

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND INDIAN POLITICS

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### Abstract

*The norm of gender equality is unspoiled in the Indian Constitution. Of late, the Women's Reservation Bill has been a political globule for nearly a decade and half. It has uninterruptedly elicited fiery debates within Parliament and outside. The anticipated bill to reserve 1/3rd seats in the Parliament and State Legislatures for women was conscripted first by the H D Deve Gowda-led United Front government. The Bill was familiarized in the Lok Sabha on September 12, 1996. Although it has been familiarized in Parliament numerous times, the Bill could not be approved because of absence of political consensus. Nonetheless our Constitution and various other legislative enactments and different Commissions recognized for women from time to time have made a number of efforts for the accomplishment of the objective of gender equality, yet in genuine practice, the planned efforts to unshackle women pedagogically, parsimoniously and predominantly politically did not harvest the desired results over the decades after independence. This paper pact with the women manumission through its political participation. The principal objective of this paper is to upkeep and embolden the enactment of the Women's Political Reservation Bill. Additionally its aim is to kindle the initiatives for preventing corruption, criminalization and communalization of politics, for imposing inflexible ceiling of funding expenditures incurred for election campaigns and crafting consciousness in the society in order to indoctrinate the values of gender equality and gender justice. To achieve these objectives, the present work is based heavily on Indian Constitutional provisions, International norms and conventions and other statutory enactments providing favourable laws rendering special privileges for the welfare of women, NGO reports, Government of India reports and imperative works by contemporary jurists who donated a lot concerning the fruition and progression of feminist jurisprudence and studies.*

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## INTRODUCTION

*“Woman is the companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details in the activities of man, and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him.”*

- Mahatma Gandhi

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion...birth or other status.<sup>1</sup> But it is the most unfortunate that women have suffered inferior position to men in almost all societies of world. The standing of women in the family and society at large was no better than those of slaves and had been treated like ordinary chattels-incapable of enjoying any rights as human beings. They were condemned to perpetual subjugation to their fathers, husbands and guardians. Under the old Christian law, the woman was not even considered a ‘person’. Thus, she had no right of a human being such as she could not join a college, she could not be enrolled as a medical practitioner or a lawyer for the same reason.<sup>2</sup> In any political system, contribution of women is very low as compared to men right from the developed to developing countries. It is quite vibrant that voting is the most conjoint and putative political action in elections. Due to sundry reasons, large mass of women are kept out of political arena. However, until the twentieth century, women did not have any right to vote in the Christian countries. In many countries women had to wage long skirmishes to get right to vote. Despite that in the arena of politics, they were not able to get equitable position. Because there was no stern attempt made for women’s Political Participation.

Political participation has been demarcated in innumerable ways. Political participation means not only exercising the right to vote, but also power sharing, co-decision making, co-policy making at all levels of governance of the State.<sup>3</sup> Political participation is generally defined as being a process through which individual performs a role in political life of the social order, has the occasion to take part in deciding what the common aim of that society

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<sup>1</sup> Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by General Assembly on 10 December 1948

<sup>2</sup> Burrell, Barbara (2004). Women and political Participation: a reference handbook. Santa Barbara (California): ABC-CLIO, Inc.

<sup>3</sup> Singh, J.P. (2000), *Indian Democracy and Empowerment of Women*, The India Journal of Public Administration, XLVI (4). 617-630

are and the most excellent way of achieving these goals. Political participation refers to actual participation in these voluntary activities by which members of the society share in the selection of rules and directly or indirectly in the formulation of public policy.<sup>4</sup> It means that by the process of political participation, the people essentially take part in political activities. No doubt, one of the important political activities of the people is exercising voting rights during elections; however, political participation is not just casting vote rather extensive range of other activities is also encompassed in it-like membership of political party, electoral campaigning, attending party meetings, demonstrations, communication with leaders, holding party positions, contesting elections, membership in representative bodies, influencing decision making etc. So, political participation may be defined as voluntary participation in the political affairs through membership, voting and contributing in the activities of legislative bodies, the political parties and/ or politically stirred movements.

