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**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2009-2010)**

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

THIRD REPORT

**'EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH
PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS'**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT,
NEW DELHI**

May, 2010/Vaisakha, 1932 (Saka)

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COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
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'EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH
PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS'

Presented to Lok Sabha on 4th May 2010
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 4th May 2010



सत्यमेव जयते

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

May, 2010/Vaisakha, 1932 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2009-2010)**

Hon'ble Chairperson - Shrimati Chandresh Kumari

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LOK SABHA

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- | | | |
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| 3. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | Under Secretary |

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INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2009-2010) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Third Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the subject 'Empowerment of Women Through Panchayati Raj Institutions'.

2. The Report is based on the inputs received from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. The Committee on Empowerment of Women took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on 3rd February, 2010.

3. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 29th April, 2010. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

4. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for placing before them material and information in connection with the examination of the subject and giving evidence before them.

5. For facility of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI
29th April, 2010

9 Vaisakha, 1932 (Saka)

SMT. CHANDRESH KUMARI
CHAIRPERSON

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

PART-I

REPORT

A. EVOLUTION AND GROWTH OF PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM IN INDIA

The *Rig Veda*, one of India's oldest sacred books and historical source mentions about the existence of village communities across the sub-continent that were self-governing and serving as the main interface between the predominantly agrarian village economies and their higher authorities. Such councils or assemblies called "sabhas" slowly assumed the form of the "Panchayat" (an assembly of five respected elders). These panchayats in north and south India became the pivot of administration, the focus of social solidarity and the principal forum for the dispensation of justice and resolution of local disputes. During the medieval and Mughal periods these characteristics of the village panchayats remained unchanged.

Local Government in British India

2. In 1870, Lord Mayo, Governor General-in-Council secured the passage of a resolution for the decentralization of power aimed at bringing about greater administrative efficiency in meeting the demands of the people but primarily designed to augment imperial finances. At about the same time, a significant first step towards reviving the traditional village panchayat system in Bengal was taken through the Bengal Chowkidari Act, 1870, which empowered District Magistrates to set up Panchayats of nominated members in the villages. The *Ripon Resolution* of 1882 provided for rural local boards with two-thirds of membership to be composed of elected, non-official representatives and presided over by a non-official Chairperson. Actual progress in implementation was slow but the role of rural local administration was elevated and the term "self-government" gained currency. In 1907, the government constituted a six-member Royal Commission on Decentralisation with Shri Ramesh Chandra Dutt as the only Indian member. The Report of the Royal Commission on Decentralisation, released in 1909, elaborated the principles enunciated in the Ripon Resolution and recognised the importance of Panchayats in the

governance of India. The Montagu -Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 brought local self-government under the domain of Indian Ministers in the provinces. To make local self-government both fully representative and responsible, the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms suggested that there should be, as far as possible, complete popular control in local bodies and the largest possible independence for them from outside control. The Government of India Act, 1935 and the inauguration of provincial autonomy under it marked another crucial stage in the evolution of Panchayats. With popularly elected governments in the Provinces, almost all provincial administrations enacted legislation for further democratization of local self-government institutions, including the village Panchayats.

Panchayats in Post-Independence India

3. Article 40 of the Constitution of India included village Panchayats in Part IV of the Constitution which contain the non-mandatory Directive Principles of State Policy. It reads as follows:

“The state shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such power and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government.”

4. The legislative competence to enact laws to establish local bodies was given to States under Item 5 of List II of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.

5. Following Community Development projects in 1952, a historic breakthrough in establishing Panchayati Raj was effected in 1957 through the Report of the Team for the Study of Community Development Projects and National Extension Service, headed by Shri Balwantrai Mehta, which recommended that *“Public participation in community works should be organized through statutory representative bodies.”* The Team was of the view that without an agency at the village level that could represent the entire community, assume responsibility and provide the necessary leadership for implementing development programmes, real progress in rural development could not come about at all. Subsequently, the National Development Council

endorsed the basic principles of democratic decentralization enunciated in the Balwantrai Mehta report and laid on States the duty of working out the structures suitable to each State. It was during this period that the term “Panchayati Raj” gained currency as a process of governance. In 1959 Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru inaugurated Panchayati Raj on 2 October, 1959, at Nagaur in Rajasthan. By the mid-60s, Panchayats had been established in several States all over India in accordance with local state legislations. However, these were differentially empowered by these legislations. Women were not given any special representation through reservation in Panchayat bodies. Elections to these bodies were not held regularly and state governments often superseded them prematurely and placed them under administrators.

6. Later, the Asoka Mehta Committee Report of 1978 recommended that Panchayati Raj be included in the Constitution. In keeping with the spirit of the Asoka Mehta Committee recommendations, some States including West Bengal, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh revisited their respective Panchayati Raj systems and undertook several new initiatives to endow local bodies with more powers.

7. In May 1989, the Union Government introduced the Constitution (64th Amendment) Bill, which proposed constitutionally-sanctioned Panchayati Raj. Although both the 64th and 65th amendments (the latter dealing with Nagarpalikas) Bills received the required two-thirds majority with at least half the members present and voting in the Lok Sabha on 13 October 1989, the Bills failed by a handful of votes in the Rajya Sabha.

8. In 1991 the Union government introduced the 72nd (Panchayats) and 73rd (Nagarpalikas) Constitution Amendment Bills, based substantially on the earlier Bills moved in the Eighth Lok Sabha but also incorporating some changes. Both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha passed both Bills on the 22 and 23 December 1992 respectively. By then, their sequence changed to the 73rd and 74th amendments respectively. Following their ratification by more

than half the State Assemblies as required under the Constitution, the President of India gave his assent and the Acts came into force as the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 on 24th April 1993 and the Constitution (Seventy-fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 on 1 June 1993, adding two new Parts to the Constitution, namely, Part IX titled “The Panchayats” and Part IXA titled “The Municipalities.”

9. Following the enactment of these amendments, all States except Jharkhand have conducted at least one election to the Panchayats at all levels. About 28 lakh Panchayat representatives have been elected to 2,39,544 PRIs (all three levels included). Of these 10.39 lakh representatives are women.

B. WOMEN AND PANCHAYATI RAJ

10. The entrance of elected women representatives (EWRs) into the grassroots polity through elections to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in massive numbers is a relatively new political phenomenon in India. Article 243 D introduced through the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution reads as under :-

- (1) *Seats shall be reserved for –*
 - (a) *the Scheduled Castes; and*
 - (b) *the Scheduled Tribes,*

in every Panchayat and the number of seats so reserved shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in that Panchayat as the population of the Scheduled Castes in that Panchayat area or of the Scheduled Tribes in that Panchayat area bears to the total population of that area and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat.

- (2) *Not less than one-third of the total number of seats reserved under clause (1) shall be reserved for women belonging to Scheduled Castes or, as the case, may be, the Scheduled Tribes.*
- (3) *Not less than one-third (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes) of*

the total number of seats to be filled by direct election in every Panchayat shall be reserved for women and such seats may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies in a Panchayat.

- (4) *The offices of the Chairpersons in the Panchayats at the village or any other level shall be reserved for the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and women in such manner as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide:*

Provided that the number of offices of Chairpersons reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes in the Panchayats at each level in any State shall bear, as nearly as may be, the same proportion to the total number of such offices in the Panchayats at each level as the population of the Scheduled Castes in the State or of the Scheduled Tribes in the State bears to the total population of the State.

Provided further that not less than one-third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women.

Provided also that the number of offices reserved under this clause shall be allotted by rotation to different Panchayats at each level.

