

Email

AJAY KUMAR

**Co-opting of 2 members in the Advisory Committee constituted to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto**

**From :** AJAY KUMAR <ajay.k42@nic.in> Fri, Apr 19, 2024 05:57 PM  
**Subject :** Co-opting of 2 members in the Advisory Committee constituted to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto 1 attachment  
**To :** Member Secretary <ms-ncw@nic.in>, Smriti Sharan <jsrl1-mord@nic.in>  
**Cc :** sushilk1987 <sushilk1987@gmail.com>, vkbnic@yahoo.com, Department of Panchayati Raj Jharkhand <panchayat-jhr@nic.in>, anitadr27x7@gmail.com, satish@chs.org, satishkrsingh1962@gmail.com, sajith sukumaran <sajith.sukumaran@gmail.com>, MADHURI N V <nvmadhuri.nird@gov.in>, madhurinv5@gmail.com, mallinath kalshetti <mallinath.kalshetti@yashada.org>, balanpp25 <balanpp25@gmail.com>, Mamta Verma <mamta.verma25@gov.in>, Vijay Kumar <vijay.kumar68@nic.in>, Ashok Kumar <ak.vats@nic.in>, BaljeetKaur PPS <baljeet.k@gov.in>, PRIYANKA DUTTA <priyanka.mopr@nic.in>, Neelima Goel <neelimagoel.dgca@gov.in>, ANURADHA edu <anuradha.edudoe@delhi.gov.in>

Respected Madam/Sir,

Kindly find attached MoPR's OM dated 19th April, 2024 regarding co-opting of two members (one member from each of NCW & NRLM) in the Advisory Committee, constituted to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto, for information and necessary action.

सादर/ With Regards

अजय कुमार/ AJAY KUMAR  
भारत सरकार के अवर सचिव/ Under Secretary to the Govt. of India  
पंचायती राज मंत्रालय/ Ministry of Panchayati Raj  
जीवन प्रकाश बिल्डिंग, 25 के. जी. मार्ग/ Jeevan Prakash Building, 25 K. G. Marg  
नई दिल्ली-110001/ New Delhi-110001

**Co-opting of 2 members in the Advisory Committee on the issues of Women Pradhan**

 **(approved).pdf**  
1 MB

(By email)

No. N-11014/4/2023-PESA (Comp. No. 30103)

Government of India  
Ministry of Panchayati Raj  
Policy (PESA & PRI) Division

11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Jeevan Prakash Building  
25, K.G. Marg, New Delhi - 110001  
Date: 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2024

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject:** Setting up of an Advisory Committee to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto - (Co-opting two members in the Committee)-reg.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, in pursuance of the Order dated 06.07.2023 of the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P. (Civil) No. 615/2023, has constituted an Advisory Committee on 19.09.2023 (*vide O.M. of even number dated 19.09.2023 placed at Annexure-I*), under the Chairmanship of Shri Sushil Kumar, Secretary to the Govt. of India (Rtd.), to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also to examine other issues related thereto.

2. The Advisory Committee, vide para-4 (ii) of the above said O.M. dated 19.09.2023, is empowered to co-opt other members in the Committee.

3. The Advisory Committee, in its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 22.03.2024 (*Minutes of the meeting are placed at Annexure-II*), has decided that, for wider consultation, one representative each from 'National Commission for Women' (NCW) and 'National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Ministry of Rural Development' may be co-opted in the Committee. MoPR may request these two organisations to nominate an officer to function as a co-opted member of the Committee.


4. This Ministry had requested these organisations to nominate their officers to function as a co-opted member of the Committee. In response, these organisations have nominated their officers.

5. Therefore, the Advisory Committee, in pursuance of para-4 (ii) of the above said O.M. dated 19.09.2023, co-opts following two members in the Committee with immediate effect, as under-

S. No.	Name of the Member	Designation
1.	<b>Ms. Meenakshi Negi</b> Member-Secretary, National Commission for Women	Co-opted Member
2.	<b>Ms. Smriti Sharan</b> Joint Secretary, NRLM, Ministry of Rural Development	Co-opted Member

6. The Terms of Reference and other conditions, prescribed in the above-mentioned O.M. dated 19.09.2023, will also be applicable, with immediate effect, to the co-opted members of the Advisory Committee.

**Encl: As Above (Annexure-I & Annexure-II)**

  
19/04/2024

(Ajay Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

Ph- 011 23356124

Email: **ajay.k42@nic.in**

To,

(1) Ms. Meenakshi Negi  
Member-Secretary  
National Commission for Women  
Plot-21, Jasola Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110025  
(email ID: **ms-ncw@nic.in**.)