The study deals with the empowerment of women who are necessitating in power and position and are over epitomized amongst the poor. The concept of empowerment is based on the augmentation of their participation in the political arena. It deals with the totality of devouring decision-making power of the women. In the present scenario, the participation of women in the politics is very imperative for their overall deliverance and empowerment. The study divulges the current political status of women at national and international level. The impact of patriarchal structure can be seen during ancient, medieval and in the present era also. In the customary society, Government and politics were concerns of tapered elite. However, even then during ancient times, the status and decision-making and power-sharing were much higher as paralleled to present times. At global level, a number of norms and treaties relating to empowerment of women through their political participation have been made which are of definite concern since majority of the nations have ratified these standards and made them an imperative part of their local laws targeting at the overall growth and development of women. As political participation is the hall mark of democracy and modernization but notwithstanding of all the efforts made at national (Indian) level, Political Reservation Bill could not be endorsed which would have far reaching bearings on the gender equality as well as empowerment of women which is leading objective of Indian Government as a welfare State.

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<sup>4</sup> Srivastava, Rashmi (2000), *Empowerment of Women through Political Participation, with special reference to Madhya Pradesh*. In Niroj Sinha (ed), *Women in Indian Politics: Empowerment of Women through Political Participation* (PP. 195-217). New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The target of the present study is to investigate into the deficiency of law relating to political participation of women in the present scenario and then try to develop the concept of empowerment of women through the accomplishment of the following objectives: (a) To scrutinize equal access of women in the decision-making in order to participate in political and economic empowerment. (b) To help in removing paucity in law in order to reinforce legal system aimed for eradication of all forms of acumen against women. (c) To recommend measures for founding of supporting platform for women by building alliances so that they realize higher level of energy and obligation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present works depend heavily on International norms and conventions, Government of India reports, NGO reports and important works by modern jurists who contributed a lot towards the fruition and evolution of feminist jurisprudence and studies. Help of various libraries located at Jalandhar, Delhi and Phillaur is taken. This paper studies various Constitutional provisions and other statutory enactments providing distinctive privileges and favorable laws for the benefits of women. It also studies the deficiency of law and its various inadequacies in real circumstances.

## **A CASE FOR POLITICAL RESERVATION IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN IN INDIA**

In India, the legal Constitutional framework seems to be an amalgamation of Communitarian perspective on one hand and that of tolerant democracy on the other hand. The Constitution of India guarantees adult franchise and provides full opportunities and agenda for women to participate actively in politics. But it is misfortune that women could not expansively avail of the Constitutional provisions due to a number of social, cultural and political constraints. So, the decade's subsequent independence witnessed debility in the participation of women in the politics. The election statistics demonstrates that for the last two decades almost equal numbers of men and women have gone to the polling booths to vote. However, the number of women filing their nomination papers in any election, national or State, is only a segment of the corresponding number of men. The percentage of winning candidates has been below eleven in the Parliament in all the past elections. The State Assemblies too display the similar situation. Thus, it is clear that the number of women winning elections is so trifling that their percentage in the legislative body is nominal. A number of seats provided to the women have

not been in proportion to women's forte in population. No variation has occurred in more than six decades. So, the politics has proved to be a very adamant terrain for women and continues to be the male realm where there is severe restriction on the admission of women. The percentage of women in the Lok Sabha in relation to the total number of seats was 4.4% in the year 1952. In the year of 1957, it increased marginally to 5.4% and to 6.7 in 1962, and then fell again to 4.2% in 1971, 3.4% the lowest was in 1977 and again it increased slightly to 8.9% in the year 1984. Then it upgraded to 8.2% in 2004. So, it is clear from this examination that the percentage of women representatives in the Lok Sabha has always been very little from the beginning onward after independence. Till date it has not crossed 11%. However, in contrast to Lok Sabha, in the upper house the presence of women has been observed to be slightly inferior. It may probably because of indirect election and nomination of women members there. Similarly, since 1952, in the Council of Ministers that were designed, the representation of women has been very little and they were always provided with less significant portfolios like, health, welfare, local Government etc. In the State Governments as well the case has been the same. The power of women MPs (Members of Parliament) is generally much delimited. They (Women MPs) have been accorded low priority to issues concerning women because they are anticipated to support the party line rather than formulate their own agendas. Between women's MPs and women's groups, there seems to be very little regular dealings. There is one exemption that the women's wings of political parties act as a go-between with women MPs, who can, therefore, become outlets between the party's leadership and the women members. On the issues regarding the family and women's rights, they are also consulted by the party leadership from time to time. However, non-party women's groups do not seem to predispose women MPs.