- (5) *The reservation of seats under clauses (1) and (2) and the reservation of offices of Chairpersons (other than the reservation for women) under clause (4) shall cease to have effect on the expiration of the period specified in article 334.*

- (6) *Nothing in this part shall prevent the legislature of a State from making any provision for reservation of seats in any Panchayat or offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at any level in favour of backward class of citizens”.*

a) Reservation of seats in the Panchayats for women

11. Since 1993, when the 73rd Constitution Amendment came into force, women have moved forward and demonstrated their capacities and abilities to hold such positions and fulfill 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. Of the total 28 lakh elected Panchayat representatives, more than 10 lakh are estimated to be women. This takes the overall presence of women in Panchayats to approximately 36.7 per cent (as on 01.12.2006), thus changing the profile of rural leadership. In Bihar, while 50 per cent of the Panchayat seats and leadership positions are reserved for women, roughly 55 per cent of elected seats at the Gram Panchayat level are occupied by women. In Maharashtra, the representation of women in Panchayats is nearly 34 per cent and in Karnataka, it is around 43 per cent. The data regarding the number of Panchayats and Elected Women Representatives in all the three tiers of Panchayats in States/UTs as on December 2006 is at **Annexure-I**. This table also contains the data relating to the distribution of reserved categories, i.e. SCs, STs & OBCs in States/UTs. As greater representation of the other weaker sections of the society viz. Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) would enhance their voice in democratic bodies and promote inclusive governance which is critical to inclusive growth, the vital role played by panchayats in this regard is laudable. Data on the number of Women Sarpanches is at **Annexure II**.

12. Since further enhancement of reservation in Panchayats would lead to more women entering the public sphere, the President of India in her address to the Parliament on 4.6.2009 had mentioned the intent to provide fifty percent reservation for women in Panchayats as women suffer multiple deprivations of class, caste and gender.

13. Accordingly, the Constitution (One Hundred and Tenth Amendment) Bill, 2009 for enhancing reservation for women in Panchayats at all tiers from one third to 50% in the total number of seats was moved in Parliament on 26th November by the Minister of Panchayati Raj . Thereafter the said bill has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Rural Development for examination and Report.

14. The proposed amendment would increase reservation for women in (i) the total number of seats to be filled by direct election, (ii) offices of Chairpersons and (iii) in seats and offices of chairpersons reserved for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to 50% in all tiers of Panchayats. This Amendment to Article 243 D of the Constitution envisages enhanced reservation for women in PRIs leading to greater participation of women in the public sphere and also making Panchayats more inclusive institutions. Moreover, gender equity and inclusiveness will lead to better delivery of public services, such as health, sanitation, early childhood care, drinking water, etc. that affect women's lives and make the PRIs more accountable to the rural populace. Reservation for women in the third tier of governance including in leadership positions in PRIs was itself a unique innovation in the governance area. Enhancement of the reservation for women in PRIs to 50% will further accelerate this process and make PRIs uniquely inclusive institutions. With the proposed Constitutional Amendment, the number of elected women representatives is expected to rise to more than 14 lakhs from the present 10 lakhs.

15. The States of Bihar, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Kerala have already amended their legislation and reserved 50% of the seats for women. The State of Sikkim has also amended its legislation to reserve 40% seats for Women in Panchayats.

b) Database on Elected women Representatives of PRIs

16. Since the advent of Panchayati Raj system in the country, barring a few States, three rounds of elections have been conducted in the various States of the country. However, it is seen that the state election commissions have so far not compiled the data pertaining to the socio-economic profile of the EWRs. Except the number and percentage of EWRs and their SC&ST bifurcation, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj so far could not furnish the data pertaining to the

socio-economic profile of EWRs in the country, State-wise. In this context, the Ministry has submitted as under:

“A nation wide survey was carried out by the well-known firm of AC Nielsen ORG Marg, who covered 23 States, 114 Districts, and 228 Blocks and 1368 Gram Panchayats of which 907 were women headed Gram Panchayats. Based on this survey, the information on the social category, age, education, primary occupation and economic category are available, State-wise.”

17. As no survey can substitute a comprehensive data base, the Committee had felt the need for the same during their deliberations. Even details of women multi-termers could not be provided by many States. The State Election Commission of Bihar has so far not compiled the data and therefore, the information in respect of Bihar could not be made available by the Ministry. As per the Ministry, data in respect of the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh is still awaited. The Updated data in respect of Multi termers among women representatives as furnished by the Ministry is available at **Annexure-III**.

c) Training and capacity building programmes for Elected Women Representatives

18. In order to encourage the political participation by women in Panchayati Raj Institutions(PRIs), the Ministry of Panchayati Raj conceptualized a scheme titled Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) targeted at EWRs and elected youth representatives (EYRs). The scheme has two facets, namely:

- (i) Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA), and
- (ii) Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PYSA).

19. Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA) aims to build on the substantial representation of women in Panchayats. It facilitates the women to use their collective strength more effectively. It supports the efforts of the atomized women representatives in the country to strengthen their unity and provide a forum for continued training. PMSA provides women with specific

kinds of support that goes beyond the usual training given to PRI representatives. It addresses the lack of technical knowledge, communication and administrative skills to fulfill their leadership role.

20. Regarding the scheme the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in a written note submitted as under:

“The PMEYSA Scheme has come into existence from September, 2007 with the objectives to enable women Panchayat leaders to articulate their problems and to formulate the institutional mechanism for their empowerment. The activities planned in this scheme are designed to reduce the gaps in accessing opportunities between male & women elected representatives. During 2007-08, 119 batches comprising of 35 elected representatives (25 Women & 10 Youth) were provided training/sensitization under the scheme. During 2008-09, 288 batches of elected representatives were provided training/sensitization under the scheme.”

21. As a Central Sector Scheme, the various activities under it are funded by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Fund is released to the State Panchayati Raj Department in two equal installments in the ratio of 50:50. The balance amount (second installment of 50%) is released only on furnishing of (1) Utilization certificate in respect of funds released and (2) Audited Statement of account on the expenditure (item-wise) incurred by the State Government/SSC. The outlay of the scheme during the 11th Five Year Plan period is Rs.4307.47 lakhs. For the North Eastern States, 10% of the total amount i.e. Rs. 410.47 lakhs has been earmarked. Details submitted by the Ministry are as under:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year wise outlay				
2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
340.60	1036.93	959.48	1010.98	959.48

22. However, during the oral evidence before the Committee, the Secretary , Panchayati Raj submitted with regard to actual expenditure as under:

“In 2007-08 we allocated 2 crore rupees , in 2008-09 it was 4 crores and in the current financial year we have so far spent 84 lakh rupees”.

23. On being pointed out by the committee that the amount allocated under the scheme is too meagre, the Secretary continued:

“But the basic problem is that the States are not giving the utilization certificate in time. We are also feeling embarrassed that for an important cause we are not able to spend the allocated money”.

24. The State-wise status of funds released for under the scheme as furnished by the Ministry is at **Annexure IV**.

25. The Ministry has further submitted that the implementation process of the Abhiyan includes the formation of Core Committee, State level Sammelans, Divisional/District level Sammelans, Formation of Association, State Support Centres and Training/ Sensitisation Programmes. As per the Ministry, the following processes have so far been completed in the States:

“Formation of Core Committee	State Level Sammelan	Divisional/District Level Sammelan	Formation of Association	State Support Centre	Training/Sensitization Programme of EWRs & EYRs
Out of the 30 States/UTs 22 States had formed the Core Committee and in the remaining states it is under process.	Out of the 30 States/UTs 21 States have organized the State Level Sammelan.	So far, 47 Divisional level Sammelan have been organized in 11 States namely, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra	States of Goa and Sikkim have so far formed the State Level Association of EWRs/ EYRs.	So far 10 States have established the State Support Centre under PMEYSA i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim and West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Kerala and Andaman & Nicobar Islands	So far 12 States have conducted the Training/Sensitization programmes i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Sikkim and Andaman & Nicobar Island.”

26. On being asked about the States that have so far not launched Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PSMA), the MoPR in a written reply has submitted as under:

“Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA) has not been launched so far in the States of Jharkhand, Orissa & Uttar Pradesh and the UTs of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Lakshadweep and Puducherry. 47 Divisional level Sammelans have been organized in 11 States namely, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Manipur, Uttarakhand, A&N Islands and West Bengal. State Level Association of EWRs/ EYRs have been formed in the States of Goa and Sikkim”.