(2) Ms. Smriti Sharan  
Joint Secretary  
National Rural Livelihoods Mission  
Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi -  
110001  
(email ID: **jsr11-mord@nic.in**)

**Copy, for information, to:**

(i) Members of the Advisory Committee  
(ii) Sr.PPS to Secretary (Panchayati Raj)/Additional Secretary  
(Panchayati Raj)

(By email)

File No. N-11014/4/2023-PESA (Comp. No. 30103)

Government of India  
Ministry of Panchayati Raj  
Policy (PESA & PRI) Division

11<sup>th</sup> Floor, Jeevan Prakash Building  
25, K.G. Marg, New Delhi-110001

Date: 19<sup>th</sup> Sept., 2023**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject: Setting up of an Advisory Committee to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto -reg.**

A Public Interest Petition before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, vide W.P. (Civil) No. 615/2023 highlighting the menace of Pradhan Pati, had been filed. After hearing the case, the Hon'ble Court, in its Order dated 06.07.2023, directed the Petitioner to seek remedy from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in the first instance. Accordingly, the petitioner filed a representation dated 08.09.2023 before the MoPR vide which following two remedies have been proposed for MoPR for consideration-

(i) To constitute a committee of experts to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto for making the reservation for women meaningful to promised by Part IX of the Constitution of India and also Panchayati Raj Acts passed by various State Govts. of India.

(ii) Taking into account the report submitted by this committee Govt. of India may take further steps as may be considered necessary to implement the suggestions made by the Committee.

2. Having regard to the Orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has decided to constitute an Advisory Committee as under-

S. No.	Composition of the Advisory Committee to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto	Designation
1.	Sh. Sushil Kumar, Secretary (Rtd.), Ministry of Mines	Chairperson
2.	Sh. V.K. Bhasin Secretary (Rtd.), Ministry of Law & Justice	Member
3.	Ms. Nisha Oraon, Director, Dept of Panchayati Raj, Jharkhand	Member
4.	Dr. Anita Brandon Senior Consultant, UNFPA India.	Member
5.	Sh. Satish Kumar Singh, Senior Advisor, Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ), New Delhi	Member
6.	Sh Sajith Sukumaran Chief Operating Officer, Kudumbashree	Member

7.	Dr. N. V. Madhuri Head, Centre for Gender Studies, NIRD&PR, Hyderabad	Member
8.	Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti Deputy Director General, YASHADA, Pune	Member
9.	Dr. P. P. Balan Consultant, Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Member
10.	Ms. Mamta Varma Joint Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj	Member Convener

3. The Terms of Reference of the above said Committee are as under-

(i) To suggest measures for eliminating proxy practices and ensuring good governance including effective implementation of the clauses under Article 243 of the Constitution of India which were inserted through 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 to increase women representation in the grass root democratic set up.

(ii) To examine the legal framework to overcome the practices being followed in the Panchayats where women have been elected as Pradhan/Mukhiya/Chairperson for the name sake and their male family members are handling the day to day work of the Panchayat.

(iii) To provide suggestions/recommendations for empowering Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayats and insuring their participation in political process and decision making at the grass root level for effective implementation of reservation for EWRs in Panchayats.

(iv) To suggest Capacity Building Needs of EWRs for empowering them with competencies for effective political leadership in PRIs including the Training programmes for their rights and duties, particularly the Laws passed by the States/Centre for the benefits of EWRs of Panchayats including relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

(v) Assessing ability of EWRs to plan, prepare the agenda, mobilise participation and conduct the Meetings of Ward Sabha, Mahila Sabha, Gram Sabha and Panchayat General Body Meetings.

(vi) To suggest IEC campaign for promoting change in social mindsets for eliminating Gender Based Discrimination and proxy practices

(vii) To suggest measures for empowerment of rural women through intensifying Panchayat – SHGs – CBOs Convergence.

4. **Power of Committee:**

(i) Committee will engage with all stakeholders of this issue including civil organizations, associations, forums etc. for wider consultation.

(ii) The Committee will also have power to co-opt other members and also the power to recommend any study relevant to the ToRs.

5. **Timeline:**

Committee will submit their recommendations to the Ministry within a period of 9 months from the date of its First meeting.

6. **TA/DA entitlements of non-official members of the Committee:**

The TA/DA entitlements of non-official members of the Committee would be governed in terms of Department of Expenditure's O.M. No. 19047/1/2016-E.IV dated 14.09.2017 (*copy enclosed*).

7. **Payment of sitting fee to the non-official members of the Committee:**


The payment of sitting fee to the non-official members of the Committee would be governed in terms of Department of Expenditure's O.M. No. 19047/10/2016-E-IV dated 12.04.2017 (*copy enclosed*).

