific vulnerabilities in the areas of civil unrest

- (v) Regarding education facilities, Panchayat and district authority should consider outreach education programmes and try to ensure physical access, transporting children to temporary schools in case the schools are damaged. Panchayat level Education Monitoring Committees should implement proactive community measures to secure access to School and if not possible then set up residential school as an urgent priority. Besides, schools should never be used as temporary shelter by security forces.
- (vi) Schools, Panchavats and District authorities must share and transfer documentation to ensure that the displaced groups of children are not denied admission or enrolment due to lack of proof of age etc. Besides, where there are security concerns, documentation and enrolment information should be kept confidential. Also special provisions are to be made for children who do not speak the local language of instruction including through the expansion of bridge courses.
- (vii) District authorities and Panchayats should need to coordinate across district borders when families are forced to migrate to a neighboring State or district. Official formalities should be relaxed in such cases to ensure that displaced families in such cases have access to basic entitlement and children admitted into local schools until they are more settled. Capacity of Panchayats may be built up to protect children in the area and monitoring their access to entitlement.
- (viii) The district authorities in liaison with Panchayats should initiate a birth registration drive to ensure that all children in the district have a form of legal identity.
- (ix) Properly conceived efforts may be made to contend with categories of vulnerable children who do not fall clearly into existing categories of welfare recipients.
- (x) ICDS norms for nutrition of children, supplementary nutrition for children below the age of six and for pregnant and lactating mothers should be adhered to. Young children must have access to immunization and other basic health services under the ICDS.
- (xi) Teachers, health workers, Panchayat members, religious leaders, NGO workers and polilical representative should play an effective role against children being forcibly pulled into civil unrest.

2. It will be appreciated that the Panchayati Raj Institutions are the statutory Institutions at grass root level which can be entrusted with planning, implementing and monitoring of various Schemes. The effective synergy of different Schemes is also possible through the PRIs for achieving maximum possible results for effective delivery system and relief by inputting the available resources judiciously. This Ministry has also from time to time advised the Ministries of Central Government for according primary role to the PRIs in implementation of their Schemes. We, therefore, urge upon

the State Government to advise the concerned authorities of PRIs at all levels in your State for instituting remedial measures for affected children. Action taken may be informed from time to time please.

Yours faithfully

(Dr. Hrusikesh Panda)
Additional Secretary
Tele No. 23747911
Fax No. 23747912

ANNEXURE - VIII

STATE WISE STATUS OF GRAM SABHA YEAR 2009-2010

MAHARASTHRA:

- The Government of Maharashtra issued a Circular on 25 January 2010 outlining the Guidelines for celebration of the Gram Sabha year
- Holding of Six Gram Sabhas in the year have been declared
- For creating awareness among rural masses for holding Gram Sabha initiatives taken through Posters, Banners, Advertisements in Press & Media
- Caption contests, essay competition in school have been announced
- District level workshops were conducted and training imparted to Gram Sevak and Sarpanch regarding conduction of Gram sabha
- Photography & Video shooting are made compulsory for each Gram sabha meeting
- The Government Machinery has been instructed to see that each Gram Sabha has full quorum
- Observers have been appointed at the district level to monitor the various competitions being held in the year of Gram Sabha
- Awards at Block, District and Division Level announced
- Gram Sabha Panel on State transport buses

BIHAR:

- Direction given to District Administration to hold special Gram sabha on Second October 2009 in all Gram Panchayats.
- Four dates fixed for Gram sabha
- For Successful implementation of big scheme direction given to all DM/DDC for holding Gram Sabha on 1st day of every month
- Electronic and Print Media were used to sensitize people on the benefits of regular Gram sabha
- District Resource Persons (DRPs) were given 60 days training in the District headquarters. Mock Gram Sabhas were also organized by the DRPs during the training
- Award given to three best Panchayats namely 1.GP-Itwa, Block-Haspura, Dist- Aurangabad, 2. GP-Loharpura, Block-Nawada,

District- Nawada,3.GP- Mohamadpur, Block-Asthawan, Dist-Nalanda on the occasion of Bihar Diwas

