

# Here, daughters will manage panchayat

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**Vadodara/Anand:** You should be educated, unmarried and a daughter of the same village. These are the three criteria for becoming a village head at Anand's Siswa gram panchayat. For the first time, this village near Borsad town in Anand is setting an example of sorts by allowing their college going daughters to manage the panchayat.

Ahead of the gram panchayat polls, 12 girls between 18 and 26 years, have filed their nominations to become gram panchayat members and sarpanch. These girls are set to get elected uncontested as Siswa village will register another record of becoming a 'samras' village — fourth time in a row.

Chief minister Narendra Modi had introduced the 'samras' scheme a decade ago to promote sar-

Burhan Pathan



## WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

panchs and gram panchayat members getting elected unanimously without competitive politics.

"From last three terms, we have been electing a woman as our sarpanch unanimously under the samras scheme. In 1995, we had a general seat but we got a woman — Pravinaben Patel — elected as sarpanch. Later, she continued for an-

other five-year term. In 2005, when it was declared as an OBC seat, we continued to have a woman sarpanch in Jayaben Harijan," former deputy sarpanch of the village Praveen Patel told TOI.

"It was five years ago that we got an entire body of woman representatives in our gram panchayat. But now we feel that we should take another step ahead. We should not just elect woman representatives, but also ensure that they are educated and unmarried — so that fresh ideas can develop our village," says former sarpanch Shailesh Patel.

After becoming a 'samras' and a 100 per cent gram panchayat with woman representatives, this village having a population of hardly 7,000 persons, has already won President's award and declared as 'Nirmal Gram Panchayat' by the Gujarat government.