8. **Manpower & Infrastructure:**

The manpower, infrastructure and the budget will be provided to the Committee in terms of GFR, DFPR and other financial instructions issued by the Ministry of Finance from time to time.

9. This issues with the approval of Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

*Encl: As above*

  
19/09/2023

(Ajay Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Government of India

Ph- 011-23356124

Email: [ajay.k42@nic.in](mailto:ajay.k42@nic.in)

Copy to:

All members of the Committee.

**Copy, for information, to:**

- (i) PS to Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj
- (i) PS to Hon'ble Minister of State for Panchayati Raj
- (iii) Sr.PPS to Secretary (Panchayati Raj)
- (iv) Sr.PPS to Additional Secretary (Panchayati Raj)

**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject: TA/DA entitlements of Non-officials of Committees/Boards/Panels etc.**

The undersigned is directed to state that the issues related to payment of TA/DA to Non-officials of Committees/ Boards/ Panels etc. have been examined in D/o Expenditure. It has been decided that TA/DA entitlement of Non-officials may be regulated by the Administrative Ministries/ Departments in the following manner:-

**(I) Retired Govt. officials nominated as Non-official in the Committees/Boards/Panels etc. :**

TA/DA entitlement of these Non-officials will be same as per their entitlement at the time of retirement as per revised rates mentioned in this Department's O.M. No.19030/01/2017-E.IV dated 13.07.2017.

**(II) Persons from various fields nominated as Non-official in Committees/Boards/ Panels etc. :**

TA/DA entitlement of these Non-official will be same as admissible to officers in Pay level-11 (Pre-revised Grade Pay of Rs.6600/-) in the Pay Matrix. TA/DA Entitlements will be as under:-

- i) Travel entitlement within the country - Economy class by Air or AC-II by train.
- ii) Reimbursement for hotel accommodation/guest house of up to Rs.2250/- per day.
- iii) Reimbursement of non-AC taxi charges of up to Rs.338/- per day for travel within the city.
- iv) Reimbursement of food bills not exceeding Rs.900/- per day.

**(III) Eminent personalities nominated as Non-official in the Committees/Boards/Panels:**

TA/DA entitlement of these Non-officials will be same as admissible to officers in Pay level 14 (pre-revised Grade pay Rs.10,000/-) in the Pay Matrix. TA/DA Entitlements will be as under:

- i) Regarding travel entitlement of these Non-officials, Secretary in the Administrative Ministry, in consultation with the FA, may allow eminent personalities who are Non-officials in the Committees/Boards/Panels etc., to travel in Executive class in the Domestic airlines within the country subject to the following conditions :-
  - a) Where a Non-official is or was entitled to travel by air by Executive class under the rules of the organization to which he belongs or might have belonged before retirement.
  - b) Where the Administrative Ministry is satisfied that the travel by Executive class by air is the customary mode of travel by the Non-official concerned in respect of journeys unconnected with the performances of Govt. duty.
- ii) Reimbursement for hotel accommodation/guest house of up to Rs.7500/- per day.
- iii) Reimbursement of AC taxi charges as per actual for travel within the city.
- iv) Reimbursement of food bills not exceeding Rs.1200/- per day.

2. In respect of Non-officials who are local, Mileage Allowance at the following rates will be admissible:-
- i) **For retired Government officers-** TA/DA as per their entitlement at the time of retirement as per revised rates mentioned in this Department's O.M. No.19030/01/2017-E.IV dated 13.07.2017.
  - ii) **Other Non-officials nominated from various fields** - Reimbursement of non-AC taxi charges of up to Rs.338/- per day for travel within the city.
  - iii) **For eminent personalities nominated as Non-officials** - Reimbursement of AC taxi charges as per actual for travel within the city.
3. The TA/DA entitlements mentioned in Para 1 above will be subject to the following conditions:-
- i) These TA/DA entitlements will be applicable in case of Non-officials coming from outside. Local Non-officials will not be entitled for TA/DA.
  - ii) Local Non-officials will be entitled for Mileage Allowance only.
  - iii) Cases seeking deviation from the above entitlements may be referred to M/o Finance giving full justification for seeking deviation.
4. These instructions will be effective from the date of issue of this O.M.
5. This is issued with the approval of Finance Minister.



(Nirmala Dev)

Deputy Secretary (EG)  
Telefax. 23093276

1. **Secretaries of all Ministries/ Departments (as per standard list)**
2. **Financial Advisors of all Ministries/ Departments as per standard list**



**OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

**Subject: Delegation of powers to Ministries/ Departments for payment of Sitting Fee in respect of Non-officials of Committees/ Panels/ Boards etc.**

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The undersigned is directed to state that the issues related to payment of Sitting Fee to Non-officials of Committees/Panels/Boards etc. have been examined in D/o Expenditure. It has been decided that Administrative Secretaries of the Ministries/ Departments may decide the Sitting Fee in respect of Non-officials of Committees/Panels/Boards etc. in consultation with their Financial Advisors and with the approval of their Ministers.

