

**LOK SABHA**  
**SYNOPSIS OF DEBATES**  
(Proceedings other than Questions & Answers)

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**Wednesday, September 20, 2023 / Bhadra 29, 1945 (Saka)**

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**OBSERVATION BY THE SPEAKER**

**HON'BLE SPEAKER:** Hon'ble Members, a new system has been installed here wherein the latest technology is being employed. All the Hon'ble members were also urged upon to make themselves familiar with the technology used here from 10:00 am onwards. Whoever wants to acquaint themselves with the technology being used here is invited to this Parliament complex tomorrow morning also. There may be certain problems attributed to the new technology. If you are unable to hear due to a low volume, we are getting it fixed. I hope everyone will cooperate with the Chair in this context. You are requested to inform me about any shortcomings found within this new system. After these two days, you will find it all the more streamlined. We will try to resolve the issues as far as practicable in these two days, and all the systems will be streamlined in the next session.

**THE CONSTITUTION (ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH  
AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023.**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)** *moving the motion for consideration of the Bill said:* It is a Constitution Amendment Bill and it is a forward moving step towards women empowerment. It is also an important step towards making India a developed nation in the Amrit Kaal. Babasaheb Bhim Rao Ambedkar had said that though political equality would be achieved on January 26, 1950, the Governments would have to abolish the inequalities existing on social and economic fronts. To remove this social and economic inequality, our Government has formulated many schemes since the year 2014, including several schemes aimed at women's empowerment. Today, this Bill will not only enhance the prestige of women but will also provide them proper representation. Through this Bill, we are inserting 239AA in Article 239 of the Constitution, which will ensure 33 per cent reservation for women in the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. We are adding Clause 3, under which we are inserting 33A in Article 330 of the Constitution, thereby there shall be a 33 per cent reservation for women in the Lok Sabha. This is a landmark move. A new Article 33A is being inserted after Article 332 of the Constitution, through which we are going to make a provision for 33 per cent seats for women in State Legislative Assemblies. This reservation will remain in force for 15 years. After 15 years, Parliament will have the power to extend this period. If we look into history, this Bill was introduced for discussion in the Rajya Sabha on 9th March 2010. It was discussed for two days and during the discussion, the House witnessed strong opposition to this Bill. The BJP had supported the Bill wholeheartedly. After being passed in the Rajya

Sabha, the Bill was referred to the Lok Sabha. However, the Bill was never taken up for discussion in the Lok Sabha and it lapsed with the dissolution of the Lok Sabha on 18th May 2014. In fact, it is a very important Bill. A discussion should be initiated on this Bill and efforts should be made to pass it unanimously.

**SHRIMATI SONIA GANDHI** initiating *said*: I, on behalf of the Indian National Congress, rise to support this Bill. Women had worked shoulder to shoulder with men on every front during the freedom struggle and have been making endeavours towards building a new India. We have 15 lakh women leaders elected through local bodies across the country. We will be happy with the passage of this Bill, but, at the same time, there is a concern. Indian women have been looking forward to their political responsibility for the last 13 years and now they are being asked to wait for a few more years. The Indian National Congress demands that this Bill should come into force with immediate effect. Alongside, a caste census should be conducted and provisions should also be made for the reservation of women belonging to SCs, STs and OBCs. Further delay in the implementation of this Bill would be a gross injustice to the women of India.

**DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY**: The Members of the Opposition parties did not bring this Bill for so many years. Our Prime Minister evinced moral courage and we have brought this Bill today. We feel proud and salute the hon'ble Prime Minister for the work he has done to honour women by convening this historic Session. Now, when we have brought this Bill, the Opposition Members say that there is no reservation in the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils. They also say that OBCs will not get reservations in Panchayats and Municipal Corporations. They are again trying to vitiate the atmosphere in the country. They want to do unconstitutional work. Our Prime Minister says whatever work he starts, he always accomplishes it. If this Women's

Reservation Bill has been brought here, the women of this country will definitely get their rights. According to Article 82 of the Constitution, the census will be conducted first, followed by delimitation. Our Government will not do anything unconstitutional. In the first place, the date of the census will be announced, thereafter, the census will be conducted and subsequently, there will be delimitation leading to women's facilitated with reservation. That is what has been provided in this Bill. The women, who raised their voices for women's reservation, both, inside and outside the Parliament, were Geeta Mukherjee of Bengal and Sushma Swaraj ji of the Bharatiya Janata Party. I.N.D.I.A alliance of 26 opposition parties has been formed which do not have even an iota of intention that women should get reservations. Be it the Rashtriya Janata Dal, be it the Samajwadi Party, be it other parties supporting them – all of them together scuttled the move when it came to passing the Women's Reservation Bill. Because of that, they sometimes talk about OBC reservation, quota within quota, giving them rights in the Rajya Sabha, clamouring as to why the reservation was not given in the Legislative Council, and now they are asking why it will not come into effect from the year 2024? Whatever laws you have passed are against women. Because of you, more women than men are behind bars in dowry cases. You have passed so many laws due to which people are not ready to provide jobs to women. So finally, I would like to urge everyone cutting across party lines to pass this Bill unanimously.

**SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI KARUNANIDHI:** I am happy to be here speaking about the Women's Reservation Bill. It is one of the very few Bills which we thought will be passed with all of us supporting one another other standing in solidarity. But unfortunately, the BJP has taken this also as an opportunity for politicking. The Women's Reservation Bill was first brought with the support of the DMK during the United Front Government in September, 1996. Since then, we have been speaking

about this Bill and debating it for the past 13 years. The Women's Reservation Bill is a poll promise of the BJP. Yet, many leaders had to urge them to bring this Bill and pass it. I myself have raised this issue of bringing the Reservation Bill many times in the Parliament. Moreover, the DMK even conducted a rally in Delhi from Mandi House to Jantar Mantar. They said that they have to involve all stakeholders, political parties and then build a consensus before bringing the Bill. I would like to know what consensus was built and what discussions were held. I do not know if any of the political party leaders were called for discussions and deliberations about bringing the Bill. In 2010, when the Bill was brought by the UPA Government, there were no conditions. The Bill was to take immediate effect after the passage of the Bill. But Clause 5 of the Bill which was presented yesterday clearly says that the reservation of seats for women in the House of the People, the Legislative Assembly of a State and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi shall come into effect after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken for this purpose. Our leader has said that if delimitation is going to be based on population census, it will deprive and reduce the representation of the South Indian States. It will become like a sword hanging on our heads. He has said that he supports the Bill but he has asked this question: why should the implementation be connected to the delimitation? It can easily be implemented in the coming Parliamentary elections. You should understand that this Bill is not a reservation but an act of removing bias and injustice and if you do not remove the clause which says, 'after delimitation', then, there is no point in passing this Bill.. We do not want to be worshipped. We want to be respected as equals. We have a right in this country as much as the right you have.

**DR. KAKOLI GHOSH DASTIDAR:** I stand here to support the Bill which has already been implemented by my leader in West Bengal. West Bengal is the only State in the country which has a female Chief Minister. In spite of the Bharatiya Janata Party being in power in 16 States, at the moment we do not have any women Chief Ministers there. At the moment, in this august House of Lok Sabha, the All India Trinamool Congress has nearly 40 percent of women Members and also in the Rajya Sabha. So far as the present Bill is concerned, why is delimitation linked with reservation? It is a sinister move and it will have more Members in the Parliament from States which have failed in population control and poor women empowerment. Moreover, it is imperative that they demonstrate genuine respect for women by aligning their actions with words. It is crucial that they take appropriate action against all individuals who are harming and showing disrespect towards women and have not been brought to book. So, if you are really interested in taking care of women towards betterment and progress, why do you not take action against the perpetrators? Why do you not take action against those people who have been molesting and killing women in Hathras and in Unnao? A little girl child was stoned to death in Jammu and the wrestlers, as I said, have been manhandled and molested. I would also like to draw the attention of the House to the plight of women labourers who hold job cards all over the country through the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. They work but their payment has not been released yet. That is also insulting to the women labourers. So are the researchers and the scientific workers of ISRO and IITs who have been denied their salaries. Thus, we want equal opportunity and equal respect and want to participate in nation-building as equals. This Bill should have come in 2014 when you came to power if you were so much interested in the welfare of women and not before the elections like a gimmick.

**THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KIREN RIJIJU)** *intervening said:* Every word spoken is a part of the parliamentary document. We should not mislead the House. When an Hon'ble member was making a statement, she made a very serious allegation, which is completely misleading. She said that the ISRO's scientists are not getting regular salaries. ISRO's scientists themselves including some of the retired scientists who are regularly in touch and are supporting ISRO have clearly said that every regular employee, including those who are pensioners, is getting regular salaries and pensions in time. The woman scientists of ISRO have made a special mention that the hon'ble Prime Minister has given the best support to ISRO. They have made the country proud. So, the record must be straight.