- Different IEC materials like Gram sabha rules, Hand book on Gram Sabha and Pictorial Book on Gram Sabha are in process
- Importance of Gram Sabha published through electronic and print media, hoarding etc
- Helpline has been established

KARNATAKA:

- The State Government has translated the GOI advisories of 2nd October into local language and circulated to all ZPs.
- Average population of a GP is over 5000 and therefore, the state also has Ward Sabhas within the GP and they are chaired by the Ward Members. Both Ward Sabha and Gram Sabha should meet at least once in six months.
- They select beneficiaries, approve plans, authorize issue of UCs and also hold Social Audit called Jamabandi.
- Minutes of Gram Sabha are recorded in a separate register

WESTBENGAL:

- Panchayat Week has been celebrated at Gram Panchayat level, Panchayat Samiti level, Zilla Parishad level and State level on the eve of “Year of Gram Sabha”
- The Chief Minister inaugurated the State level function 6th December09 at Berhampore, Murshdabad
- Debate, discussion, exhibition, quiz, stage play, folk song etc were performed at different levels
- Discussions held on various topics like functioning of Panchayat, better delivery of services to the people, improving quality of governance in Panchayats, participation of people in development works, awareness of people on functioning of Panchayat, women empowerment etc at all levels.

MADHYA PRADESH:

- All District Collectors directed by the State Government to perform special activities about Gram Sabha from 2.10.2010 to 8.10.2010
- Appointment of Officers for Organization of Gram Sabha

- Additional Agenda of Forest Rights Act to be included in the meeting.
- For ensuring participation of Women wage workers in the Gram Sabha, special workshop will be conducted.
- Officials have been assigned specific functions. Collector will assign specific officials for each GS. The CEO of ZP will transfer funds in time to GS. The BDO will make available the services of technical personnel available with him for preparation of plans.

ANDHRAPRADESH:

- One senior officer at mandal [block] level is nominated as a facilitator for each of the Gram Panchayats in the mandal
- Pursuant to the instructions of the GoI all the Gram panchayats in the state were requested in advance to conduct Grama Sabha on 02.10.2009

As a festive occasion

- Wide publicity was given in the print and electronic media that this Grama Sabha heralds the year of Grama Sabha in commemoration of 50th Anniversary of Panchayat Raj in India
- Women, particularly from SHGs participated in good number and made their contribution.
- Public were appraised about various developmental programmes of the GoI and GoAP.
- NREGA is the prime item on which views were expressed by the public in the Grama Sabha.
- Various initiatives under NRHM program were explained to the public by the people from Department of Health.
- Public were appraised of the diseases like Swine flu, Diarrhoea, Malaria, Chikungunya, Dengue fever and symptoms of the diseases and preventive measures.
- CDPO/ Supervisor/ Anganwadi worker of the concerned village explained to the public about the maternal and child related nutrition and immunization issues
- In the wake of floods in the state around that time, in all the affected districts Grama Sabhas focused special attention on the rehabilitation and relief operations, and post-flood activities.
- It was resolved to prepare contingency plans for facing such flash floods in the villages

- For the rest of the duration of the year of Gram Sabha CEOs/DPOs were instructed to ensure the holding of Gram Sabha on the key dates like:
 - ✓ March 8th-International Women's Day
 - ✓ Jun 30th- Environment Day
 - ✓ August 15th- Independence Day
 - ✓ September 8th- International Literacy Day
- In the above meetings specific focal subjects were indicated for discussion.
- Section 6 of A.P. Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 provides for Grama Sabha.
Detailed statutory rules were issued there under.
- April 14th and October 2nd are the normal dates prescribed for holding Grama Sabha.
- Detailed agenda was also indicated in the statutory rules.
- All Panchayats were advised to discuss the forth coming "SAKSHARA BHARATH" programme and make it an important item on the agenda of the 14th April Gram Sabha.
- For the concluding function on 2/10/2010, best Gram Sabha awards at Mandal and District level will be distributed.
- Veterans in Panchayat Raj set up will be honored at Mandal/ District level
- Prize winning students on essay writing, elocution contests held at Mandal and District Levels will be given prizes

