



# Women in Legislatures

DAY  
**17**

## CURRENT AFFAIRS GS PAPER-II (Section-I)

### Background:

- Iceland is going to have its first majority-elected women's parliament, with 33 of the country's 63 seats being won by women. Compared to the Indian parliament, this is less than 14%.

### India's comparison with the world:-

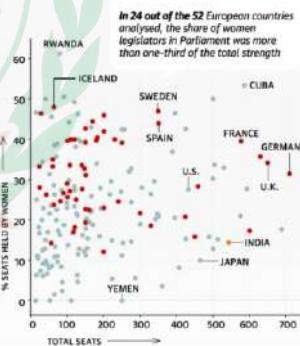
- India Parliament has got a negligible amount of Women representation, raking lower than most countries in the world.
- India has only 78 women in Lok Sabha out of 543.
- Rwanda tops the list with 61% female candidates.
- Yet even many developed countries are in many cases not the same as in the case of Japan.
- According to the Global Report on the Gender Gap 2021, India dropped 13.5% points in the political empowerment index and the number of female ministers from 23.1% in 2019 to 9.1% in 2021.
- State distribution in India:** In 24 of the 31 state legislatures, the proportion of women in the assembly is less than 10%, as shown below.
- Women's strength has grown organically over the years: therefore, other gentle methods such as imparting education and providing economic activities are to be highlighted. Women's strength can increase organically.**

**1. WOMEN IN STATE LEGISLATURES:** The table shows the percentage share of women M.L.As in State Legislatures in three 5-year periods between 1995 and 2021. In 14 of the 31 states, the share of women in the state legislatures M.L.As between 2012 and 2021 was more than 15%. (However, in two less than 14% and of the remaining 14 states, the share was less than 10%).

State	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2021
Bihar	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Haryana	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Jharkhand	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Karnataka	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Odisha	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Punjab	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Rajasthan	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Sikkim	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Telangana	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
U.P.	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
A.P.	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Assam	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Gujarat	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Himachal	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Jharkhand	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Karnataka	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Madhya Pradesh	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Maharashtra	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Odisha	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Punjab	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Rajasthan	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Sikkim	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Telangana	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
U.P.	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Uttarakhand	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Uttar Pradesh	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Tripura	5.3	9.3	13.2	14.2	14.2
Nepal	7.9	13.4	15.8	15.8	15.8
Maldives	10.0	13.0	15.7	15.7	15.7
U.K.	9.2	13.9	17.1	17.1	17.1
U.S.	13.3	18.0	24.4	24.4	24.4
Marshall Islands	16.4	13.9	4.1	4.1	4.1
Yemen	1.2	2.2	3.1	3.1	3.1
MKT	1.0	1.4	2.1	2.1	2.1
Minors	5.0	8.0	12	12	12

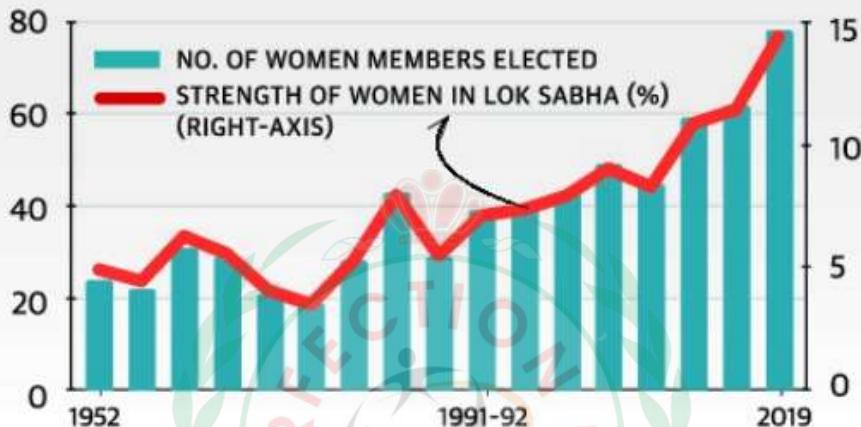
\* As per UNDP, As women were elected to the 15th Legislative Assembly between 2012 and 2021 despite their given names.

**1. WOMEN IN CENTRAL LEGISLATURES |** The graph plots the number of seats in the lower house of a Parliament against the share of women legislators in European countries (●), India (●) and the rest (○).