The number of women contesting elections is very low in comparison to the men in Indian society. Compared to the population also, the percentage of women contestants is very stumpy. It augmented from 2.3% in 1952 to 6.5% in the year 1999. In the year of 2009, of the total contestants, more than 93% were men. However, fascinatingly, the percentage of women winning elections has always been higher than men. In 1952, the percentage of men who won the elections was 26.05% whereas women winning elections were 51.16%. In the year, 1999, out of the total male contestants, 12.3% won the elections. And out of the total female contestants, 17.3% women won. 12.6% female contestants won the elections in the 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha elections. From the above analysis, it is quite patent that percentage women winning elections are more than the percentage men winning even though political parties

negate tickets to the women candidates on the conjecture that they are not proficient of winning elections.

Distant from political parties and Parliament, women are also utterly under-represented in other domains of decision-making, in a country like India, there seems paradoxical-on the one hand, women have progressed into the professions and civil services in far higher numbers than in other South Asian countries. They have made foremost inroads in various male dominated professions. Women are provided the opportunity for demonstrating their skills even in the fields of business; art; medicine; engineering; law and culture. However, on the other hand, their ticket into the upper echelons seems to be restricted by a glass ceiling. But beginning with 1980's began the effort of political empowerment as it was professed to give women the needed fillip to a forward surge towards all round development and to a status of uprightness and partnership in decision making. To make a political empowerment of women a reality, the issues of reservation of 1/3 of the seats for women at the grass-root level organization was taken by women's organizations and social activists. It was also pragmatic by the Committee on the Status of Women in India, 1974 (CSWI) that 'the rights guaranteed by the Constitution have helped to shape an insinuation of equality and power which is frequently used as an argument to repel protective and hastening measures to enable women to achieve their just and equal position in society'. It was then the finding of the Committee that as voters, the participation of women was amassed at a faster pace than males but as candidates there was the opposite trend. 30% reservation for women in the local Governments and other decision making bodies was acclaimed by the National perspective Plan for Women, 1988 in order to encourage the participation of the women in grass root politics.<sup>5</sup> Finally this debate occasioned in the passing of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act, 1992.

In 1992, Seats and Pradhan positions were also earmarked for the two underprivileged minorities in India, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, in the form of authorized representation proportional to separate minority's population share in apiece district by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment. Even though, this Amendment also delivered that one-third of the seats in all Panchayat councils, and also one third of the Pradhan Positions, must be reticent for women. It was expected that the Panchayati Raj institution would safeguard political empowerment removing the social and economic acumen against them. This legislation cemented the way for the entry of more than one million women into the local Governments,

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

presidents and vice-presidents. It means it hastened the stride of the participation of women in the policymaking decision only at grass root level. The reservation for women was realized in all major States except Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (which has only reserved 25% of the seats to women). A sizable percentage of women representatives perceived enhancement of their self-esteem, confidence and decision-making ability.<sup>6</sup> However, the representation of women in the continual Lok Sabha's is concerned; it has never gone beyond 11 percent. In the same way, reality seems to be very alarming that out of 117 members of the Legislative assembly of Punjab only 14 are women which are just about 12% of the total members. So is the case in other States and the percentage of women members is just 3% to 9%. Diagnosing the fact of low political participation of Women in Lok Sabha and State Legislatures in India, the Bill seeking to reserve the seats in Lok Sabha and each of the State Legislative Assemblies was for the first time introduced in the Parliament in 1996. Almost 19 years have been elapsed since its first introduction in the Parliament but the Women's Reservation Bill has still not stood enacted as a law. Following is the chequered history of the Women's Reservation Bill which was moved in the Rajya Sabha on 9 March 2011 seeking to reserve 33 percent seats for women in the Lok Sabha and in each State Legislative Assembly:

**12 September 1996** -- After protracted negotiations, as a first step, in September 1996, the Deve Gowda Government announced in the parliament the Women's Reservation Bill as 81st Constitutional Amendment Bill.

But subsequent opposition, the bill was referred to the scrutiny of the Joint Select Committee of Parliament. The report was produced in the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha but nothing constructive happened.

**26 June 1998** - The bill was re-introduced in the 12th Lok Sabha as the 84<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment by the National Democratic Alliance Government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This time also, the bill failed as 12<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha was dissolved precipitately with the Vajpayee Government being reduced to a minority.

