



NATIONAL COALITION FOR WOMEN'S RESERVATION (NCWR)
PRESS RELEASE
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Women's Reservation must firmly rest on the three pillars of social justice, inclusion and federalism

"No Conditionalities! Implement Women's Reservation at Current Parliament Strength": Feminist Activists and Political Leaders

Key Demands in Memorandum to elected representatives

The Memorandum requests elected representatives to seek the following amendments to the 2023 women's reservation legislation (The Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, to enable its immediate implementation:

1. Delink women's reservation from seat expansion, the Census and delimitation by removing all references to the latter from Clause 3 of the Constitution (106th amendment) and Articles 334(1) and (3).
2. Ensure federal rights by inserting a new clause to distribute the 33% seats according to the current States' share of total seats.
3. Provide for reservation of seats for vulnerable and marginalized women, such as OBCs, nomadic and de-notified tribes, religious minorities, transgender and non-binary persons, by inserting a new clause saying all future reservations will automatically apply in the 106th amendment.
4. Ensure a transparent and participatory process for identification of the first 33% seats by inserting a new clause specifying that seat selection will be conducted along the lines of the method used by Panchayati Raj institutions, with key changes (no draw, only alphabetical system; review by State Commissions with involvement of women's groups and rights advocates).
5. The amendments we suggest to the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act 2023 can be presented in a single Amendment Bill. Separately, we urge that Parliament consider an amendment to The Representation of People Act to provide for election campaign funding for vulnerable and marginalized groups. TV

16th July, 2026: At a well-attended online press conference today, political leaders and feminist activists asserted that implementation of Women's Reservation must firmly rest on the three pillars of social justice, inclusion and federalism. "We demand immediate delinking of the Women Reservation Act, 2023 from census and delimitation in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament," they said, adding that 33% reservations can be ensured at current strength of Parliament. They warned

that any move to expand the seats in Lok Sabha for BJP-NDA's political ambitions would be unitedly resisted by all secular and progressive forces.

The speakers condemned the repeated attempts of the Union Government to weaponize women reservation to pursue its political agenda of delimitation, gerrymandering and destroying the federal character of our democracy. While one such attempt was successfully foiled by a combined opposition in April 2026, the NDA is currently on overdrive to get more MPs and parties on its side, to pass a Bill linking women's reservation with delimitation and seats expansion.

Though the Women Reservation Act [Constitution (106th Amendment) Act] was passed by the Parliament, in 2023 after about four decades of struggle, to date, Parliament has only 14-16 % presence of women MPs and 10% in state assemblies.

Within this, the representation of women from diverse marginalized backgrounds is negligible. The Act itself leaves out many marginalized identities, including women from OBC, NT-DNT, minority communities, transgender and non-binary persons, women with disabilities etc. This historical injustice must be undone, without further delay, the speakers said, emphasising the need for a new paradigm of participation and inclusion in politics.

Women and transgender persons from these communities deserve a constitutional guarantee of reservations and a level-playing field, including state-enabled election funding, to be able to represent their voices in Parliament and State Legislatures. Highlighting the lack of clarity on how the reserved seats will be identified, the speakers demanded a participatory, transparent and impartial process, to ensure the fair representation of various oppressed communities.

"Leaving inclusion to political parties that are all practicing "parivarvaad" (dynastic politics) betrays the claimed intention of the Government to ensure that marginalized women including OBC and transgender women do not come into politics," **said Shashi Yadav, (MLC, Bihar Assembly, CPI-ML & AIPWA)**. "In the Legislature of this world's biggest democracy there is not a single person who represents the transgender community which constitutes 4-5% of the population," said **Akkai Padmashali from the Trans Feminist Collective**

"Feminist politics has not been about numbers alone, but also about political transformation. Speaking as a woman, a feminist, and located in a minority community that has enjoyed both prominence and vulnerability, while 33% is non-negotiable, the recognition of marginalised identities is just as important," said **Anita Cheria from the Indian Christian Women's Movement**.

Hasina Khan of Bebaak Collective, Mumbai spoke about the need for a comprehensive socio-economic lens to understand the lived experiences of religious minorities, instead of a communal lens that the State often uses. She also said diversity of reservations are crucial for dismantling privilege.

Speaking about why Dalit women stand with the demand for inclusion and diversity as integral to women's reservation, **Abirami Jotheeswaran from the All-India Dalit Mahila Adhikaar Manch** said, "Yes SC/ST communities are getting reservations

within the Parliament but women from these communities continue to be excluded from real decision making. Today violence against women from the SC/ST and minority communities is systemic but is this being raised in the Parliament? We need to be present to hold the State accountable.”

Elina Horo, Adivasi Women's Network and Jharkhand Janadhikar Mahasabha spoke about the value that adivasi women's rich nature-connected perspectives can bring to policy-making. **Prof. Kusumam Joseph** shared about the 5-years work of the Equal Rights Movement in Kerala to ensure participation of all marginalized identities in the discourse of reservations. Connecting the various dots, **Beena Pallical of the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights** re-affirmed the value and indispensability of intersectionality within reservations, while extending solidarity to the struggles of women and transpeople from various marginalized backgrounds.

The unanimous position of all speakers was that it is high time the arbitrary linking of women's reservation with census and delimitation is brought to an end through a constitutional amendment. Feminist politics believes in decentralised federalism, and fights against patriarchal centralism, they affirmed.

The Press Conference was moderated by **Mona Mishra, feminist activist from the All-India Feminist Alliance (ALIFA – NAPM)**, who also shared briefly the 5-point demand charter of the National Coalition for Women's Reservation (NCWR) – See Annex. Attended by many media persons and feminists from different parts of the country, members also shared about the ongoing campaigns in different states and future plans to strengthen the movement.

Issued by: National Coalition for Women's Reservation (NCWR), a pan-India, non-partisan coalition of organisations, networks and individuals working together for women's reservation and equal political representation)

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