27. While furnishing the details of various Sensitization Programmes organized to enhance the capacity of the EWRs and EYRs under the Scheme since 2007, it has been stated as below:

“The programme/activities under PMEYSA Scheme are process based and the Sensitization programmes are started after the completion of the preliminary stages of the Scheme i.e. State level Sammelan and District level Sammelan. So far 12 States have conducted the Training/ Sensitization programmes. These are Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Kerala, Assam, Karnataka, A&N Islands and Sikkim”.

28. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj does not have any separate scheme exclusively for training women elected representatives of PRIs except PMEYSA. However, it has been submitted that the Ministry also provides assistance for training and Capacity building of elected representatives of Panchayats including women representatives under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana and the Backward Regions Grant Fund (in 250 selected backward districts). This training is conducted through the State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs). Since the inception of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, as per available data from States, about 89570 women representatives of PRIs have been trained in the year 2004-05; 96800 women in 2005-06; 146505 women in 2006-07; 73673 women in 2007-08 and 161000 women in 2008-09.

29. During the course of oral evidence of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, the Secretary added in this regard:

“As mentioned, we have three schemes for capacity building. One is BRGF for 250 BRGF districts. Backward Region Grand Fund is a scheme under which we give money for capacity building and the money is pretty large. Rs. 1 crore per district per year. This capacity building is not only for training, but there are several capacity building components. For training purposes enough money is available. Likewise, the other scheme is RGSY, that is, for non-BRGF districts. There also we provide funds for training. These two programmes are both for men and women where we do not make a distinction. Considering that the requirements of women are very different on certain score, we have devised this PMEYSA. This does not have only training component, it also has federation of women so that among themselves they discuss and acquire confidence. They work as a lobby at the States and the Centre. Of course, we have also been, as mentioned earlier, in most of the States assisted by the State Support Centre. Unfortunately, I do accept that this PMSA which has been the most important capacity building programme has received least attention from State Governments. If I give you figures, last year, that is, 2008-09 we trained 1.61 lakh women. That number is too low because we have about ten lakh plus woman representatives. I do admit that the capacity building component has been lagging behind.”

30. On being asked about the success of training given to Elected Women Representatives, through these programmes, the Ministry furnished the following reply:

“Under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana (RGSY), the States/UTs are providing training for capacity building of Elected Representatives including Women Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). Coverage of all the members within a year of election has not been achieved so far due to various constraints such as lack of institutional capacity, constraints of delivery methods etc. Ministry of Panchayati Raj is working with the States to ensure such arrangements.”

d) Proxy participation of male members related to EWRs in panchayat meetings

31. It is a cause of concern that relatives of elected women representatives interfere in the official activities of women EWRs. Though in some cases the relatives of newly elected representatives play a role in nurturing, encouraging

and lending support to women elected representatives, in many cases male relatives even participate in official proceedings on behalf of women, a practice that can never be approved.

32. During the deliberations of the Committee, the Members recollected several incidents of such proxy participation. When they desired to know the action taken in this regard, the Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj quoted an example from the state of Maharashtra during oral evidence:

“This is an issue concerning all States. However, the State of Maharashtra issued an order in July 2007 which states that the office bearers of all the PRIs should discharge their duties themselves and their close relatives should not interfere in their work. Any particular relative must not sit in the office as a matter of routine. A conduct violating this principle would be treated as misconduct under the relevant Panchayati Raj Act and the disciplinary authority would take action against the office bearers who were allowing their relatives to interfere in the Office administration”.

33. While submitting on the same issue, the Ministry in a written reply stated:

“Anecdotal evidence shows that while several women representatives indeed take the assistance of their male relatives when they are first elected, as they gain confidence they become more independent and shrug off their support. It must be remembered that hard-line solutions, such as completely prohibiting the presence of a male relative with a woman representative might be counter-productive, as it might contribute to a more discouraging domestic environment for the woman representative. The answer would be to change mindsets, particularly of male relatives through more pre-election and post election counseling, while also promoting the confidence of women to themselves negotiate the space and independence they need in their official tasks”.

e) Special quorum for women in PRI meetings

34. Reservation of seats for women alone cannot ensure their active participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions. Patriarchal system, illiteracy, inexperience, responsibilities at home, etc. keep women away from the Panchayat meetings. This makes their representation ineffective as many of the decisions are taken in their absence. To help them overcome such hurdles and

to carry forward the concept of empowerment of women, certain provisions should exist which mandates a minimum quorum of women in the meetings.

35. In Himachal Pradesh a quorum of 15 percent of the total families is required for Up-Gram Sabha meetings with a separate one-third quorum for women. Quorum requirement for the participation of women in Gram Sabha has been provided in the States of Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

36. Regarding the quorum for Women in the Gram Sabha, the Ministry furnished the following details :

“While women are expected to participate in the proceedings of the Gram Sabha, it is often found that they do not attend Gram Sabha meetings. A handful of States have made special provisions in the quorum requirements to ensure the presence of women in the meetings of the Gram Sabha. This is clearly important because it makes possible the ongoing engagement of women in processes of local governance, as opposed to a five yearly visit to the polling booth. In Chhattisgarh, the quorum for Gram Sabha meetings is 1/10th of the total membership of the Gram Sabha, of whom 1/3rd must be women. Jharkhand, Orissa and Sikkim also have similar provisions for a quorum of one-third women. An interesting innovation has recently been developed by Himachal Pradesh, which prescribes a quorum of 15per cent of the total families for Up-Gram Sabha meetings, with a separate one-third quorum for women. The Himachal government institutionalized the practice of organising Mahila Sabha meetings in advance of the Gram Sabha, and the first such Mahila Gram Sabha was convened as recently as in September, 2007. A variation is the practice followed in Maharashtra of convening a meeting of the women members of the Gram Sabha before the main Gram Sabha meeting. It could be argued that, while it represents a laudable attempt to involve women in panchayat proceedings, this practice may actually entrench a separation between the sexes instead of bringing women and men together into the Gram Sabha. Ideally, the practice of a separate Mahila Gram Sabha preceding the general Gram Sabha should be supplemented by a quorum requirement for women in the latter.”

Quorum requirements for women in Gram Sabhas in various States is given below:

State/UT	Quorum	Quorum for Women	Mahila Gram Sabha	Any Other	Up-Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha
Andhra Pradesh	Not Specified	No	No		No
Assam 10%	No	No	No	Quorum of Gram Sabha reduced from 1/3rd to 10% of Members	No
Bihar	10%	No	No		No
Chhattisgarh	1/10th of the total number of members of Gram Sabha of whom 1/3 rd must be women	Yes - 1/3rd of the quorum	No		NA
Goa	NA	NA	NA		No
Gujarat	NA	No	No	Social Justice Committee at the village level takes care of full and satisfactory consultation. Though there is no quorum, prior public notice is given and people are encouraged to participate in large numbers.	No
Haryana	NA	NA	NA		NA
Himachal Pradesh	1/3rd of total no of families represented by one or more member of family	Yes – for Up Gram Sabha, 1/3rd of the quorum, which is 15% of the total families	Yes		Yes
Jammu and Kashmir	NA	No	No		No

Jharkhand	1/10th of the total members of the Gram Sabha, out of which at least 1/3rd should be women. In Scheduled Areas, the quorum is 1/3rd members with 1/3rd of them being women.	Yes- 1/3rd of the quorum	No		Yes – in the Scheduled Areas
Karnataka	10% or 100 members whichever is less, with at least 10 persons from every ward attending	33 % of those who attend Gram Sabha	No		Yes- 10 % or 20 members whichever is less. 33 % of those who attend Ward Sabha has to be women.
Kerala	10%. for adjourned meeting. Quorum is 50 persons	NA	NA	The Kudumbshree Neighbourhood Group exclusively for women belonging to poor families in Gram Sabha	NA
Madhya Pradesh	10% or 50 members of Gram Sabha, whichever is less. No quorum for adjourned meetings.	NA	No		No, because the size of the Gram Sabha is Small.
Maharashtra	15% or 100 persons whichever is less	NA	Yes		NA
Manipur	10%	No	No		No
Orissa	10% with 1/3 of women. No quorum for adjourned meetings	Yes- 1/3 rd of the members present, in Palli Sabha 1/10 th members present should be women	NA		Yes. 1/10th of members should be women.
Punjab	1/5th of total voters & 10 % for adjourned meeting	No	NA		No