SIKKIM

- Message regarding importance of Gram Sabha was disseminated to all Panchayats and Stakeholders, through Official Circulars and Media
- A day long and fruitful State level Sammelan held on 4th August, 2010 attended by the Chief Minister, the Member of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Chairpersons of PRI, Heads of Departments and 1000 Panchayat members of both Gram and Zilla Constituencies.
- Special GS was held on the following dates with the following topics in focus:
 - 2nd October 2009: MGNREGS, ICDS, SSA, NRHM, Drinking Water, Village development plan.
 - 23rd February 2010: Development of Gram Panchayat.

- The third mandatory Gram Sabha was organized during 1st week of August 2010. Various issues relating to planning & implementation of socio-economic programmes were discussed in addition to passing of resolutions of various schemes relating to the development of GPs.
- Sikkim Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan in coordination with Government of Sikkim also organized a State Level Workshop of women Panchayats on 07.09.2010 for creating awareness regarding importance of Gram Sabha. This was attended by the Chief Minister, Heads of Departments, senior level officers besides elected women Panchayat members.
- Booklets, pamphlets and short promotional films on importance of Gram Sabha were circulated to all Gram Panchayats. Video Ads on importance of Gram Sabhas being publicized through local TV Channels.
- Department to organize a one day workshop on the importance of Gram Sabha in all the four districts namely:

1.	18th September, 2010	Namchi, South Sikkim
2.	20th September, 2010	Mangan, North Sikkim
3.	24th September, 2010	Gyalshing, West Sikkim
4.	27th September, 2010	Gangtok, East Sikkim

- Activities to be undertaken are: Quiz Competition, Essay Competition on the topic ‘Gram Sabha’ for Secondary School Children and Lecture by Resource persons on the importance of Gram Sabha and Panchayati Raj System.
- The last and the 4th Gram Sabha of “Year of Gram Sabha” is to be held on 02.10.2010. Financial help is extended by the Department to hold the Gram Sabha successfully.

PUNJAB

- To strengthen and enable Gram Sabha. Action Plan to be prepared by a Committee headed by Divisional Deputy Directors.
- The State Institute of Rural Development deputed to make action plan of Districts clarifying the role of District Collector CEO & the PRIs.
- The DDPO's directed to get the GP Plan prepared and placed before Gram Sabha for approval.
- DDPO's to launch a comprehensive Publicity/ Media plan for increasing awareness at the grassroots level about role of Gram Sabhas and to ensure greater participation with expanded agenda for discussion, debate and decision making.
- Select at least four dates (including 02.10.2009) keeping in view the agriculture season, weather conditions etc. for mandatorily holding Gram Sabha meetings and facilitate these meetings by Campaigns through media.
- Designate and train resource persons and government officials to facilitate meaningful and purposeful Gram Sabha meetings.
- To publish date of Gram Sabha meetings on notice board of the Gram Panchayats and also display information regarding NAESA, BRGF etc.
- To prescribe norms for disclosure of information before Gram Sabha Select beneficiaries for Old age Pension, Widow Pension, Handicapped Pension, Indira Awas Yojana Scheme, Prime Minister Gram Uday Yojana, Rajiv Kalayan Yojana.
- Obtaining approval for the expenditure of Gram Panchayats incurred during last six month and approval of annual Budget of Gram Panchayat.
- DDPO's directed to hold the Essay Competitions on topics of Gram Sabha in Villages, Block and District level.
- Awards for best Gram Sabhas at the Block, District and State level. Controller Panchayati Raj to make provision for the funds for these awards.
- Chairman Education Board to incorporate basics of self-governance in the syllabi of schools from primary to senior secondary level.
- To incentivize Gram Sabha conducting regular and meaningful meetings.
- To conduct district and block level programmes on Decentralized Planning, the Rights and Responsibilities of the Gram Sabhas,

Social Audit by Gram Sabha and to use local electronic and media for the purpose. Collaborate with Academic & training institutions to prepare State-specific training material.