2. While considering the proposals for payment of Sitting Fee to Non-officials, the Ministries/Departments are directed to keep in view the following instructions/guidelines:-

- 2.1. **Categorisation of Committees:** For the purpose of payment of Sitting Fee, Committees/Boards/panels are categorized into following three categories:-
- (i) **High Level Committee :** In terms of Cabinet Secretariat Circular No. 1/16/1/2000-Cab. dated 15.04.2002, a High Level Committee is a Committee set up with the approval of Hon'ble Prime Minister through the Cabinet Secretary and presided over by a high ranking dignitary e.g. a Minister, a Judge of the Supreme Court of India, a Vice-Chancellor etc. including prominent persons in public life as Members.
  - (ii) **Technical or Expert Committee:** A Technical or Expert Committee is a Committee constituted to discharge functions as prescribed under Acts/Rules/Subordinate legislation on the subject. Such Committee is to be set up with the approval of the Minister of the concerned Ministry. In case any Member of Parliament is included in the Committee, the prior approval of Prime Minister to their inclusion is to be obtained in terms of Cabinet Secretariat Circular No.1/16/1/2000-Cab. dated 15.04.2002.
  - (iii) **Other Committees:** All other Committees will be covered under this category. These Committees will be constituted with the approval of the Administrative Secretary or Minister.

2.2 **Definition of a Non-official :** For the purpose of grant of Sitting Fee only such persons are to be considered as Non-officials who are not employed in any institution/ organisation/body funded by the Central Government.

3. **Rates of Sitting Fee:** On the basis of categorisation of Committees viz. High Level Committee, Technical or Expert Committee and Other Committees, The Ministries/Departments shall ensure that the maximum rates of Sitting Fee to be paid to Non-official Chairman/ Members will not be more than the following:-

- |       |                               |   |
|-------|-------------------------------|---|
| (i)   | High Level Committee          | : Not more than Rs.10,000/- per day of Sitting. |
| (ii)  | Technical or Expert Committee | : Not more than Rs.6000/- per day of Sitting.   |
| (iii) | Other Committees              | : Not more than Rs.4000/- per day of Sitting.   |

4. For arriving at the rates of the Sitting Fee to Non-official Chairman and Members of the Committees/Boards/Panels, the Ministries/Department shall observe the following conditions:

- i. While considering the amount of Sitting Fee, the Ministries/Departments have to keep in view facts such as nature and scope of the Committee, importance of the subject assigned to the Committee, category of the Committee (i.e. High level Committee, Technical or Expert Committee or other Committee), level/status of Chairperson/ Members, duration of the Committee, frequency of meetings, Terms of Reference of the Committee etc.
  - ii. In no case, the ceiling should exceed 10 meetings in a month in respect of all categories of Committees viz. High Level, Technical or Expert Committees and Other Committee. It is presumed that such committees are constituted for a limited duration specified in the order.
  - iii. It is clarified that the Govt. employees nominated to such Committees/ Boards/ Panels etc. will not be entitled to Sitting Fee.
  - iv. Cases seeking deviation from the above norms may be referred to M/o Finance giving full justification for seeking deviation.
3. These instructions will be effective from the date of issue of this O.M.
4. This is issued with the approval of Finance Minister.

  
12/04/2017  
(Nirmala Dev)

Deputy Secretary to the Government of India  
Telefax. 23093276

1. Secretaries of all Ministries/ Department ( as per standard list).
2. Financial Advisers of all Ministries/ Departments (as per standard list).
3. Cabinet Secretariat - For information.

By email

N-11014/4/2023-PESA  
Government of India  
Ministry of Panchayati Raj  
(Policy Division)

11th Floor, JP Building, New Delhi  
25 Kasturba Gandhi Marg,  
New Delhi-110001  
Date: 8th April, 2024

To,  
All Members of the Committee

**Subject:** Minutes of the Second Meetings of the 'Advisory Committee to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto' held on 22nd March, 2024— reg.

Madam/Sir,

I am directed to forward herewith the Minutes of the Second Meetings of the above Advisory Committee, held on 22nd March, 2024 under the Chairmanship of Shri Sushil Kumar, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.), for information and for action as appropriate.

