1. **Emmeline Pankhurst**

Emmeline Pankhurst is one of the most eminent political activists in history and has been named one of Time’s 100 Most Important People of the 20th century. Interested in politics from a young age, Pankhurst was destined to make history. As the leader of the suffragette movement, Pankhurst campaigned tirelessly to achieve the right to vote for women from 1889 when she created the Women’s Franchise League to the year she died in 1928, consequently she same year that women of 21 years and over were given the right to vote. In 1903 Pankhurst founded the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) which became unstoppable in advocating for women’s rights. Led by Pankhurst, the WSPU members demonstrated and protested, leading eventually to violent altercations with the police. In a series of window-smashing campaigns by the suffragettes in 1912, hundreds of women including Pankhurst were imprisoned. The fight carried on in prison with the women going on hunger strikes which led to violent force-feedings. It was not until 16 years later that women aged 21 and over were given the right to vote. Pankhurst will be forever remembered for her integral role in gaining the right to vote for women.

1. **Malala Yousafzai**

Malala Yousafzai is an educational campaigner from Pakistan and Nobel Peace Prize winner. Malala’s journey started at the age of 11 when the Taliban banned girls from going to school in 2008. After publicly speaking out about girls rights to learn in her home town, Swat Valley, Malala became a target for the Taliban and its supporters. At the age of 15, Malala while on her way home from school was shot in the side of her head. Waking up 10 days later in Birmingham, England, she recieved lots of love and support from people all over the world. Malala and her family permanently moved to the UK, at this point deciding she needed to continue the fight until every girl has the opportunity to go to school. In 2014 Malala and her father Ziauddin Yousafzai formed the Malala Fund which hopes to give every girl an opportunity to achieve and learn. That same year Malala received a Nobel Peace Prize for her work, becoming the youngest ever Nobel laureate. Now studying for a degree at the University of Oxford, Malala regularly travels around the world visiting girls who are fighting poverty, war, child marriages, and gender discrimination to go to school. Malala continues her fight to ensure all girls can receive 12 years of free schooling in a safe environment.

1. **Mother Teresa**

Standing at a mere five-feet while she was alive is a woman whose memory towers over the world to this day. Poor, marginalized, small in stature, and a woman, she had the makings of obscurity, but these were features that did not define her spirit or her message. Her love and compassion gained the attention of princesses and world leaders, earned her a Noble Peace Prize, and touched the hearts of everyday men and women around the world—forcing the world to re-examine their own priorities, hearts, and minds. As we continue to celebrate Women’s History Month, by featuring empowering women, this week Love Happens is honouring the powerful life and work of Mother Teresa. With the support of the Catholic Church eventually the Missionaries of Charity was formed. Today the charity has surpassed 4,000 members with a mission to care for “the hungry, the naked, the homeless, the crippled, the blind, the lepers, all those people who feel unwanted, unloved, uncared for throughout society, people that have become a burden to the society and are shunned by everyone”. This woman of physical and material mediocrity shook the world through her selfless devotion to the poor, proving that It is not our successes that define or empower us, it is the potential for goodness and selflessness that exists in every human heart that has the true capacity to change the world. It is this forceful essence of love that Mother Teresa leaves behind that reminds us of the power that resides in us all. So long as we have a heart and a mind centred around love, we are empowered to make a difference in the lives of many.

