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Around 20,000 EWRs to be trained by March, 2018

The Minister of Women and Child Development, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched an intensive training program for Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Master Trainers, in New Delhi today. This capacity building program is being organized by National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) of the WCD Ministry which will ultimately train approximately twenty thousand EWRs covering nearly 50 EWRs from each district by March, 2018.

Addressing the participants at the inauguration of the program, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi said that this is an historic step since for the first time ever an initiative of this scale has been taken up to train EWRs who will go out and administer the villages professionally. It is regrettable that not many women sarpanches and EWRs come forward to take up their responsibilities and mostly allow their husbands to take the lead. So, they remain 'sarpanchanis' in name only, the Minister added. She said that training two lakh women sarpanches across the country will help bring following important changes:

1. It will help to create model villages.
2. It will help prepare women as political leaders of the future.

The training program will include simple engineering skills will give them an insight into women's issues as well as focus on education and financial matters, Smt Maneka Gandhi explained. The Minister disclosed that awards will be given to the Master Trainers to those who have succeeded in empowering EWRs of their areas. The Minister also appreciated the initiatives taken by some states to specify certain minimum education level for sarpanches and panchayat members.

The Capacity building of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) is critical to empower women to participate effectively in the governance processes. This will help them assume the leadership roles expected of them and guide their villages towards a more prosperous future. About 150 master trainers and 450 EWRs attended today's program.

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