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<sup>6</sup> National Institute of Advanced Studies-Gender Studies Unit (NIAS), Women's Voice, National Alliance of Women (NAWO) and Initiatives-Women in Development (IWID) Baseline Report on Women and Political Participation in India., pp.8, available at [http://www.iwrawap.org/aboutus/pdf/FPwomen\\_and\\_pol\\_pax.pdf](http://www.iwrawap.org/aboutus/pdf/FPwomen_and_pol_pax.pdf) (Last assessed 31 march 2015)



**22 November 1999** -- The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government re-introduced the bill in the 13th Lok Sabha. However, there was again disappointment on the part of the Government for gathering consensus on the issue.

**2002** -- The bill was familiarized in Parliament but unsuccessful to sail through.

**2003** -- The bill was presented twice in Parliament by the NDA Government but could not get it passed even though NDA had been assured by the Congress and the Left, constituting a majority, of their support.

**May 2004** -- The United Progressive Alliance Government incorporated it in the Common Minimum Programme (CPM).

**6 May 2008** -- The Government tabled the bill in the Rajya Sabha so that the legislation did not hiatus and then it was raised to the Standing Committee on Law and Justice.

**17 December 2009**--The report was presented by the Standing Committee and the bill was tabled in both the Houses of the Parliament amid protests by Samajwadi Party, JD (U) and RJD.

**22 February 2010**--President Pratibha Patil in her address said that the Government was loyal to early passage of the bill.

**25 February 2010**-- Union Cabinet sanctioned Women's Reservation Bill and cleared it (the bill) for taking it up in the Rajya Sabha.

**8 March 2010**—the bill was enthused in Rajya Sabha but after unruly divisions and threats of pulling out sustenance to the UPA Government by SP and RJD, voting on it deferred.

**9 March 2010**—Women's Reservation Bill was passed by Rajya Sabha with prodigious majority.

The Bill, having been passed in the Rajya Sabha in 2010, can become a law only if it is also passed in the Lok Sabha. Anticipated to provide reservation for women at each level of legislative decision-making, the Bill warranted that one-third of the total available seats would be reserved for women in National, State and Local Governments. On 10 March 2010 the 14year dangerous political struggle to give women passable representation ended with the Rajya Sabha finally debating the contentious issue and then voting 186-1 on the Constitution



(One Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 amidst acrimony, political rifts and dreadful scenes of dissent. In the 245member House with an actual strength of 233, the bill required the sponsorship of at least 155 members. The reserved seats would be prearranged by gyration to different constituencies and would be valid for 15 years after the commencement of the Amendment Act. The Bill seeks to reserve for women 181 out of the 543 seats in the Lok Sabha and 1,370 out of a total of 4,109 seats in the 28 State Assemblies. Only the last step remained-of the Lok Sabha endorsing it. However, Lok-Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar had nothing encouraging saying as she appeared from over an-hour long meeting with known critics of the Women's Reservation Bill on 14 July 2011. On the 15-year old Bill, her second foremost attempt within a month to forge a consensus had been disastrous as socialist and Muslim leaders precluded her advances and flagged their old "conspiracy" concerns. Leading Andhra Muslim leader from Asaduddin Owaisi of the Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) told that Women's Reservation Bill would sound a death-knell for the representation of all Muslim Members of Parliament – male and female-in the Lok Sabha. The Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief Lalu Yadav was the most vociferous in his protest.<sup>7</sup>

For the Bill, these are dejected bodings at a time when United Nations Women has revealed new worldwide proof supporting the intrinsic worth of quotas as device to augment the incidence of the women in the Parliament. Another protuberant example of Costa Rica can be quoted here which approved the momentous Responsible Paternity Act 2001 for reassuring shared upbringing of the children, just five years after authorization of 40% representation for the women in its Parliament. Out of 28 countries with more than 30 percent women in the Parliament, several pulled out of clang, including the neighboring Nepal, which has 33 percent women in the Parliament. However, in India, even the monsoon session of Parliament didn't clinch much promise for the Constitution (one Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 which looks for reserving one third seats for the women in the Lok-Sabha and State legislatures.<sup>8</sup>