1. **Indira Gandhi**

The life of Indira Gandhi is a story that inspires a whole generation of women to be unapologetic and strive to achieve success by breaking the glass ceiling. Women's political participation and leadership are necessary factors for general peace and prosperity of a nation and the only way to encourage more women to be represented across platforms is by constantly reminding people about the tales of successful women through history. Strong-willed and determined, Indira Gandhi’s tenure as Prime Minister challenged stereotypes at a time when the nation was not ready to witness a woman call the shots. She brought about considerable changes inside the government, established new trends and values and expelled older officials from the Parliament on grounds of indiscipline. Women in power, not just in politics are faced with obstacles that are gender driven, societal norms that discourage their growth, restrictions and expectations that may bog many down. Stories of women who have surpassed these and risen to power need to be at the forefront so it fosters confidence among aspiring women to persevere, just as Indira Gandhi had done. As we continue to discuss issues around gender rights and participation, these are the accounts we turn to, for hope and inspiration. We must reflect and applaud the journey of Indira Gandhi as a leader, as a woman and be grateful that our nation has produced such a dynamic personality. Indira Gandhi will forever be remembered as a powerful and capable leader who brought her country to the world’s stage and developed India into a regional superpower. Having faced her fair share of criticism, Indira continued to relentlessly pursue her goals with a conviction unmatched by any leader of her time. And this was the reason she commanded respect, irrespective of gender.

1. **Kalpana chawla**

15 years ago, the world watched in horror as the US space shuttle Columbia disintegrated while reentering the earth’s atmosphere. All seven crew members on board were lost; one of them was Indian-American Kalpana Chawla, the first woman of Indian origin to go to space. Although Kalpana’s second space flight ended in disaster, she is remembered as an extraordinary woman, an inspiration, and a role model. She set a mighty example for being courageous, dedicated, and an independent woman who set her eyes on space and followed through with her dream. With an aim to join NASA, Chawla moved to the United States in 1982. She went on to obtain a Master's degree in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Texas at Arlington in 1984 and got her second Master's degree in 1986. Not stopping there, she went on to earn a doctorate in aerospace engineering from the University of Colorado at Boulder. In 1988, she took another step closer to her dream, joining NASA, and in 1997 she went on her first space flight. Her determination and grit has been an inspiration to little girls, and strong women across the world.

1. **Indra nooyi**

Whether it’s a list about the world’s most powerful businesswomen or one that talks about the most successful CEOs in the world, it’s a rarity that Indra Nooyi misses that list. Even though she was born in Chennai to a conservative middle-class family, Nooyi was not one to conform to norms. Breaking traditions, she was a part of a girl-band and also played cricket. But it was her genius mind that took her forward. A student of IIM-Calcutta and then the Yale School of Management, Nooyi carved her own path to success. She started her journey with Johnson & Johnson and then worked with Boston Consulting Group. She joined PepsiCo in 1994 as the Chief Strategist. She quickly climbed the corporate ladder and became the CEO in 2006. In the 44 years of PepsiCo then, she was the 5th CEO. Nooyi is also responsible for many of PepsiCo’s leading achievements. She helped make one of the biggest food deals in corporate history when Pepsi acquired Quaker Oats for $13.4 billion. Since she has been at the helm of the company, PepsiCo’s shares have gained 78 per cent. Being a woman leader, Nooyi has often spoken about gender inclusion at the workplace. Reports suggest that Nooyi would also watch replays of Chicago Bulls championship games to learn more about teamwork. Former Pepsi CEO Steven Reinemund has called Nooyi "a deeply caring person" who "can relate to people from the boardroom to the front line." Calm, composed and dignified that’s what best defines Indra Nooyi, the woman who shattered the glass ceiling and took PepsiCo to newer heights. The world sees Ms. Nooyi as one of the most powerful woman leaders because of her impeccable leadership skills and intelligence.

1. **Mary kom**

One of the strongest women in the world, Mary Kom is a true example of excellence. The title ‘Magnificent Mary’ has been given to her for a reason. She went on to become the World Amateur Boxing champion for a record six times. She was the first female boxer from India to win a gold in the 2014 Asian Games and another gold in the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Mary Kom is an inspiration for women all over the world. Her biopic titled 'Mary Kom' starring another woman on this list (Priyanka Chopra) was released in 2014 and Priyanka's role in that movie perfectly portrayed her as well as Mary Kom's greatness. These women worked their whole lives to do something great and exceptional. They did an amazing job by setting an example for every woman around the world. Not only women, but men who want to achieve greatness in their lives. I am personally very inspired by these wonderful women and I hope that you will also get inspired and motivated after knowing about their greatness.