Rajasthan	10%	NA	NA		10 %
Sikkim	1/5th for Gram Sabha	Yes-1/3rd of the quorum	NA		Yes. 1/5th
Tripura	1/8th for Gram Sabha, 1/5th for Ward Sabha. No quorum for adjourned meetings	No	No		1/5th
Uttar Pradesh	20% with no quorum for adjourned meetings	No	No	Provision for 6 Standing Committees where inclusion of women is mandatory	No
West Bengal	10% in Gram Sansad, Block Sansad and Zilla Sansad and 1/20th in Gram Sabha	NA	No	Sub-committee in the Gram Panchayat on women and child development, and Gram Unnayan Samiti has representation from womenheaded SHGs	Yes – Gram Sansad, Block Sansad, Zilla Sansad
Chandigarh	1/5 th	NA	NA		NA
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	NA	NA	NA		No
Puducherry	NA	NA	NA		NA
Daman & Diu	10%	NA	NA		NA
Lakshadweep	10%	NA	NA		NA

Source: State Profiles 2007 & Rapid Appraisal for Volume 2 of this SoPR

Note on Adjourned Meetings: In some States, if the quorum is not fulfilled in the first meeting, then the quorum requirement is waived in the second (adjourned) meeting. These States are Bihar, Manipur, Orissa and Jharkhand. In Kerala, there must be at least 50 members present in the second meeting. In Punjab the quorum for the meeting is 1/5th of the total voters that comprise the Gram Sabha, provided that in case of an adjourned meeting the quorum shall be one tenth. The Table mentions the quorum for the first meeting.

f) Rotations of seats reserved for women

37. 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 as even if they have performed effectively in their first term they are unable to

reap the benefits of these achievements in the next election, when they are generally sidelined by men who are eager to come back to power.

38. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in a written note has furnished to the Committee the following information relating to rotation in different States:

“	State / UT	Rotation
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Once every 5 years
2.	Assam	Once every 5 years
3.	Bihar	Once every 5 years
4.	Chhattisgarh	Rotated such that women could occupy all seats in a cycle of three elections
5.	Goa	Once every 5 years
6.	Gujarat	State Election Commission to decide
7.	Haryana	Not Available
8.	Himachal Pradesh	Once every 5 years
9.	Jammu and Kashmir	Not Available
10.	Jharkhand	<i>Sub judice</i>
11.	Karnataka	Every 5 years for members; for Presidents and Vice-Presidents in Taluk and Zila Parishad every 20 months and for Gram Panchayat Adhyakshas and Upadhyakshas every 30 months
12.	Kerala	Every 5 years for members
13.	Madhya Pradesh	Once every 5 years
14.	Maharashtra	Not available
15.	Manipur	Not available
16.	Orissa	Once every 5 years
17.	Punjab	Once every 5 years
18.	Rajasthan	Once every 5 years
19.	Sikkim	Once every 5 years, proposed to slow down to 2 cycles
20.	Tripura	Not available
21.	Uttar Pradesh	Once every 5 years
22.	West Bengal	Once every 5 years
23.	Chandigarh	Not available
24.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	Not available
25.	Puducherry	Every 5 years by the State Election Commission for the post of Chairperson
26.	Daman & Diu	Not available
27.	Lakshadweep	Every 5 years by the State Election Commission”

Source: State Profiles 2007

Note: Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, West Bengal, Puducherry and Lakshadweep mention that rotation is applicable to all seats reserved for women, whether for the post of Chairperson or for the post of member. The remaining States do not specify whether it applies only to Chairpersons or to members as well.

39. A study commissioned by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj on Elected Women Representatives in PRIs by AC Nielsen ORG- MARG in 2007 throws some light on the major constraints faced by women in participating in the

Panchayat elections. As per this study, the proportion of elected representatives that contested PRI elections across three rounds is as follows:

“ Proportion of ERs that contested PRI elections across three rounds (%)

	Contested only one election		Contested two elections		Contested three elections	
	Yes	Number surveyed	Yes	Number surveyed	Yes	Number surveyed
EWR	87.8	4880	9.9	4880	2.3	4880
EMR	71.9	1838	18.7	1838	9.4	1838

(Source: Study of EWRs in Panchayati Raj Institutions, page-58)

40. This study shows that while a large proportion (83.4%) of the interviewed elected women representatives have contested only one election in their career, only a small proportion (12.4%) have attempted second and third rounds (4.2%) of elections. Elected male representatives were found to be more likely to contest elections than once as compared to elected women. A major reason cited by female respondents for not contesting elections for a second time was the de-reservation of their seat. Other reasons were the inability to balance work and household chores, resistance from spouse, etc.

41. The said study has also observed that the ability to win more than one round of election is found to be higher in the case of male Pradhans and male ward members than female Pradhans and female ward members respectively. Relatively low levels of social interaction or inadequate campaigning emerge as the most frequently cited reason for defeat while contesting a second time. Only a very small proportion (12%) attributed their defeat to inadequate developmental achievements during their tenure. A much higher percentage (40%) cited their unacceptability or conflict across different social categories, while 30% cited political rivalry among the external factors not directly linked with their own performance.

g) Special honorarium for EWRs

42. A major constraint faced by women from poor families is the 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 Panchayat work 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 separate honorarium to Elected Women Representatives. The available data shows that the remuneration given to Members of Gram Panchayats in most of the States is just nominal. To encourage participation of women in panchayat activities, special honorarium needs to be given to them.

h) Disincentives in the population policies of States

43. Generally in all States, 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 additional qualifications that apply only to persons who are, or who aspire to become members of PRIs.

44. Accordingly, the States of Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan at present have laws that disqualify persons having more than 2 – 3 children from becoming the members of Panchayats. In this regard, the Ministry submitted as under:

“Imposition of the two-child norm was part of a package of disincentives for people to have larger families, based on the idea that since panchayat members are visible and influential, those with only two children can better act as agents of change. However, studies have shown that the norm had the unintended consequence of denying the chance of elective office in Panchayat to otherwise deserving people. The norm has been particularly harsh on poor and illiterate women, as they rarely have a say in matters relating to number of children that they bear. Ministry of Panchayati Raj has strongly taken this matter up with

the States concerned, pointing out that the cornerstone of Indian democracy is the practice of universal adult suffrage, and this cannot be compromised by a norm of this nature. It was also pointed out that the norm, apart from denying people the right to stand for elections or hold a seat in a panchayat had little effect on population growth. Most of the States that had performed well on the population front did not have such a norm. With persuasion from the Ministry, three States viz. Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana have taken action to reverse the two-child norm”.

i) Special adult literacy programmes for EWRs

45. Illiteracy is the most pertinent hurdle that prevents the entry of rural women into mainstream politics. The AC Nielsen ORG- MARGA study commissioned by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj among elected representatives of PRIs showed that about one fifth of them were illiterates. However, the gender gap was significant (women -24%; men 6%). The general educational attainment was up to middle school or above among elected representatives (48%). Pradhans had higher educational attainment than the Ward Members.

46. The educational background of EWRs (%) as per the study is as below:

EWRs	Illiterate	Up to primary school	Up to middle school	Middle school and higher
Female Pradhans	11.4	19.8	16.4	52.4
Female Ward Members	26.6	19.2	17.1	37.1

(Source: Study on EWRs in Panchayati Raj Institutions)

47. The social background of the EWRs surveyed indicates that the majority of them are from Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) or Other Backward Classes (OBCs) groupings showing thereby that political representation of women in Panchayats is not confined to the elite.

48. The social background of the EWRs surveyed is as under:

EWRs	General	SC	ST	OBC
Female Pradhans	28.3	24.3	15.3	32.1
Female Ward Members	28.4	25.8	12.0	33.8

j) Committee system in Panchayati Raj Institutions

49. Provision for Standing Committees of Panchayats is made in the State Panchayati 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 of Standing Committees at any level. The Standing Committees meet and discuss issues on fixed dates. In the case of West Bengal, the Standing Committees have wide powers to call for information, to inspect the immovable properties of the Gram Panchayats and inspect any work in progress. The Elected heads at all three tiers of the Panchayat structure are required not to sanction any fund for a scheme, programme or project without considering the views of the members of the Standing Committees to whom powers have been delegated with respect to a particular scheme, programme or project. Standing Committees are formed for different subjects such as Planning and Economic Development, Social Justice, Health, Nutrition and Education. The number and composition would vary from State to State, however there is generally a provision for representation of women and disadvantaged classes in the Committees.