**\*SHRIMATI VANGA GEETA VISWANATH**

**SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':** Our party Janata Dal United supports the Women's Reservation Bill, 2023. We support it because we believe in women's empowerment. The Government does not intend to provide reservations to women in Parliament or legislative assemblies, and this Bill has been brought in the panic reaction of the 26 parties that have formed I.N.D.I.A. If the Government had the intention, they would have started a caste-based census in the year 2021 because it is the demand of this country. This country calls for the conduct of a caste-based census. But the Government does not have faith in doing justice to the poor, the most backward, the backward; therefore the Government did not conduct the census. The provision of 334-A made by the Government will continue indefinitely and in the year 2024, women will be deceived in the garb of huge propaganda. Bihar was the first State to extend 50 per cent reservation to women in the year 2006 after the formation of the Government in 2005. In 2015, the Grand Alliance Government was formed and

in the year 2016, 35 percent reservation was given to women in all the services of the State Government. The Government of Bihar has worked to empower 1 crore 30 lakh rural women through 'Jeevika'. Provisions should be made in the Women's Reservation Bill brought by the Government so as to provide reservation to the most backward and backward classes. We have provided 20 per cent reservation to the most backward classes in the Panchayati Raj system and municipalities in Bihar. I support this Bill.

**\*DR. RAJASHREE MALLICK:**

**SHRIMATI SANGEETA AZAD:** In the new Parliament building, the Nari Shakti Vandan Bill has been laid on the Table of the House, which has been a long pending demand for decades. The Bahujan Samaj Party and I have placed the Women's Reservation Bill on the Table of the House many times. I, on behalf of my party Bahujan Samaj Party wholeheartedly support this Bill. When the Constitution was being drafted, it was Baba Saheb Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar who made efforts to enhance the dignity of women in our society, who did not have the right to receive education and possess money and property. While Babasaheb gave us the right to vote, Manyavar Kanshi Ram Sahib made endeavours to create awareness about the value of that one vote to the downtrodden, oppressed, and deprived sections. With the introduction of this Bill, the women of the country have got new energy and women have got a chance to feel dignified and safe. The Bill provides necessary incentives for women to enter the political arena and achieve excellence. We support this Bill, but the BSP has some demands, which we want to be included in this Bill. According to NFHS-5, there are 1020 females per 1000 males of India's population. Therefore, instead of 33 percent reservation in Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, 50

Percent reservation should be given. This reservation should be implemented in the Rajya Sabha and State legislative councils also. Reservation for SC/ST as well as the OBC category should also be ensured in the Women's Reservation Bill. The caste census which was scheduled to be held in the year 2021 should be completed as soon as possible and the delimitation should also be implemented as soon as possible.

**SHRI NAMA NAGESWARA RAO:** On behalf of my party, I would like to wholeheartedly support the Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill. Before I speak about the Women's Reservation Bill, 2023, I would like to make two points. Telangana was formed in 2014. Immediately after the formation of the Government there, the Telangana Legislative Assembly within 12 days on 14 June 2014 sent a resolution to the Government to provide 33% reservation to women. We have provided 50% reservation to women in sarpanch, MPTC, ZPTC, MPP, and villages in our State. They have been provided reservation in the municipality and also in the corporation. In the Agriculture Market Committee also, we have provided 33% reservation to them and 50% reservation in other areas also. In the Bill that was introduced yesterday, a point about 334A was raised. Most of them have talked about the census and about delimitation. We demand that the reservation of 33 percent should be implemented immediately.

**SHRIMATI BHAVANA GAWALI (PATIL):** I strongly support this Bill. Today, after 75 years, political participation is going to be provided to women. All women will benefit from this decision. I also want to say that 33 percent reservation should be provided to women in the Cabinet also. If women have to move forward, they will also have to play a role in the Executive as well. If we want to empower women further, we have to pass this Bill. There are many women sitting here, who have come after a lot of struggle. I have also come here after a lot of struggle. I don't

have any political background, but I am representing here for the fifth time. The way we have struggled and every woman has come here after struggling, I want to salute that struggle and say that we all should pass this Bill together.

**\*SUSHRI S. JOTHIMANI:**

**SUSHRI SUNITA DUGGAL:** The Women's Reservation Bill is the first Bill that has been brought in the new Parliament House, for which I want to congratulate the women of the entire country and thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister from the bottom of my heart. This is a historic Bill. The women who have contributed to bringing the Women's Reservation Bill must be feeling relieved today. I want to say that we all should rise above the party line and support the Bill which we have brought today. If anyone was most concerned about women, it was Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar ji, Jyotiba Phule and Savitribai Phule. Now if anyone has shown concern about it, it is our hon'ble Prime Minister Under the leadership of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, this Government had given the slogan of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' from the soil of Haryana. Women have successfully held the portfolios of important ministries in our Government. I want to add one more thing. It is important that women should be equipped with positions and posts and they should come forward in politics, otherwise, no one will listen to them. Lastly, I would like to say just one thing that all women, irrespective of parties, should actively participate in the discussion and passing of this Bill which has been brought today.

