

Title: Need to ensure that elected representatives of a Panchayat Raj Body are not deprived from attending Zila Parishad meetings particularly in Ganjam district, Orissa.

SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK (BERHAMPUR) (ORISSA): Sir, the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act aims at providing better administration through Panchayat Raj Bodies. This Act seeks to give an opportunity to the representatives elected to these Bodies to reactivate Panchayat Raj administration. But six elected representatives, out of which four are ladies, of a Zila Parishad in Ganjam district of Orissa could not play their role as they were debarred from their membership.

These six representatives had not been told that they were supposed to take oath by the third meeting of the Zila Parishad to retain their membership. Their presence was marked in all the three meetings and they participated in the election of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman which were the sole items of the agenda in the first and second meetings. They somehow, came to know that they would have to take oath by the third meeting. When they made the demand to be administered oath, it was stated that they could take the oath in the fourth meeting. Before fourth meeting started, they were debarred from their membership. This act, in my opinion, is a great hit at the root of democracy.

In view of the above, I request that steps should be taken to ensure that elected representatives of a Panchayat Raj Body are not deprived from performing their duties.