50. In this regard, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in a written reply furnished as under:

“The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has circulated a model Panchayat and Gram Swaraj Act to all the States in which Standing Committees for Finance, Economic Development and Planning, Welfare and Social Justice, Health, Nutrition, Sanitation and Drinking Water, Education and Skill Development, Agriculture, Forestry, Watershed and Allied Activities and Public Works are recommended to be constituted in every

Panchayat at all levels. The Chairperson would be elected by the members of the respective Standing Committees. The number of members of every Standing Committee would be decided by the Panchayats, so that all elected members except the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson shall be members in one of the Standing Committees and the number of members to each Standing Committee shall, as far as possible, be equal”.

k) Women’s Component Plan

51. The notion of Women’s Component Plan (WCP) was adopted in the Ninth Plan. It 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.

52. However, in the absence of a separate allocation of budget for PRIs, there can be no incorporation of women’s component plan. Hence, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has been pursuing with the States to have provision for a Panchayat sector in their budgets.

53. Informing the Committee about the provisions of Women’s Component plan in States, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj submitted:

“According to available information, this provision is available only in the case of Kerala and West Bengal. 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”.

I) Involvement of NGOs in strengthening PRIs

54. NGOs are also involved in the Training and the Capacity Building of elected representatives. They have also been engaged by the States in carrying out need assessment and preparing participatory plans at the Panchayat level. These NGOs also provide the resource pool for various capacity building and participatory planning workshops held at National and State Level. NGOs also have their role in awareness generation during campaigns at the Gram Sabha level on various developmental and social issues.

55. On being asked about the steps taken for community mobilization and awareness generation, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj submitted in a written reply:

“The national capability building frame work prepared by the Ministry and recommended to the States for the training of Elected Panchayati Raj representatives and officials provides for campaigns at the Gram Sabha level in which NGOs and CBOs should be involved in a big way to motivate the people. Such campaigns can focus on important concerns of the people and Panchayats such as alcoholism, literacy, girls’ education, domestic violence, dowry, water and soil conservation, organic farming etc. through the performance of kala jatha natak and evocative songs, with the objective of triggering collaboration and common action between Panchayats and the people on a daily basis, instead of only at the time of conduct of the Gram Sabha”.

C. GENERIC ISSUES PERTAINING TO PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM

(i) Devolution of functions, funds and functionaries to PRIs

56. 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.

57. As far as devolution of functions to Panchayats are concerned, States should undertake ‘Activity Mapping’ completely and sincerely. Clarity on the role and responsibilities of the Panchayats of different tiers is provided by Activity

Mapping which, thus, becomes an important step in the devolution of functions to the Panchayats. It implies that subjects are not sought to be devolved wholesale but assigned to different levels of government on the basis of clear principles of public finance and public accountability, and above all, the governance principles of Subsidiarity, Democratic Decentralization and Citizen-Centricity. Activity Mapping helps the key players in understanding their respective roles and responsibilities clearly. Conceptually, Activity Mapping is a way of unbundling subject into component activities and assigning these to the appropriate level of Panchayats, following the principle of subsidiarity.

58. Regarding Activity Mapping, the Ministry submitted as under:

“Activity Mapping is required to be done in respect of 29 subjects. According to the information available, the status of completion of mapping of activities varies from State to State as given below:

S.No.	States/ UTs.	Number of subjects for which Activity Mapping done.
1.	Andhra Pradesh	9
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	29
3.	Assam	21
4.	Bihar	29
5.	Chhattisgarh	27
6.	Goa	No information is available
7.	Gujarat	14
8.	Haryana	10
9.	Himachal Pradesh	29
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	Elections to PRIs have not been held.
11.	Jharkhand	Panchayats are not in existence, as elections have not been held.
12.	Kerala	26
13.	Karnataka	29
14.	Madhya Pradesh	25
15.	Maharashtra	No information is available.
16.	Manipur	16
17.	Orissa	18
18.	Punjab	13
19.	Rajasthan	24
20.	Sikkim	19
21.	Tamil Nadu	No information is available.
22.	Tripura	29

(Note: Mizoram, Meghalaya and Nagaland are exempted. Delhi has no Panchayats)

59. Assignment of functionaries and finances should follow the assignment of functions. Fiscal decentralisation being a necessary pre-condition for the autonomy and viability of any decentralized body, the State and Central Governments must ensure that there is clarity and regularity in the flow of funds to Panchayats. Providing adequate number of functionaries for Panchayats is another important aspect in realizing the goals of a Panchayati Raj form of governance.

60. On being asked about the level of Devolution achieved by States, the Ministry in a written reply submitted as under:

“Under the Panchayat Empowerment & Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) being implemented by the Ministry since 2005-06, States/UTs are ranked on the basis of the Devolution Index which captures the extent of devolution of the 3Fs to the Panchayats for 2008-09, evaluation of the States/UTs was done in two stages – the first which assesses whether States have fulfilled & Constitutional requirements viz. establishment of State Election Commission (SEC), holding PRI elections, setting up State Finance Commission (SFC) and constitution of District Planning Committees (DPCs) and the second stage where they were assessed on the 34 indicators of the Devolution Index. Of these indicators, 5 relate to ‘functions’ 15 to ‘finances’ and 14 to ‘functionaries’. Based on the evaluation, incentive grants were awarded to 10 States in 2008-09, details of which are given below:

- First Prize (Top 4 States): Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Rs. 1.50 crore each Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Second Prize (Next 4 States): Karnataka, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana.
Rs. 75 lakh each
- Third Prize (Next 2 States): Chhattisgarh and Assam.
Rs. 50 lakh each

61. On being asked about the States that are at the bottom of the list based on Devolution Index, the Ministry of MoPR in a post evidence reply submitted as below:

“As per the information available for the year 2008-09, the States of Bihar, Punjab and Manipur are at the bottom of the list based on Devolution Index with (rank No. 19, 20 and 21 respectively). The States of Punjab and Manipur have performed badly on ‘Score of Functions’ and the State of Bihar performed badly on ‘Score of Funds’.

(ii) Strengthening of Gram Sabhas

62. The *gram sabha* occupies a central place in the entire scheme of local governance because it provides an opportunity to the individual villager to participate in the local decision-making process. All men and women in the village who are above 18 years of age form the Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha meets twice a year. Meetings of the Gram Sabha are convened to ensure the development of the people through their participation and mutual co-operation. The annual budget and the development schemes for the village are placed before the Gram Sabha for consideration and approval. The Sarpanch and his assistants answer the questions put by the people. The different problems and difficulties of the people are also discussed in the Gram Sabha.

63. Year 2010 has been designated as the year of *gram sabhas* to spread awareness about good governance at the local level. To make local governance effective, local governing bodies has to be energized. In this regard, the Ministry has informed the Committee as under:

“Two circulars have been issued on 2nd October, 2009 to the States and UTs covered under Part IX of the Constitution to observe 2009-10 as the Year of Gram Sabha and for effective functioning of the Gram Sabhas. The programs, events and activities for the Year of Gram Sabha would cover the period from 2nd October, 2009 to 2nd October, 2010. The State Governments have been advised to ensure that at least 4 meetings of Gram Sabha are held with a notice of at least 7 days so that adequate participation in the meetings is ensured. The State Governments would prepare and implement action plans to strengthen Gram Sabhas. Government officials must be present at the meeting of Gram Sabha. The States have also been urged to adopt the provisions of the draft Model Panchayat and Gram Swaraj Act circulated by the Ministry for the strengthening of Gram Sabhas”.