- The training regarding importance of holding Gram Sabha meetings, Decentralized Planning, the Rights and responsibilities of the Gram Sabhas, Social Audit by Gram Sabha is conducted at block level by Mahatma Gandhi State Institution of Public Administration and State Institutions of Rural Development Punjab jointly and during the current financial year all the block will be covered.

ORISSA:

- All the District Panchayat Administrations have been instructed to conduct/organize meetings emphasizing different important schemes in all the Gram Sabhsa.
- The collectors have also been provided with the guidelines furnished by Government of India and impressed upon to conduct special Gram Sabha meetings during this year
- To sensitize the people it was instructed for painting “year of Gram Sabha,2009-10” on the walls of G.P., Buildings, Schools and other public places
- All districts were instructed to organize district level Workshops an and essay competition on the topics of Gram Sabha
- Orissa has sent the names of fifteen Gram Panchayat for having performed best Gram Sabhas during the year, 2009-10 for selection at the National level for Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Award.

KERALA:

- Kerala issued detailed guidelines as per Circular No.55122/DA3/09/LSGD dt.16-11-2009
- **Identification of Gram Sabha Facilitators:**
 - ✓ Gram Sabha facilitators were identified from each Grama Panchayat and instruction was given to each Grama Panchayat to identify Gram Sabha facilitators for each ward
 - ✓ Each GP identified 30-40 facilitators
 - ✓ A pool of Master Trainers was identified by the DPC as resource person
 - ✓ A two day training programme for the Gram Sabha facilitators was designed and Implemented by KILA

- ✓ The training programmes were conducted in 71 batches and all together 6429 Gram Sabha facilitators were trained
- **Development of resources materials for Grama Sabha strengthening:**
 - ✓ A hand-book was developed for the purpose of training of Gram sabha facilitators
 - ✓ This document was circulated to all the local governments of Kerala
- **Action research on Grama Sabha Strengthening**
 - ✓ For strengthening of Grama Sabha the action research is being carried in the following GPs:
 - Anand (Trivandrum District)
 - Keezvillam(Trivandrum District)
 - Kodom-Beller(kasargod district)
- **Documentary films on Grama Sabha**
 - ✓ Two documentary films on Grama Sabha having 30 minutes duration is prepared by KILA for National & International training programmes
 - ✓
- **Training for civil society groups**
 - ✓ KILA in association with Kudumbasree and local Government association has been involved in conducting training programmes for the Ngos, media research organization, kudumbasree functionaries, literacy workers, SC and ST promoters.
 - ✓ The major topic covered role of Civil society in Gram Sabha strengthening
- **Concurrent support for Local Governments for strengthening Grama Sabha through Help Desk system**
 - ✓ Help Desk System placed at KILA renders concurrent support to the PRI functionaries
 - ✓ Three volumes of Frequently Asked Questions(FAQs)related to Gram sabha functioning have been published during 2009-10

- **Special Grama Sabha meetings for the preparation of Vision Document on Sanitation**

- ✓ Each Grama Panchayat has prepared draft vision document on sanitation and placed before the special Grama Sabha for approval
- ✓ On the basis of the Vision Document, Action Plan was prepared

ASSAM

- Issued Detailed guidelines to all the CEO Zilla Parishads/PD DRDA's in the hill areas
- Agenda for the Gram Sabha to cover following activities:
 - a) Setting up a frame for Gram Sabha functioning during the year/review of its work implementation
 - b) Taking up common concerns of the people
 - c) Setting a target for clean village
 - d) Review of MNREGS, DDP and BRGF works
 - e) Organizing community service, voluntary labour and cultural programme
 - f) Social audit for development work
- Till date 8604 Gram Sabha meetings have been held in the 2202 Gaon Panchayats

HARYANA

- A list of the issues which were to be taken up for discussion during the meeting of Gram Sabha was circulated to all the Deputy Commissioners for further circulation amongst PRIs
- The message i.e. “ year of the Gram Sabha-for Empowered people and Accountable Panchayats” was conveyed to all the Deputy Commissioner for wide publicity through wall paintings at every Panchayat Ghar/wall of a house on the main entrance of the village and other key places

- Leaflets, handouts, brochures, guidebooks etc were developed and distributed by HIRD
- Files, folders, letter pads and envelopes etc were printed by the Director HIRD from the local markets with a slogan i.e. “Year of the Gram Sabha-for Empowered people and Accountable Panchayats” to create an awareness among the common people.