Yours faithfully,

Encl: As Above

  
08/04/2024  
(Ajay Kumar)

Under Secretary to the Government of India  
Email: [ajay.k42@nic.in](mailto:ajay.k42@nic.in)  
Ph: 011-23356124

Copy, for information, to:

Sr. PPS to SPR/AS(PR)

**N-11014/4/2023-PESA  
Government of India  
Ministry of Panchayati Raj**

**“Advisory Committee to examine the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by the male members of their families and also examine other issues related thereto” –  
Minutes of the second meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2024**

The second meeting of the above-mentioned Committee under the chairmanship of Shri Sushil Kumar, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.) was held in the Conference Hall of Jeevan Bharati Building, MoPR on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024. The list of participants is placed at *Annexure – I*.

2. Ms. Mamta Varma, Joint Secretary-cum-Member Convenor of the Committee, welcomed the Chairman and members of the Committee. The Agenda-wise discussions made during the meeting, decisions taken by the Committee and officers responsible for taking action on the decisions of the Committee are mentioned in the subsequent paras.

3. The 1<sup>st</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.1:**

Presentation on the Study conducted on the ‘Issues of Women Pradhans in India's Local Governments’ by *Shri. Sajith Sukumaran, Kudumbashree and Dr. Madhuri, NIRD&PR*.

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

Shri Sajith Sukumaran, Kudumbashree and Dr. Madhuri, NIRD&PR made a presentation on the Study conducted on the ‘*Issues of Women Pradhans in India's Local Governments*’. The study has been conducted in 17 States namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tripura and Uttar Pradesh. A copy of the presentation is placed in *Annexure – II*.

The objectives of the study are-

- to examine the extent and prevalence of the Sarpanchpati system;
- the roles played by members;
- recommendations to eliminate proxy practices; and
- to enhance capacity-building measures of elected women representatives (EWRs).

The major findings of the study are-

- EWRs continue to face the continuing challenges arising out of mindsets imbued with patriarchy, family and caste elements;
- It is not easy for the EWRs to shake off the shackles of traditional social and community norms once being selected as Sarpanches, etc because they do not get any support against such steps from their society/family for the period beyond elected representatives.
- Due to inexperience in handling official matters and less familiarity with procedures, the Woman sarpanches are afraid of legal actions and contractual liabilities for the tender/contracts and reports of some police cases have caused fear for being sent to jail.

- The sheer ignorance of not knowing the procedures and systems has led to one case wherein the woman sarpanch had awarded contract to her son ignoring the proper procedures.

The recommendations made in the study to protect and increase EWRs' participation in decision-making power include-

- Setting up systems to have continuous one-to-one mentoring provision;
- preparation of detailed manuals and a system for regular production of manuals on roles and responsibilities, laws and policies and do's and don'ts in vernacular languages;
- formulation of a Model Law for States to abolish the Sarpanchpati system quoting the efforts made in states and successes obtained;
- every year continuous training on various subject matter, exposure visits, two-term reservation for EWRs etc.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

On this presentation, the Committee has made the following suggestions to be incorporated in the study-

<b>Committee Member</b>	<b>Suggested that</b>
Shri Sushil Kumar, Chairman	i. The terms of reference for the TNA should include with Training Need specific to segmented social sections viz. SCs, STs, OBCs, General etc. ii. Synergy and forging partnerships with the District Legal Aid Society to handhold and acting as mentors to guide EWRs in legal matters and build protective systems to assure them. iii. Establish a mechanism for continuous follow-up on the lessons learnt and impact of the National Workshops for EWRs rather than just registering attendance as participation. iv. Concretize and details the method of convergence for EWRs. v. Consult with non-governmental organisation SEWA – Ahmedabad to enhance the empowerment of women. vi. For training set up Learning Management Systems for continuous learning. vii. Consider devising easy system-driven approval processes with check signals at each stage to guide the user. viii. Partnerships with Open School to enable EWRs to obtain Board Examination certificates ix. Partnerships with NIELIT for building computer skills for EWRs.
Shri V.K. Bhasin, Member	i. Data needs to be compiled on how many legal cases were filed against the woman sarpanches for financial irregularities/ violation of Panchayat laws and also whether sarpanches were jailed for violations of impropriety in the discharge of the functions under Panchayat laws, if so how many woman sarpanches were jailed including the seriousness of offences. ii. Standing Legal Support from the State side may be made available to the EWRs, especially for finalising the award of contracts for development in the villages and other matters having legal implications. As the executives at the Central