1. **Priya Jhingan, first woman in Indian Army**

Enrolled as Cadet no 001, Priya Jhingan became the first woman cadet to join the Indian Army alongside a batch of 25 other feisty women – the first batch of women who became trailblazers for women in the armed forces. It wasn’t until 1992 that the Indian Army had seen a woman cadet train at its academy. All it took for a gutsy Priya Jhingan to upend the norm was a letter to the then Chief of Army Staff, General Sunith Francis Rodrigues. Here was a young girl demanding that one of the top services in the country be opened to women! As a young woman cadet, her experiences range from inspirational and motivating to extremely hilarious in a male-dominated campus. But the strenuous physical training, matching the exact routine of the male cadets at the academy, toughened them. No compensation was made for gender. She stood her ground courageously years ago when a very drunk jawan entered her room. He was court-martialed and forced to leave. After completing her training at the Officers Training Academy in Chennai, Priya received her service commission on 6 March 1993. Priya’s most memorable memory from her service at the Judge Advocate General is the first Court Martial she conducted. After a glorious ten years at Judge Advocate General, Priya retired in 2002 as Major Priya Jhingan.

1. **Chetna Sinha, founder, first rural bank for women in India**

Having set an example for women’s empowerment in rural Maharashtra, Chetna Sinha, founder of the Mann Deshi Mahila Sahakari Bank, is unstoppable as she is all set to apply for a small finance bank licence and raise Rs 100 crore through an alternate investment fund. At the ET Women’s Forum, Sinha spoke about her journey of setting up the cooperative bank in 1997 with a small amount raised from friends, which has now grown to a capital of Rs 150 crore. Chetna Sinha set up the Mann Deshi Foundation with the aim of economically and socially empowering women in Maharashtra's Mhaswad village. She has never looked back. Rural areas typically face several developmental impediments: Small land holdings; low savings and capital formation; stagnant factor productivity; limited market access; low levels of human development; paucity of resources and a young population alienated from farming and other rural occupations. She has nurtured social entrepreneurship at the grassroots that is redefining the way the world thinks about rural distress. Sinha has been able to build women’s perspectives in the context of development, enabling them to claim space in the political, economic, societal and cultural systems. Women are reframing crucial questions on burning issues, about their experiences, problems, needs and are developing a different narrative.

1. **Aung San Suu Kyi**

The world’s most famous living political activist, Aung San Suu Kyi gained international fame and recognition when she campaigned for democracy in Burma, earning herself a spot amongst the great female role models. Suu Kyi lead the National League for Democracy for many years and gained huge global respect and praise for her continued stance, despite being a political prisoner under house arrest for over 20 years before her release. Suu Kyi is planning to run for President in her native Burma in 2015, and if she does, it will be a massive victory for one of life’s superb female role models.

1. **Elizabeth Garret Anderson**

The rather wonderfully titled Elizabeth Garret Anderson was the first female surgeon and physician in the United Kingdom. Anderson didn’t just stop there, however. She became the first female medical doctor in France, the first woman to be a dean of a British medical school, the first British female mayor, and a co-founder of a hospital staffed by women. If Elizabeth Garret Anderson isn’t your definition of a female role model, then I don’t know what is!

1. **Oprah Winfrey**

One of the most influential people in the world today is Oprah Winfrey. Throughout these years, she has taken every chance she could get to inspire and motivate people by setting an example with her powerful words. And things like this come only from experience. She has gone through a lot and has shared her story with the world a gazillion times in hopes to spread a message. No matter what life throws at you, everything works out at the end if you’re strong enough. Oprah triumphed over everything that is enough to keep a person down, poverty, violence, assault, and many other evils. A true example of inspiration, Oprah Winfrey is one of the pioneers of the women empowerment movement. Her actions and words never fail to impress and inspire people in the way she intends to. Winfrey’s generous nature is what defines her as a Philanthropist. The Oprah Winfrey Show was the highest-rated television program of its kind in history and was nationally syndicated from 1986 to 2011.