**2. WOMEN IN LOK SABHA** | The graph shows the share of women lawmakers in the Lok Sabha from the first election till 2019. The percentage of women parliamentarians has gone up significantly in the last three terms of the Lower House



■ The share of women MPs went past the 10% mark only from the 2009 election

■ Between 1952 and 2019, a total of 661 women have been elected to the Lok Sabha

### Indian Status:

- ❖ Only the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha reached 10% mark, previously stagnant representation of less than 9% of Indian MPs since independence.
- ❖ The Indian system has population-based voter representation in the Lok Sabha.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh has 80 MP's members with more than 200 million inhabitants, Bihar with 100 million inhabitants got 40 MP seats and Maharashtra with 114 million inhabitants has 48 MP seats.
- ❖ Three northeastern states - Nagaland, Mizoram, and Sikkim - only have one seat each.
- ❖ Uttar Pradesh has a better representation of women than the national average of 17.5% (14 MPs), while Maharashtra has



the national average of 12.5% (6 seats) and Bihar with 7.9% is well below the national average lies (3 seats).

- ☞ When the total seats are distributed among the states by population, the resulting proportion of women of 12% is well below the actual population of women.
- ☞ The scenario for female legislative assemblies (MLA) MPs in all state assemblies in India is even worse, with a national average of a pitiable 9%.
- ☞ The best among them, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Haryana are represented at 14%, while the worst states are Pondicherry and Nagaland, which don't have an MLA for women.

### Challenges:

- ☞ The reservation of one third seats for women in the Lok Sabha was introduced as a bill several times until 2008 and has expired each time.
- ☞ Illiteracy is one of the main barriers women face to political empowerment. Due to a lack of understanding, they do not know their fundamental and political rights.
- ☞ Gender differences in education, resource ownership, and persistent bias continue to act as barriers for women leaders. Education influences the social mobility of women.
- ☞ Within the family the unequal distribution of housework between men and women is also one of the important factors in this context.
- ☞ It is related not only to time, effort, and medical care during pregnancy and delivery, but also to the increased involvement of the mother necessary for breastfeeding and the continued tendency of women to take on more childcare.
- ☞ Lack of political networks A lack of openness in political decision-making and undemocratic internal processes represent a challenge for all newcomers, but especially for women, as they tend to lack internal knowledge or political networks.



- ☛ Lack of financial support Women do not receive sufficient financial support from political parties to participate in elections.
- ☛ Social and cultural norms imposed on women prevent them from entering politics; they must accept the dictates placed on them and bear the weight of society.
- ☛ they also bear their privations and undermine their status by viewing it as a culture of society.
- ☛ It not only determines how many female candidates win a parliamentary election, but also directly and indirectly how many are considered and nominated for office.

## Way Forward:

- ☛ In a country like India there is currently a need for women to have equal participation in general political activity.
- ☛ Society needs to deconstruct the stereotype that women limit themselves to domestic activities.
- ☛ It is important that all institutions (state, family and community) address the specific needs of women, such as closing educational gaps, renegotiating gender roles, addressing gender-specific division of labor and biased attitudes.
- ☛ All political parties must reach consensus and ensure approval of the Women's Reserve Bill, which requires women to reserve 33% of seats in parliament and all state legislatures.
- ☛ India should endeavor by the electoral commission to encourage the restraint of women in political parties. While this does not offer guarantees as to the number of female MPs, it does allow a more meritocratic and less complex method of moving the ball forward.
- ☛ India has a longtime Prime Minister and several female Prime Ministers and House Spokespersons.
- ☛ For a balanced future for the country, it is up to us to discuss and agree on how this will change.



- ❖ As such, the government must provide appropriate measures to improve the social, educational, and economic conditions of women. So, that women can use their intrinsic strengths to defend themselves.

### **Conclusion:-**

- ❖ The central theme is the educational and economic empowerment of women, which prevents women from entering the workforce and gaining experience. Reservations cannot help if the attitudes of society do not change, society would always find ways like: Pradhan Pati to circumvent such regulations.

**Q. Discuss the state of participation of women in the political sphere in India. What can be done to improve this condition?**

**PERFECTION IAS**

**हिन्दी कहानी**  
(टैक्सिपिक विषय)

**भाग-६**

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**बी.पी.एस.सी. मुख्य परीक्षा हेतु**

**PERFECTION IAS**

**हिन्दी नाटक**  
(टैक्सिपिक विषय)

व्याख्या एवं विश्लेषण चाहिए

**भाग-४**

○ अध्योनारी  
○ वरद्धमान

**बी.पी.एस.सी. मुख्य परीक्षा हेतु**