	<p>Government level, State Government level and District Government have the support of standing legal department, this arrangement at the Panchayat level for woman sarpanches would help in taking decisions in accordance with law.</p> <p>iii. EWRs Association at all three tiers of PRIs to be structured i.e at the national level/ state level and district level</p> <p>iv. If found feasible the model of cooperative societies supplying milk to the National Dairy Development Board may also be studied for structuring the federation of EWRs.</p>
Dr. Anita Brandon, Member	<p>i. Some of the recommendations need to be more focused and detailed.</p> <p>ii. Higher honorarium linking with care giving roles and transportation costs for the EWRs.</p> <p>iii. Uniform remuneration for EWRs across GPs, Block Panchayats and District Panchayats in all States/UTs.</p> <p>iv. Helpdesk for Women Sarpanches and Members for mentoring and guiding support.</p> <p>v. Two-terms reservation for EWRs to be seriously considered.</p> <p>vi. Basic education level for the Sarpanches to be set to ensure accountability.</p>

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

Shri Sajith Sukumaran, Kudumbashree and Dr. Madhuri, NIRD&PR.

4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.2:**

A Report on the Road Ahead in Strengthening SHG Convergence into PRI Leadership with Specific Recommendations – *assigned to Shri. Sajith Sukumaran, Kudumbashree.*

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was proposed that a discussion on the Report may be made in the next meeting of the Committee.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee has decided to make discussion on the report in its next meeting.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

Shri Sajith Sukumaran, Kudumbashree.

5. The 3<sup>rd</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.3:**

Discussion on the Questionnaire *designed by Dr. Anita Brandon* 'To elicit responses from all States and UTs on empowering women elected representatives and covering proxy participation'.

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was observed that major contents of the "Questionnaire" designed by Dr. Anita Brandon" have been covered in the detailed "Consultative Paper" prepared by Shri V. K.Bhasin". Therefore, it was proposed to merge these two documents for circulation with States and other stakeholders. After making changes therein of drafting/ consequential nature the detailed "Consultative Paper" may be issued accordingly.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee also decided that new point, if any, mentioned in the "Questionnaire" be merged with the " above detailed Consultative Paper" and thereafter it may be circulated to all States and other stakeholders for their comments/suggestions, if any.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division).

6. The 4<sup>th</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.4:**

To push the inputs of MoPR from the study in the selected Aspirational Block of the State of Maharashtra - *Discussion on the tasks assigned to Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti, DDG, YASHADA.*

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was discussed that Dr. Kalshetti will make a presentation on the assigned tasks in the next meeting and also prepare Template-driven IEC Strategy for National/State/District/Block and GP level. He will also create WhatsApp group at Block and District level to capture the works undertaken by EWRs independently or through their proxy participation.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee agreed with the discussion made in this regard.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti, DDG, YASHADA.

7. The 5<sup>th</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.5:**

To undertake a comparative study of all State Panchayati Raj Acts by *Shri. V.K. Bhasin*, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.):

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was brought to the notice of the Committee that the consultant (Sh. Mahesh Sherwal) who had been assigned the task of preparing the comparative chart of the provisions of all the State Panchayati Raj Acts has resigned. As this job involves day to day work on full time basis, it was decided that the Policy Division of Ministry of Panchayati Raj would consult Action Research & Research Studies (AR&RS) Division of the Ministry for allocating a study for this purpose to a reputed law institute. Shri. V.K. Bhasin suggested that study may be assigned to 'National Law School University, or such other research institute which the AR&RS division might consider appropriate. Mr. Sherwal may be requested to give a draft if possible as he had been working in this field and may be inclined to give that. MoPR would acknowledge his effort if he agrees to do that.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee agreed with the discussion made in this regard. The decision was also taken that the Report of the Law Institute so received would be studied at the first instance by Sh. V.K. Bhasin and he would submit the same along with his observations and suggestions thereon, if any before the Committee.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division and Action Research & Research Studies Division).

8. The 6<sup>th</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.6:**

Ministry to collect information on State-wise reservation of seats for women in the post of Panchayat Secretaries.

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was discussed that in response to MoPR' D.O. letter, sent on 28.11.2023 to all States/UTs to collect information, only one State (Tamil Nadu) has shared the data, *inter-alia*, as under-

"..... *As per the Tamil Nadu Government Servants (Conditions of Service) Act, 2016, Section 26, A minimum of thirty per cent of all vacancies which are to be filled through direct recruitment shall be set apart for women candidates irrespective of the fact whether the rule of reservation of appointment applies to the post or not. In respect of the posts to which the rule of reservation of appointment applies, thirty per cent of vacancies shall be set apart for female candidates following the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Schedules tribes, Backward Class Muslims, Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes or Denotified Communities shall be set apart for female candidates for the post of Panchayat Secretary following the reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Backward Class Muslims, Backward Classes, Most*



*Backward Classes or Denotified Communities and General or Denotified Communities and General Turn. Women Candidate shall also be entitled to compete for the remaining seventy per cent of vacancies along with male candidates."*

As regards the remaining States/UTs, they may be requested by MoPR again to furnish requisite information/data.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee agreed with the discussion made in this regard.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division).

