

Nirbhay Chetna

World's Largest Women's Safety and Gender Sensitisation Initiative

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, has launched **Nirbhay Chetna**, a landmark national programme titled "Sensitisation of Men towards Women-related Issues, including the Safety and Security of Women". Recognised as the largest drive of its kind anywhere in the world, Nirbhay Chetna signals a decisive step by the Ministry to place women's safety and gender equality at the very centre of grassroots governance in India.

Nirbhay Chetna is the flagship component of **Nirbhay Raho**, the Ministry's comprehensive programme for gender equality, implemented under the Nirbhaya Fund. Through Nirbhay Raho, the Ministry has committed to reaching every Panchayat in the country with concerted action on three fronts: sensitising men, empowering women elected representatives, and strengthening physical safety infrastructure in villages. **The initiative is unprecedented in both scale and scope, making it one of the largest capacity-building efforts of its kind aimed at promoting gender-responsive governance through Panchayati Raj Institutions.**

Under Nirbhay Chetna, all Panchayats across India will be covered. More than **17.5 lakh male elected representatives** of Panchayati Raj Institutions will receive structured training on gender equality, women's rights and safety, and their responsibilities as elected representatives in ensuring a secure environment for women in their communities. To deliver this at scale and ensure sustainability, the programme will build a dedicated cadre of **28,500 Master Trainers** at the State, District, and Block levels, who will carry the programme forward within their jurisdictions.

Panchayat representatives are not merely elected leaders; they are the most trusted and visible community leaders in Grameen Bharat. Their words carry weight, their actions set example, and their priorities shape what communities collectively value and protect. When these leaders are sensitised to gender equality and women's safety, their active involvement creates an environment that is genuinely conducive and productive for women in every sphere of rural life. It is this understanding that places male elected representatives at the very heart of Nirbhay Chetna. The Ministry of Panchayati Raj recognises that the reach and impact of this programme will extend well beyond those directly trained, as sensitised leaders influence families, communities, and institutions around them.

Alongside Nirbhay Chetna, the **Nirbhay Netri** programme will provide legal literacy and capacity-building training to more than **14.5 lakh women elected representatives** across the country. This will equip them with knowledge of their rights, legal provisions, and the tools to participate more effectively in local governance and in advocating for women's safety within their Panchayats.

The third pillar, **Nirbhay Drishti**, will install CCTV cameras in villages across all States and Union Territories, providing a visible and practical safety infrastructure for women at the village level.

Together, the three components of Nirbhay Raho constitute a comprehensive, ground-level programme: building awareness among men, strengthening the capacity of women in governance, and securing the physical environment of villages. Training materials will be available in Hindi, English, and regional languages. The programme will be independently evaluated to measure outcomes and ensure accountability.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj's vision through Nirbhay Raho is clear: that every woman in rural India, in every village and every Panchayat, lives without fear, participates in public life with confidence, and receives the full protection of the law and of her community. Nirbhay Chetna is the Ministry's commitment to making that vision a reality, beginning with those who have the greatest potential to make a difference at the grassroots level. Being undertaken for the first time at such a scale, the initiative represents a landmark effort to engage male elected representatives across the country as partners in advancing gender equality, women's safety, dignity, and leadership. The initiative seeks to foster greater awareness, responsibility, and positive behavioural change, encouraging men to become active allies in creating safer, more inclusive, and women-friendly Panchayats. By promoting women's participation, leadership, and empowerment, the programme contributes to the broader vision of social justice, equality, and inclusive development in rural India.

Key Facts at a Glance

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India

Programme: Nirbhay Chetna (under Nirbhay Raho flagship)

Fund: Nirbhaya Fund, Government of India

Coverage: All Panchayats across all States and Union Territories

Male Elected Representatives to be Trained: More than 17.5 lakh

Master Trainers to be Built: 28,500 (State, District, and Block levels)

Nirbhay Netri: Legal and capacity-building training for 14.5 lakh women elected representatives

Nirbhay Drishti: CCTV cameras to be installed in villages across the country

Training Languages: Hindi, English, and regional languages