(iii) Existence of multiple agencies for implementing schemes

64. Sometimes, Central Ministries assign the duty of implementation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSSs) and Additional Central Assistance schemes (ACAs) to Societies & Missions etc. which are termed as “Parallel Bodies” (PBs) instead of assigning the planning and implementation functions to PRIs as per the Constitutional mandate. These PBs are apparently created for speedy implementation of the schemes and greater accountability. However, it has also been observed that these ‘Missions’, often create disconnection, duality and alienation between the existing and the new structures and functions. In addition, there are issues of continuity beyond the life of CSSs/ACAs, subsequent operation & maintenance and continued accountability. As flow of funds for implementation of the schemes is through these PBs, they usurp the legitimate space of PRIs and demoralize the PRIs by virtue of their superior resource endowments, though such resources are available only during the lifetime of schemes.

65. In this regard, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has stated as under:

“Diversion of funds by Panchayats would not take place in view of advances in core banking systems, computerization of treasuries and timely transfer of funds directly to implementing PRIs. Using IT facilities, allocated funds can also be transferred to PRIs as and when needed by them. 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. Ministries / States have, therefore, been advised on January 19, 2009 to consider phasing out such PBs from their schemes. As phasing out of these PBs are likely to disturb existing arrangements thereby affecting service delivery, it has not been possible to phase out these PBs in one go. Nevertheless, these issues are being addressed for each scheme separately”.

66. While further apprising the Committee about the efforts made by the government in streamlining things, the Ministry, inter-alia, submitted as under:

“Through his D.O letter dated November 8, 2004, Cabinet Secretary had conveyed to all Union Secretaries dealing with CSSs, the Prime

Minister's directive that they should review their respective schemes in the light of Article 243G read with the Eleventh Schedule with a view to incorporating in the schemes, the import of the Constitutional provision in letter and spirit. Ministry of Panchayati Raj was required to be consulted in this exercise and the same was to be completed within two months. Cabinet Secretary again reminded the Secretaries in 2005 and 2006. Since progress made by the Ministries/Departments in this regard was not satisfactory, a Committee was set up by the Cabinet Secretariat in August, 2007 to review the existing Guidelines so as to ensure and enhance the centrality of PRIs in the planning and implementation of CSSs. The report of the Committee has been furnished to the Ministries concerned. But the progress in the matter is slow. MoPR issued a detailed advisory on January 19, 2009 delineating the role and responsibilities of PRIs in implementing CSSs/ACAs.

The departmental CSS and ACA guidelines have not taken a consistent approach to institutional structures for implementation. While on the one hand they might leave the engagement of Panchayats optional on the ground that local government is a state subject, on the other hand, they also might contain rigid conditionalities such as the setting up of district missions etc. Often, PBs are created for supposedly speedy implementation and greater accountability. However, there is little evidence to show that such PBs have avoided evils such as partisan politics, sharing of spoils, corruption and elite capture”.

(iv) Updation of National Panchayat Portal

67. As Panchayat represent the first level of interaction for over 60% of Indian populace i.e. the rural masses and provide a large number of basic services for millions of citizens living in India's rural centres, the National e-Governance Plan has identified Panchayat as one of the Mission Mode Projects(MMP). The MMP has been designed to overcome the challenges being faced in the villages such as lack of reliable communication infrastructure, delay in providing services to the citizens (Licenses, Certificate etc), Low revenue mobilization for implementing schemes at the Gram Panchayat level, lack of monitoring mechanism for the schemes.

68. A National Panchayat Portal has been developed by NIC which has a versatile front-end in terms of dynamic website for Panchayat, with information, content and services needed by people, links citizens with Panchayats, links

Panchayats with each other and allows access to information & services provided by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State Panchayati Raj Departments, etc.

69. In this regard, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj submitted in a written reply as under:

“National Panchayat Portal (NPP) has been adopted by the States of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Orissa. Out of these, Maharashtra, Orissa, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh have also created content. In all, there are about 4 lakh content items which have been published in the NPP site by these States. Ministry of Panchayati Raj also publishes around 1000 contents on the portal page of Ministry using NPP”.

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

NEW DELHI
29th April, 2010
9 Vaisakha, 1932 (Saka)

SMT. CHANDRESH KUMARI
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

PART –II

ANNEXURE - I

NO. OF PANCHAYATS AND ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES IN THE THREE TIERS OF PANCHAYATS IN STATES/UTs AS ON 01-12-2006

Panchayats at all levels

Sl. No.	State/UT	No. of Panchayats	Total for Panchayats at all levels: Number of elected representatives							
			General (Non - SC/ST) categories	SC		ST		Total	Women	
				No.	%	No.	%		No.	%
	States									
1	Andhra Pradesh	22945	172136	34025	15.2	17842	8.0	224003	74019	33.0
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1789	0	0	0.0	8260	100.0	8260	3183	38.5
3.	Assam	2431	23206	1344	5.3	886	3.5	25436	9903	38.9
4.	Bihar	9040	109767	19440	14.9	884	0.7	130091	70400	54.1
5.	Chattisgarh	9982	76013	17540	10.9	66833	41.7	160386	54102	33.7
6.	Goa	192	1500	0	0.0	0	0.0	1500	453	30.2
7.	Gujarat	14068	83982	7970	7.0	22235	19.5	114187	38068	33.3
8.	Haryana	6325	54508	14965	21.5	0	0.0	69473	24994	36.0
9.	Himachal Pradesh	3330	16793	8724	32.0	1753	6.4	27270	9128	33.5
10.	Jharkhand	3979								
11.	Karnataka	5856	67920	17859	18.6	10311	10.7	96090	41210	42.9
12.	Kerala	1165	16246	2005	10.8	232	1.3	18483	6515	35.2
13.	Madhya Pradesh	23412	222836	61103	15.4	112938	28.5	396877	134368	33.9
14.	Maharashtra	28302	176877	25268	11.0	27565	12.0	229710	77118	33.6
15.	Manipur	169	1684	43	2.4	41	2.3	1768	646	36.5
16.	Orissa	6578	56576	16910	16.8	27376	27.1	100862	36086	35.8
17.	Punjab	12605	62680	28376	31.2	0	0.0	91056	31838	35.0
18.	Rajasthan	9457	73030	25364	21.2	21410	17.9	119804	42402	35.4
19.	Sikkim	170	639	57	5.7	309	30.7	1005	384	38.2
20.	Tamil Nadu	13031	91958	23653	20.3	877	0.8	116488	39364	33.8
21.	Tripura	540	3914	1509	26.3	310	5.4	5733	1986	34.6
22.	Uttar Pradesh	52890	578984	191950	24.9	727	0.1	771661	299025	38.8
23.	Uttarakhand	7335	44450	11077	19.3	1973	3.4	57500	21517	37.4
24.	West Bengal	3713	37277	17158	29.2	4314	7.3	58749	21428	36.5
	Union Territories:									
25.	A & N Islands	75	856	0	0.0	0	0.0	856	296	34.6
26.	Chandigarh	19	153	34	18.2	0	0.0	187	62	33.2
27.	D&N Haveli	12	7	3	2.4	115	92.0	125	49	39.2
28.	Daman & Diu	15	71	4	4.1	22	22.7	97	37	38.1
29.	Lakshadweep	11	1	0	0.0	100	99.0	101	38	37.6
30.	Puducherry	108	784	237	23.2	0	0.0	1021	370	36.2
	TOTAL	239544	1974848	526618	18.6	327313	11.6	2828779	1038989	36.7

Source: Compiled from data provided by the States and Union Territories.

Published in the State of Panchayat, A Mid-Term Review and Appraisal dated 22.11.2006, p-26
Data provided to the 14th Lok Sabha for Committee of Empowerment of Women.

Note:

General (Non-SC/ST) categories, Males & Females;

SC: Scheduled Caste Males & Females;

ST: Scheduled Tribe Males & Females;

Women: Combined SC, ST and General categories.