9. The 7<sup>th</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.7:**

Sending of Consultative Paper to States – *prepared by Shri. V.K. Bhasin, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.).*

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

This matter has been discussed and already covered in Agenda Item No. 3 as in Para No. 5 of this document.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

This matter has been discussed and already covered in Agenda Item No. 3 as in Para No. 5 of this document.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division).

10. The 8<sup>th</sup> **Agenda of the meeting** and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.8:**

Selection of States for field visit/Study.

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

In view of Model Code of Conduct being in operation on account of the Lok Sabha General Election 2024, it was felt that it would be difficult for the States to make arrangements for physical field visits, thus, MoPR, in consultation with States/UTs, may organise four Regional meetings through video conferences (VC) in the month of April 2024. if feasible. Participants of the VCs meetings may include State Government Officers, Elected Representatives (ER) one each from Gram Panchayat, Block Panchayat and District Panchayat and other which the MoPR may co-opt. The committee may, if required, visit the various PRIs after the election.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee agreed with the discussion made in this regard.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division).

11. The 9<sup>th</sup> Agenda of the meeting and discussions made during the meeting and decisions taken by the Committee are as under-

**Agenda No.9:**

The Committee may also consider co-option of other members, if any.

**Discussions made during the meeting:**

It was discussed that for wider consultation, one representative each from 'National Commission for Women' and 'National Rural Livelihood Mission, Ministry of Rural Development' may be co-opted by the Committee. MoPR may request these two organisations to nominate an officer to function as a co-opted member of the Committee.

**Decisions taken during the meeting:**

The Committee agreed with the discussion made in this regard.

**Action, on the decisions of the Committee, to be taken by:**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (Policy Division).

12. In addition, the Chairman of the Committee has suggested the following actionable points for the Ministry:

- i. Ministry of Panchayati Raj may explore entering into Memorandum of Understanding with Open School for providing basic education to the EWRs.
- ii. Ministry of Panchayati Raj may make a reference to the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (NEILIT) to study the feasibility of providing digital training both at Central and State level to EWRs in consultation with Ministry of Panchayati Raj and provide commencement of such training at the earliest. Presentation from the representative from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting may be organised in the next meeting.
- iii. Ministry to write to all State Commissions for Women to invite their insights and actions taken on prohibiting proxy women participation in the PRIs.

13. The meeting ended with a Vote of Thanks to the Chair and all the participants.

**List of Participants**

**Committee Members**

- i. Shri. Sushil Kumar, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.), Ministry of Mines – Chairperson
- ii. Shri. V.K. Bhasin, Secretary to the Government of India (Rtd.), Ministry of Law & Justice.
- iii. Smt. Mamata Verma, Joint Secretary, MoPR
- iv. Dr. Anita Brandon, Sr. Consultant, UNFPA (*joined online*)
- v. Dr. N. V. Madhuri, Head, Centre for Gender, NIRD&PR (*joined online*)
- vi. Shri. Satish Kumar Singh, Sr. Advisory Centre for Health and Social Justice (*joined online*)
- vii. Dr. Mallinath Kalshetti, DDG, YASHADA, Pune, Govt. of Maharashtra (*joined online*)
- viii. Shri. Sajith Sukumaran, Chief Operation Officer, Kudumbashree, Govt. of Kerala (*joined online*)
- ix. Dr. P. P. Balan, Consultant, MoPR

**Officials and Consultants from the Ministry**

- x. Dr. Chandra Shekhar Kumar, Additional Secretary, MoPR
- xi. Shri Vijay Kumar, Deputy Secretary, MoPR
- xii. Shri. Ajay Kumar, Under Secretary, MoPR
- xiii. Ms. Priyanka Dutta, SDG Consultant MoPR

# Study on Elected Women Representatives (EWR)

Presentation to the Committee, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

# The Study

- This was proposed in the first meeting of the committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024
- Objectives of the Study
  - To examine the extent and prevalence of the *Sarpanchpati* system
  - To look at the impacts of the roles played by male members
  - To make suggestions/recommendations for eliminating proxy practices
  - To suggest capacity-building measures

# Key Findings

- *Sarpanchapati* system is in operation in all the states covered by the study, except Kerala
- Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) operate in complex and peculiar contexts which make them dependent on a male person in different forms.
- Women are breaking the shackles in many places; we did see EWRs who have evolved into confident leaders
  - Leaders the SHG system (HP, Karnataka)
  - From mass movements or CSOs (Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh)
  - Those who got a second term (Jharkhand)