**SHRIMATI VEENA DEVI:** Women's representation issue has been discussed in Parliament and Legislative Assembly for several decades, but today an auspicious moment has come that the Government led by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of the country has shown courage and introduced this Bill in the House. The resolution of

'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' and the steps taken towards respect and empowerment of women have made us believe that only this Government can attach due deference to women and ensure their proper participation in politics. Unless both men and women work equally, society and nation cannot progress. I, on behalf of my party and the NDA, support this Bill.

**SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE:** I stand here on behalf of the Nationalist Congress Party in full support of this Bill. I always say that there are two wheels for a cycle to work. So, men are equally important. I would like to speak about the men who have influenced our lives as women. It was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who gave us the right to vote. It was Shri Mahatma Phule who made sure to give us education. A woman like me stands here educated and qualified because of what he contributed. I am fortunate enough to say that Maharashtra became the first State to implement 33 per cent reservation for women in Panchayati raj institutions. There are many families which have liberal, modern thinking. This is a big social change. Let us send a message to this nation that we are committed to SCs, STs, and OBCs. There are a lot of people who did exceptionally well in bringing in this Bill. What is the date and timeline for census or delimitation? If the Government wants to bring the change, then they should apply it in the Rajya Sabha. The way we are looking at decision-making to empower women, we must also talk about crime against women and the whole of Parliament must condemn it and make sure it comes down to zero.

**SHRIMATI DIMPLE YADAV:** We have always been demanding that women belonging to backward classes and minority communities should also be given the benefit of reservation through this Bill. When the Government is going to complete its 10 years of being in power, what has prompted them to be seized of the issue concerning women? My question is whether this Bill will be implemented in the

upcoming elections. When will the census be held? Will this Government conduct a caste census or not? When will delimitation take place? Real accomplishment will be realised only when we provide full reservation to women and I reiterate the demand of our party that women belonging to backward classes, minority communities and SCs/STs should also be provided with reservation.

**SHRIMATI JASKAUR MEENA:** On behalf of mothers and sisters of the entire country I would like to thank the Government for introducing the 'Naari Shakti Vandan Bill, 2023 as this Bill will prove to be a milestone in the continuous efforts of our Prime Minister to tread on the path of progress. When we say that man and woman are two wheels of a chariot, these capable wheels move forward supporting each other. We should not put a question mark on the competence of women. Women are capable. Today, there are capable women in the present Lok Sabha who are handling many Ministries as Ministers. The Bill provides for providing reservation to one-third of the sisters in all the three legislative institutions, Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assembly, and Delhi Legislative Assembly, which is really commendable. At the same time, I would also request that the protection given by the Constitution to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should remain intact. I would like to bring one more thing to the notice of the House that the party which ruled for 65 years out of 75 years did not take pains to do anything for the dignity and the progress of women. Under the leadership of the hon'ble Prime Minister, women have been showing competence in the present Lok Sabha and after the implementation of this Bill, our sisters will stand even more efficiently. Today, 82 of us are in this Parliament and all of us actively participate in the proceedings of Parliament. I think 181 sisters will sit inside this Parliament when this law comes into force after completing the constitutional process. 181 sisters will provide leadership to the women power of this country for their

competence, education, health and progress and they will become partners in the progress of this nation and they will shine in the future.

**SHRIMATI SARMISTHA SETHI:** It is, indeed, a historic moment that in the new Parliament Building, the first legislation that has come before the House is the much-awaited Women Reservation Bill. The Bill has seen the light of the day only after the initiative of Shri Naveen Patnaikji. Our hon. The Chief Minister has always worked for women's reservation. Ours is the first political party to fill one-third of women candidates in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. Every third BJD MP in this House is a woman. We are promoting the political representation of women through Mission Shakti. In local bodies, we are pioneers in giving 50 per cent reservation to women. My leadership believes that along with political empowerment, we must have an action plan for social and economic empowerment. Odisha's model of empowering women through self-help groups has been widely appreciated. We appreciate the Union Government for bringing this Bill. However, we also suggest that this Bill should be implemented from the coming 2024 elections instead of waiting for the delimitation. This will correct the historical mistakes we have made to women during the last 75 years. This Bill has a provision for SC and ST women but this Bill has ignored the OBCs. The Union Government should take necessary steps in the interest of OBCs in this Bill. This will help the Bill to become more inclusive. Beyond the provisions of the Bill, we need to create an ecosystem for political, economic and social empowerment of women. Legislative provisions with a safe and sustainable political and social ecosystem will definitely go a long way.