ANNEXURE- II

DATA ON THE NUMBER OF WOMEN SARPANCHES IN STATES

Sl. No.	Name of the State/UT	Provision in the State/ UT Legislation.	Number
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act 1994. Provision 1/3 rd of the seats are reserved for women Sarpanch.	7269 out of 21807 = 33.3%
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1/3 rd of total seat of Sarpanches (GP) are reserved for Women Sarpanches.	647 Women Chairperson (GP) out of total of 1779
3.	Chattisgarh	Chattisgarh Panchayati Raj (Amended) Act. 2008 reservation has been enhanced from 33% to 50 %	3282 Women Sarpanches.
4.	Bihar	50% as per the Bihar Panchayati Raj Act 2006	4013 Women Sarpanches.
5.	Goa	Goa Panchayati Raj Act 1994	72 out of 190 = 37.84% Including Deputy Sarpanches.
6.	Gujarat	Provision of one third reservation against total number of seats for Village Sarpanch in Gujarat Panchayat Act. 1993 vide Section 9,10 & 11	4565 out of 13693 elected Village Sarpanches. (33.33%)
7.	Haryana	1/3 rd seats of the total seats are reserved for women to be elected as Sarpanches.	2108 seats are reserved for women against 6155 seats of Sarpanches. (34.24%)
8.	Himachal Pradesh	1/3 rd seats of the total seats are reserved for women to be elected as Sarpanches.	1147 out of 3243 = 35.37%.
9.	Kerala	33% as per the Kerala Panchayati Raj Act.	333 Women Sarpanches out of 999 (33%)
10.	Madhya Pradesh	As per amendment in Madhya Pradesh Panchayat & Gram Swaraj Act. 1993 , 50% reservation for women has been made in all three tiers of PRIs.	7707 Women Sarpanches.
11.	Maharashtra	As per the reservation policy in Maharashtra State, 1/3 rd of the total number of offices of Sarpanches in the Panchayati Raj Institutions are reserved for Women candidates.	Out of 27909 Village Panchayats 9210 seats of Sarpanches are reserved for women. 9448 women are officiating. (33.85%)

12.	Manipur	Section 25 of the Manipur Panchayati Raj Act 1994	60 women Sarpanches out of 165 (36%)
13.	Rajasthan	The reservation for women to be elected as Sarpanchas in the State of Rajasthan was 33% which has been increased to 50%.	37.89%
14.	Sikkim	40% seats are reserved for women. The State Govt. enhanced seat reservation from 33% to 40 % in 2007 only. No proposal to enhance further.	65 women Sarpanches in Sikkim out of 163 total Sarpanches. (39.87%)
15.	Tripura	1/3rd seats are reserved for women.	219 Women Pradhans out of 511 Pradhans (Sarpanches).
16.	Uttarakhand	Up to 50% as per Uttar Pradesh Panchayat Raj Adhiniyam 1947.	3751 Women Sarpanches out of 7541 (49.7%)
17.	West Bengal	Not less than 1/3rd of the total number of offices of Sarpanches including the seats reserved for women.	
18.	Chandigarh	1/3rd as per Punjab Panchayati Raj Act, 1994 (As applicable in Chandigarh).	4 out of 12
19	Lakshadweep	Lakshadweep Panchayat Regulation, 1994 provides reservation of not less than 1/3rd of seats in Panchayat for women.	4 Women Sarpanches out of 10 Panchayats. (40%).
20.	Puducherry	Section 11 (4) of the Pondicherry Village and Commune Panchayats Act 1973. Provided further that one-third of the total number of offices of Chairpersons in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women.	36 out of 98

ANNEXURE - III

State wise details of Multi Termer elected Women representatives for more than one term in Panchayats

Sl. No	Name of the State	Tiers of Panchayati Raj System					
		Village Panchayat		Intermediate Panchayat		District Panchayat	
		No. of Women representatives elected more than one term	% Women representatives elected more than one term	No. of Women representatives elected more than one term	% Women representatives elected more than one term	No. of Women representatives elected more than one term	% Women representatives elected more than one term
1	Andhra Pradesh*	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Arunachal Pradesh	602	20	115	17	05	0.9
3	Assam*	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	Bihar*	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	Chhattisgarh	14426	27.50	229	25.22	29	27.62
6	Goa	90	15.84	00	00	00	00
7	Gujarat*	-	-	-	-	-	-
8	Haryana	433	1.76	7	0.68	5	2.66
9	Himachal Pradesh	822	9.43	42	6.89	10	10.87
10	Jharkhand	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
11	Karnataka	1654	4.31	33	2.16	16	4.17
12	Kerala	763	12.83	92	12.4	18	14.4
13	Madhya Pradesh	10383	7.77	148	6.22	23	2.75
14	Maharashtra	4543	8.62	100	8.80	62	11.27
15	Manipur	35	4.79	Not Established in Manipur		2	6.89
16	Orissa*	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	Punjab	2448	8.8	25	2.8	1	1
18	Rajasthan*	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	Sikkim	42	4.71	There are only 2 tiers of Panchayats		3	3.15
20	Tamil Nadu*	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	Tripura*	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	Uttar Pradesh*	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	Uttra Khand	551	2.98	41	3.74	126	4.76
24	West Bengal	2858	17.64	777	23.47	127	42.62
25	A&N Islands	12	4.27	3	8.82	Nil	Nil
26	Chandigarh	9	26.4	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
27	D&N Haveli	1	2.22	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
28	Daman & Diu	1	2.94	Daman & Diu has no Intermediate level of Panchayats.		1	14.28
29	Lakshadweep	2	6.45	Lakshadweep has no Intermediate level of Panchayats		1	11.1
30	Puducheery	Civic Elections of the Union Territory of Puducherry was held in Jun-July, 2006 for the first time and the terms of Panchayats will likely to continue for 5 years from July, 2006 onwards as per the provisions under the Pondicherry Village and Commune Panchayat Act., 1973.					

* Data from these states are awaited.

ANNEXURE IV

**STATEMENT SHOWING ALLOCATION TO STATES UNDER PANCHAYAT MAHILA
EVAM YUVA SHAKTI ABHIYAN (PMEYSA)**

Name of the State	Year of release	Amount released	Activities
ANDHRA PRADESH	2008-09	2 nd Instalment of Rs. 12,92,023/- after adjusting unspent balance of Rs. 58,257/- was released on 31.3.2009.	(a) Setting up of State Support Centre (b) 5 Divisional level Sammelan (c) Core Committee Expenses (d) 44 batches of sensitization programme of EWRs and EYRs
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2008-09	Rs.36,63,463/- 29.5.08 & 10.06.08	(i) 2 nd Instalment for the State Level Sammelan – Rs. 2,71,000/- vide DD No. 549469 dated 10.06.08. (ii) Training/ Sensitization Programme Rs.25,87,463/-vide DD No. 549270 dated 29.5.2008 (iii) Setting up of State Support Centre – Rs. 8,05,000/- vide DD No. 549270 dated 29.5.2008.
ASSAM	2006-07	Rs. 1,68,750/- as 1 st Instalment on 6.3.2007.	State level Sammelan
	2008-09	Rs. 50,67,000/- as 1 st Installment on 26.3.2009.	Training/Sensitization Programme
	2009-10	Rs. 50,67,000/- as 2 nd Installment on 28.1.2010.	Training/Sensitization Programme

BIHAR	2008-09	Rs. 4,78,064/- as part payment on 31.3.2009	2 nd instalment of State level Sammelan and 1 st instalment for organizing 38 District level Sammelans.
	2009-10	Rs. 17,65,434/- on 20.7.2009.	Balance amount towards 1 st Instalment of 38 District level Sammelan.
	2009-10	Rs. 3,78,000/- on 1.9.2009.	State Support Centre
CHATTIGARH	2009-10	(i) Rs.11,87,062/- as 2 nd installment on 17.7.2009. (ii) Rs. 3,66,000/- as 1 st installment on 17.7.2009.	(a) State Support Centre for year 2008- (b) Core Committee Meeting (c) 4 Divisional level Sammelan (d) Meeting of PMSA Association (e) Sensitization Programme (f) Cost of running the State Support Centre for 2009-2010.
GOA	2008-09	Rs.6,53,850/- as 2 nd installment on 24.3.2009.	(a) Core Committee Meetings (b) 2 Divisional level Sammelans (c) Meetings of Goa Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan Associations. (d) 23 batches of Sensitization Programme of EWRs & EYRs.
GUJARAT	2006-07	Rs. 2,22,375/- as 1 st installment on 9.3.2007.	State level Sammelan.
HARYANA	2008-09	Rs. 26,47,450/- as 2 nd installment on 24.3.2009.	State level Sammelan & 19 District level Sammelan.
		Rs. 8,05,000/- on 30.7.2008.	Setting up of State Support Centre.