# Typology of *Sarpanchpati* System

Power, Authority, Representation				Aware and bold decision maker
	Partial Role in Decision Making		Aware, strategic, silent decision maker	
		Aware, partially dependent		
		Physical Security		
		Social Security		
	Aware, timid, dependent		Physical Support Transportation	
Novice, unaware				Legitimate Moral Support

# Summary of Findings

- Women cannot break social and community norms for a mere five year term when they are *Sarpanch* (Ref: Rajasamand Sarpanch)
- The risks are too many; they can land in prison. They sign cheques, approve tenders in most places (Bihar, Rajasthan)
- Triple burden on women: Governance while facing prejudices of patriarchy, family, and caste (Ref: Chhattisgarh, Bihar)
- Serious capacity gaps form hurdles in being effective (All States)



# Suggestions/ Recommendations

- A nation-wide initiative is needed in addressing skill gaps of EWRs in governance and administration – include it in NCBF
- A TNA within TNA within TNA
- A fundamental change in approach and pedagogy is necessary in capacity building
  - A training calendar considering women's other priorities
  - A gender audit of training modules and institutions (infrastructure, facilities)
  - Special focus on Functional Training for illiterate EWRs
  - State pools of women trainers; can Mountain Move to Mohammad?
  - State level dedicated help desks for EWRs

# Suggestions/Recommendations

- Capacity building (Continued)
  - Tie up with NRLM for establishing Gender Resource Centres (GRC) at Gram Panchayat level
  - Creation of 'Schools of Practice' with a 'Community of Practice' selected and specially trained from successful EWRs
  - Mentors – one-to-one for Sarpanches (NIRD PR Guwahati, SDG Mentors)
  - Detailed manuals, and a system for regular production of manuals, in languages that can be understood even by illiterate women, on
    - Roles and responsibilities
    - Laws and practices
    - Dos and Don'ts (Risks)

# Suggestions/ Recommendations - Policy

- A national campaign on Women Sarpanches and their importance
  - Message of women power; politics of performance; prestige
  - Multi-lingual, multi-media, through all government channels
  - Along the lines of 'Beti Patao, Beti Bachao' campaign.
- Formulation of a Model Law for States to abolish the Sarpanchpati system, focusing on
  - Code of Conduct
  - Conflict of Interest
- An advisory to states to promote associations of EWRs

# Suggestions/Recommendations - Policy

- A nation-wide campaign to make Gram Panchayat offices inclusive
  - Women-friendly, PwD-friendly, Elderly-friendly
- Advisory on revision of honorariums; timely disbursement; can there be a higher honorarium for EWRs?
- Advisory on an auxiliary audit system for better book-keeping at Panchayats
- Can States reserve 50% of the positions of Panchayat secretaries for women? (Positive impact: Chhattisgarh)
- Convergence with NRLM, MoRD for a special drive for ensuring livelihood support to EWRs

# Suggestions/ Recommendations - Policy

- Technology intermediation for illiterate/elderly/less-educated EWRs
  - Provision of a smart phone
  - A local community resource person trained to provide support
- Ensuring nodal staff at training institutions for training of EWRs
- Encourage state departments to implement PRI-CBO Convergence

# PRI-CBO Convergence

- MoRD had issued an advisory to the state in 2016, asking to promote convergence of SHGs with Gram Panchayats
- Pilot projects in PRI-CBO Convergence were implemented in 15 states
- A methodology that came up through pilot – VPRP and their submission to GPs for inclusion in GPDP - was taken up as a national programme
- MoPR and MoRD issued joint advisory to the states on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for VPRP-GPDP integration

# PRI-CBO Convergence

- MoRD announced the universalisation of the PRI-CBO Convergence methodology in 2022; roll out began in April 2023.
- 15 States took up the programme during 2023-24; seven more states have included it in their Annual Plans for 2024-25.

# PRI-CBO Convergence - Suggestions

- MoPR and MoRD should discuss the current stalemate in VPRP-GPDP integration and resolve outstanding issues.
  - Methodology should be re-examined
  - Is technology taking precedence over planning?
- A National Workshop on PRI-CBO Convergence was held in 2023-24
  - Attended by both the Secretaries, Additional Secretaries, Joint Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries
  - Implementation of the recommendations of the National Workshop is the key to effective implementation of convergence between SHGs and PRIs



# Summary of Recommendations

- High level monitoring forum at the national level (MoPR and MoRD)
- Joint advisory (MoPR and MoRD) on convergence
- Model State guidelines for SHG-PRI Convergence
- Special strategies for Schedule VI and 'State Act Areas'
- SHG system can play a critical role in localising SDGs around the nine themes (Sankalp) that MoPR has formulated for GPDP
- *Detailed recommendations can be submitted to the committee*