Even as the debate frenzies on the need for protecting women in the country, the long pending issue of the Women's Reservation Bill seems to have been put on the backburner. But why is that about 12 years after its conscripting, the Bill has still not seen the light of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> AC-Nielsen ORG-MARG (2008), Study on Elected Women Representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India, New Delhi.

day? Why it is that traffic to promote gender equality in decision-making bodies has not been allowed to get applied? The efforts of sequential Governments to amend the Constitution of India in order to provide for the reservation in country's legislatures are not being emerged because of unresponsive behavior towards gender equality of certain leaders who are supposed to be unswerving to the cause of social justice. Politicians camouflage their vested interests with the argument that the Bill would deny passable representation for the backward sections of society. What they recommend is a quota within a quota for definite classes. India ranks 109 in the world arrangement of Women in National Parliaments, with 11 per cent in the Lower House and 10.6 in the Upper House. Thus, in spite of the realization, gender sensitivity in administration is still distraught to acquire a grip because of the general anxiety that women might surpass men in all spheres and also interject in their political affairs, which is largely scrupulous to be a male domain. Political parties are using this issue just to women voters. And it is fairly palpable that there is a long way to go for the enactment of the Bill.

#### **CURRENT STATUS OF WOMAN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION FROM GLOBAL TO NATIONAL LEVEL**

No doubt today, there is substantial increase in the percentage of women as voters. The participation of women as voters is virtually equal to men. But the political participation (as a whole) of the women is not equal to men and so they are still not able to get a share alike to men in organization that require decision making. Still politics is subjugated by men at every level of participation and women have not been regarded as noteworthy part of the political arena. The representation of women as policy formulators and decision makers in the legislative bodies is very low. In legislative bodies women have been laborious and more space but most nations in the world have failed in providing due space as well as representation to women in their political system. Thus, from local level to global level, leadership and participation of the women in the political fields are always bargained. Women are always underrepresented in leading positions, whether in civil services, academia, elected offices or private sector. Such kind of situation prevails despite their abilities and capabilities which have been proved as leaders and their right of participating at par with men in democratic governance.

Women are moving equally with men only in a few countries, like Germany, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland. In these countries, substantial inroads are being made by the women into decision making process. Female manifestation in legislature remains small and

relatively trivial in the advanced countries like Western Europe and North America. It is indicated by the statistics (2010) that the world average of exemplification of women in legislature is 19.1%, in both the houses combined. It is 19.3% in lower house and 18.2% in upper house. As of 1 October, 2013, only 21.4 percent of national parliamentarians were women, a slow increase from percentage in 2010.<sup>9</sup> At the International Level, as on 1 October, 2013, there are only 37 States in which there are less than 10 percent of women parliamentarians in single or lower houses.<sup>10</sup> However, at parliamentary floor, the representation of Indian women is still far from satisfactory. India ranks 110<sup>th</sup> in the world according to the data released by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an international group that works for the promotion of democracy, peace and co-operation in the world.<sup>11</sup> The above-stated statistics divulge that India lags behind many countries including its neighboring countries Pakistan, China and Nepal, when it comes to women's participation in the politics.

## **FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS**

India as a welfare State is devoted to the welfare and development of its people in general and of susceptible sections in particular. Though Indian Constitution and various other legislative enactments and different Commissions established for women from time to time have made a number of efforts for the achievement of the objective of gender equality, yet in actual practice, due rights are denied to women and they continue to be the victims of male domination.<sup>12</sup> Violations of the rights of the women linger in practice. The women are lacking in position and power and are over represented amongst the poor. As a result, women lack in political participation, educational triumphs thereby showing under-representation in employment spheres. It means that the planned efforts to unshackle women parsimoniously, pedagogically and predominantly politically did not yield the anticipated results over the decades after independence.