HIMACHAL PRADESH	2007-08	Rs. 11,61,475/- as 1 st installment on 14.2.2008 & 28.03.2008	(i) Setting up of State Support Centre (ii) 16 Training/ sensitization programme (iii) State level Sammelan (iv) 3 Divisional level Sammelan.
KARNATAKA	2007-08	Rs. 12,83,500 as 1 st installment on 24.12.2007	(a) Setting up of State Support Centre. (b) Core Group Meeting (c) 4 Divisional level Sammelan (d) State level Sammelan
	2008-09	Rs. 3,96,896/- 2 nd installment on 5.12.2008	State level Sammelan
		Rs. 24,77,200/- as 1 st installment on 26.3.2009	176 batches of Training programme
KERALA	2008-09	Rs. 16,84,450/- as 1 st installment on 27.8.2008	(a) Setting up of State Support centre. (b) 7 Divisional level Sammelans (c) Meeting of Association (d) 6 batches of training programme.
MADHYA PRADESH	2008-09	Rs. 3,12,750/- as 1 st installment on 15.12.2008	(a) Core Committee Meeting. (b) 10 batches of training. (c) Setting up of State Support Centre
	2009-10	Rs. 31,78,000/- on 12.10.2009	(a) 2 nd installment towards the release made on 2008-09. (b) Core Committee meeting. (c) 50 training programme of newly elected representatives. (d) 50 training programme of newly elected representatives. (e) District level sammelan in each district of MP. (f) State Support Centre.

MAHARASHTRA	2008-09	Rs. 11,16,500/- as 1 st installment on 24.9.2008	(i) Divisional level Sammelan (ii) Establishment of State Support Centre
MANIPUR	2008-09	Rs.3,48,075/- as 2 nd installment on 25.3.2009.	(i) Divisional level Sammelan (ii) 12 Sensitization programme
ORISSA	2007-08	Nil	IFD had concurred an amount of Rs. 7,29,000/- for organizing the State level Sammelan subject to the dates received from the State Government.
PUNJAB	2007-08	Rs. 7,39,900/- as 1 st installment on 14.2.2008 & 28.3.2008	(a) Setting up of State Support Centre. (b) Divisional level workshop (c) District level workshop.
RAJASTHAN	2006-07 2007-08	Rs. 15,47,250/- to Vidya Bhawan Society on 01.4.2006 Rs. 7,18,900/- as 1 st installment on 12.2.2008 & 18.3.2008	State level Sammelan (a) Setting up of State Support Centre (b) Core Group Meeting (c) PMSA Association (d) 32 training programme.
SIKKIM	2008-09	Rs.5,26,295/- as 1 st installment on 23.12.2008	12 batches of Training/Sensitization programme and State level Sammelan.
TAMILNADU	2008-09	Rs. 2,76,470/- as 2 nd installment on 3.10.2009.	State level Sammelan
TRIPURA	2008-09	Rs. 2,25,500/- as 1 st installment on 28.11.2008.	Establishment of State Support Centre.
UTTAR PRADESH	2006-07	Rs. 1,92,100/- as 1 st installment on 12.3.2007.	State level Sammelan.

UTTRAKHAND	2008-09	Rs. 5,38,500/- as 1 st installment on 23.1.2008.	(a) Setting up State level Sammelan. (b) State Level Sammelan. (c) Divisional level Sammelan.
WEST BENGAL	2007-08	Rs.5,54,556/- as 1 st installment to Jadavpur University on 29.2.2008	(a) 2 nd installment for release of 2006-07. (b) 2 divisional level Sammelan. (c) Setting up of State level Sammelan. (d) 5 Core Committee meeting.
	2008-09	Rs.29,55,750/- as 1 st installment on 16.2.2009.	210 batches of Training programme.
	2009-10	Rs. 4,39,000/- as 1 st installment on 23.10.2009.	Establishment of State Support Centre at Panchayati Raj Department.
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	2007-08	Rs.10,33,625/- as 1 st installment on 14.2.2008 & 28.3.2008.	(a) 10 batches of training programme (b) Setting up of State Support Centre for 5 months only. (c) State level Sammelan. (d) Divisional/District level Sammelan. (e) Meeting of PMSA Association.
	2009-10	10,80,000/- as 1 st installment on 27.10.2009 & 8.10.2009 (Rs. 9,27,500/- & Rs. 1.52,500/-)	(a) 67 Workshops cum orientation programs for EWRs & EYRs. (b) District level Sammelan. (c) State Support Centre
DADAR & NAGAR HAVELLI	NIL	NIL	NIL
DAMAN & DIU	NIL	NIL	NIL

LAKSHDWEEP	2008-09	Rs.5,93,863/- as 1 st installment on 12.12.2008	(a) Core Committee Meeting (b) Annual working expenditure for the Core Committee (c) State level Sammelan (d) Annual Expenditure for PMSA Association. (e) 3 batches of Training Programme (f) Setting up of State Support Centre.
PUDUCHERRY	NIL	NIL	NIL

*Rajasthan has refunded the entire amount of Rs. 7,18, 900/- dated 23.10.2009 with the reasons that the tenure of the present elected representatives shall be expired in next three months. Hence, organizing training/sensitization programme is not desirable.

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2009-2010)**

**Eighth Sitting
(03.02.2010)**

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 3rd February, 2010 from 1500 hrs. to 1700 hrs. in Committee Room 'E', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Shruti Choudhry
3. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
4. Smt. Rama Devi
5. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
6. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
7. Kumari Mausam Noor
8. Smt. Sushila Saroj
9. Smt. Rajesh Nandini Singh
10. Shri Umashankar Singh
11. Smt. Annu Tandon
12. Smt. Seema Upadhyay

RAJYA SABHA

13. Shri Jabir Husain
14. Shri Ambeth Rajan
15. Smt. Vasanthi Stanley
16. Dr. Prabha Thakur

WITNESSES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ

1. Shri A.N.P. Sinha Secretary
2. Shri J.M. Phatak Additional Secretary
3. Smt. Rashmi Shukla Sharma Joint Secretary

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri S Bal Shekar Joint Secretary
2. Shri C.S. Joon Director
3. Smt. Mamta Kemwal Deputy Secretary
4. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to the sitting of the Committee.
3. Thereafter, the witnesses tendered oral evidence on the subject 'Empowerment of Women Through Panchayati Raj Institutions' before the Committee. The main issues which came up for discussion during the course of evidence included training and capacity building of elected women representatives; comprehensive data base on the socio-economic profile of the elected women representatives; allocation under Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan (PMSA); need for separate quorum of women in Panchayat meetings; Mahila Gram Sabhas; extension of reservation cycle for women, etc.
4. Members sought clarifications on different points most of which were replied to by the representatives. The Ministry was also asked to furnish written replies to the remaining queries.
5. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2009-2010)
Thirteenth Sitting
(29.04.2010)

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 29th April, 2010 from 1500 hrs. to 1600 hrs. in Committee Room No. 139, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson

MEMBERS**LOK SABHA**

2. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
3. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
4. Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
5. Dr. Jyoti Mirdha
6. Kumari Mausam Noor
7. Smt. Jayshreeben Kanubhai Patel
8. Smt. Yashodhara Raje Scindia
9. Smt. Supriya Sule
10. Smt. Annu Tandon

RAJYA SABHA

11. Smt. Kanimozhi
12. Dr. Prabha Thakur

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Shri S. Bal Shekar | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Shri C.S. Joon | Director |
| 3. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | 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 Report on the subject '**Empowerment of Women through Panchayati Raj Institutions**'. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Report with some changes and authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Report and present the same to the Parliament.

4.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

5. The Committee then adjourned.

*matters not pertaining to the subject