UTTARAKHAND

- Instruction was given to the District to Organize open Gram Sabha meetings on special days along with other activities.
- District Panchayat Officer sent an instruction to the Block Development Officers to organize Gram Sabha meeting and cultural programme on 2nd October 2010 on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti.
- District Panchayat Officer requested to the Block Development Officers to sent an action taken report to the district headquarters

GOA

- A circular has been issued to all the Block Development Officers in the State of Goa to ensure that the Gram Sabhas are convened regularly and that there is close monitoring and mentoring of their meetings
- Regular training programmes are being conducted by Goa Institute of Rural Development (GIRDA) for capacity building of the Panchayati Raj Representatives on various aspects
- State Level convention of all Sarpanches, Dy. Sarpanches and members of PRIs was held on 19th June 2010 at Panaji
- A booklet on Gram Sabha was released

GUJARAT

Strategies Adopted as special initiatives:

- Special Campaign for Garm Sabha meeting was organized for a particular period
- Publicity of the Programme through news papers, television and other traditional methods
- Responsibilities given to the Collector and DDO
- All village staff remain present in Gramsabha with details
- All Class-I & II officers are assigned Gram Sabhas during the Campaign
- Punishment for non attendance
- Invitation to Ministers, M.P., M.L.A, non-officials, village leaders cooperative leaders and NGOs
- Cultural and developmental programmes on Gram Sabha day
- Open house for raising individual issues in Gram Sabha without prior notice
- Review of the issues raised at village level
- Feedback from class-I &II officers on daily basis
- Officers to put their vehicles at the entrance of the village
- Same sitting arrangements for officials, non-officials and villagers
- System of day to day reporting
- ONLINE REPORTING through special portal designed by state government from village E-gram centers for monitoring
- Evaluation report from the district at the end of the campaign
- Distribution of pamphlets on various schemes and lectures by officers on such schemes in gram sabha
- Gram Sabha conducting social audit of various programmes

- The senior officers of the district and the state even ministers have been participating in the gram sabhas to demonstrate the significance attached to it, to get a first hand feel of the state affairs and to guide the people using their wisdom
- **Till now, there have been sixteen rounds of gram sabhas. Around 2, 45001 gramsabhas organized where 3.46 crores people have participated.**
- **A total 9, 27,218 questions were received and amongst those total 4, 62,948 questions have been resolved on the spot and total 7, 85,970 questions are resolved, with 84.77% result overall.**

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2010-2011)
Sixth Sitting
(10.03.2011)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 10th March, 2011 from 1530 hrs. to 1600 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson
LOK SABHA

MEMBERS

2. Dr. Jyoti Mirdha
3. Kumari Meenakshi Natrajan
4. Shrimati Yashodhara Raje Scindia
5. Shrimati Supriya Sadanand Sule
6. Shrimati Annu Tandon

RAJYA SABHA

7. Shri Jabir Husain
8. Shrimati Brinda Karat
9. Shri Ambeth Rajan
10. Dr. Prabha Thakur

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri C.S.Joon Director
2. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan Under Secretary

2. At the outset, Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee.

3. The Committee, then, took up for consideration the draft Action Taken Report on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions'. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Report with some minor modifications and authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Report and present the same to the Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

(Vide Para 4 of the Introduction)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE THIRD REPORT (FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2009-2010) ON 'EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS'

(i)	Total No. of Recommendations	16
(ii)	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: Recommendation Nos. 70, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 83 and 84.	11
	Percentage to Total	68.75%
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government: Nil	Nil
	Percentage to Total	Nil
(iv)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: Recommendation Nos. 71, 72 and 82.	03
	Percentage to Total	18.75%
(v)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies: Recommendation No. 75, 85	02
	Percentage to Total	12.5%