For this sorry state of affairs, many other factors are also accountable. History of freedom movement indicates very evidently that there was participation of a large number of women in that freedom movement. However, after that it went on declining due to the fading of the

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<sup>9</sup> Tandon, Aditi (July 15, 2011). More Trouble for Women's Reservation Bill: Socialist, Muslim Leaders Cry Conspiracy. The Tribune, Chandigarh, India

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union. 31 march, 2015, Women in National Parliaments: World Average <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm>

<sup>12</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union, 31 march, 2015, Women in National Parliaments: World Classification. <http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/arc/classif011013.htm>

ideology of the Nehru-Gandhian era. The sharp deterioration in juvenile sex ratio; persistent high maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate; high gender gap in literacy at all levels; high rate of dropouts of girl students; and increasing incidence of crime against women; inadequate access of women to the property rights and employment opportunities; and their less political participation and undernourishment raises many questions about the role of institutional machinery to appliance the law. In the present time, two types of barriers are faced by women as far as their participation in political life is concerned. First, structural barriers, still a number of restrictions are imposed on women's options to vote or to run for offices through discriminatory laws and institutions. Second, capacity gaps which mean that women are always less likely in appraisal to men to have contacts, education as well as different resources required to becoming operative leaders. Therefore, in the women's participation in the political fronts, gender roles have become major obstacles. Besides, the traditional division of labor; economic barriers; the type of electoral system, lack of sufficient training and rampant violence against women in Indian society in the form of dowry deaths, sexual assaults, honour killings, acid attacks, domestic violence etc. are also some of the contributories to keep women away from every sphere of public life including politics. Apart from this, the process of elections has become a very costly affair. Women are not capable of spawning large amount of money required for fighting elections. Most of them fail to take off due to indecorous planning at the grass root level. This upsetting state of affairs is also an outcome of the incessant failure of women's welfare policies. Corruption and centralization of powers are the basic major obstacles for political participation of women in India because Corruption and nepotism portend to eat into the little good that has been done for women's empowerment in this country.

## CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

Undeniably, there is need to remove the *deficiency of laws (Constitutional provisions) and policies* pledging a place of honour and equality to women because they are not sufficient to contest the menace of inequality. For the emancipation of women and conversion of their de-jure equality into de-facto equality, the educational, economic and political independence of the women is of paramount importance. This can lead to total improvement of the women. This goal of economic independence and empowerment of the women can be achieved only through gainful employment opportunities. Women's gainful employment especially in more rewarding occupations clearly will play a role in improving the lot of the women especially in

increasing their status and standing in the society. The economic empowerment inevitably shadows political empowerment so it is quite vibrant that the socioeconomic state of women will recover only if they are also a part of the governing process is a fact that is extensively recognized the world over. Therefore, it becomes obligatory for the women's organizations as well as the Government of India to hunt for remedial measures to improve the political status of the women. The bill propositioning quota for women is a step forward in mainstreaming women in politics by giving them representation in the utmost elected bodies both at national and provincial levels where they can deliberate on all the glitches in order to seek their redressal and thereby to get an occasion to acme them on a national as well as local platform. Without appropriate representation of women in the legislative bodies and political participation at all echelons, issues regarding women would remain neglected.<sup>13</sup> Comprehending women's suppression and relegation and affirmative discrimination against women in general has materialized the need of their empowerment – both political and economic. In order to achieve this objective, Reservation Law for providing political participation to women is the need of the hour. Therefore, the individuals who oppose the Bill tooth and nail should be made to reach at an unanimity in the interest of the nation. The Government must be insatiable enough to safeguard the Bill and pass it even if it is at the cost of losing its allies because only a nation which has empowered its women to be a part of all forms of governance, can achieve true liberation and economic success. In India, this can originate by enacting the Women's Political Reservation Bill.

Further *suggestions* which can be recommended are as follows: (1) To implement rigorous procedures to stop corruption, proscription and communalization of politics. (2) To guarantee that women are taken seriously in their elected post by assigning important portfolios and restraining their functions to social welfare and women and child development. (3) To implement stringent ceiling of funding expenses incurred for election campaigns. (4) Legal system targeting at purging of all forms of acumen against women should be reinforced. In accumulation to that, awareness level about laws should also be elevated among women. (5) Women should be provided leadership and communication training. (6) The Representation of People Act, 1951 should be amended to coerce political parties to deliver for obligatory nomination of the women candidates for at least one-third of the seats to circumvent de-recognition as a national party. (7) All the women organizations must come on a common podium with lone objective of pressing the political parties to either upkeep the passing of

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<sup>13</sup> UN Women, checked monthly against updates from the United Nations.

Reservation Bill or face the antagonism of women voters in the next general elections because a precarious mass of women is a pre-requisite for the effective political participation of women. (8) The media both print as well as electronic can play an imperative role in generating awareness in the society. It can act as an agent of political socialization for indoctrinating the standards of gender equality and gender justice.