**SHRIMATI GOMATI SAI:** Under the leadership of the popular Prime Minister of India, the Bharatiya Janata Party government is adding new dimensions continuously. It is the result of his functioning that the Women's Reservation Bill has

been introduced in the House. Proving the slogan of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Prayas' meaningful, an initiative has been taken to give full rights to half the population of the country. Those people, who are sitting in the Opposition today, have never thought in the interest of women. These people only pretend to be in favour of women. For the past several decades, the previous governments have not been successful in giving half of the population their rights. I once again express my gratitude to the hon'ble Prime Minister for taking this historic step.

**DR. T. SUMATHY (A) THAMIZHACHI THANGAPANDIAN:** Our Party DMK and our dynamic Leader have been the torchbearers of women empowerment. I rise here to support the Bill. While I appreciate the initiative, I do have my own fears, anxieties and doubts. The Bill is like a post-dated cheque in a bankrupt Bank. The Women Reservation Bill is a matter of right, and not a matter of favour. Our rich Tamil Epics have spoken about the rights and power of women invariably through all walks of life. Tamil Nadu is a role-model State which has been implementing several things for the women folk. Grant of equal rights to women in family property and 50 per cent reservation in local bodies' representation are examples of this. An empowered woman plays a stellar role in a nation's growth and in Tamil Nadu she stands second to none. After a tumultuous journey, this Bill has been tabled here today. There is no special quota for physically challenged women in the Bill. That is another grave loophole in it. The inclusivity of the queer community is a totally grey area in it. Why is there no reservation in Rajya Sabha or State Legislative Council? Section 5 of the Bill states that the provisions will come into effect after the delimitation exercise. This is a utopian promise. This Bill should be implemented as quickly as possible before the commencement of the 2024 elections.

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)** *intervening said:* On our very first day in this new Parliament House, we have started legislative work and have done the work of truly saluting the women power. India is the most populous country in the world and out of a population of 142 crore, 70 crore population is women, but it is very worrying and unfortunate that even today the participation of women in Lok Sabha is only 14 per cent and in Rajya Sabha only 11 per cent. A research by the Inter-Parliamentary Union looked at women's participation in the lower house in 193 countries, in which India is ranked, 149th and in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022, India's ranking is 135th out of 146 countries. This is not a very encouraging figure for us and all the economic surveys of the government also show that the participation of women in the legislative assemblies of our States to the Parliament of our country is very low, so the Women's Reservation Bill is the need of the hour. When we provide participation to the women of our country in urban local bodies and Panchayati Raj institutions, our women have done very remarkable work in rural areas and urban areas. Many topics came up during the discussion on the Bill. An important topic was that there should be a separate provision for women belonging to the backward community. This issue is serious and the concern is not unwarranted. Many historic decisions have been taken by this government during the last nine years to serve the interests of OBCs and I am sure that the Prime Minister must be thinking something towards preserving the rights of women coming from our backward and deprived section of society. In the all-party meeting, many of our colleagues were demanding to bring the Women's Reservation Bill. Now I see a strange situation. If the Government did not introduce this Bill, you would say that the Government is anti-women and when the government has brought the Bill, you say that the government has brought this Bill keeping in view the forthcoming elections in the year 2024. The census data, that we have, is very old and

on the basis of that we cannot carry out delimitation or generate additional seats, so we have to follow this constitutional process and we will have to create additional seats by carrying out delimitation along with the new census exercise so that more women get a chance to come in. This Bill is a welcome step.

**SHRI HASNAIN MASOODI:** The objective of this Bill is only to gain political mileage. I am sure that the people of the country perceive this deceit and hypocrisy. There is nothing in this Bill for women at the moment or in the coming days. Overall, if the Bill is aimed at women empowerment, women's participation, and women's representation, we are for it. But the manner in which it is being piloted, the way we are being deceived, we are against it. If we believe that gender justice is part of our commitment, why are OBCs and minorities being deprived? Why is there no attempt to provide total justice? Minorities account for 14 percent, now you see how much representation of women and minorities is there in the House? Why do not the Government have any instruments for that? We are supporting the idea of the Bill, we are supporting its concept. But our demand is that the OBCs and minorities that have been subjected to exclusion ought to be included in the Bill. If we can't do justice to women belonging to minority communities even after 75 years, I think it won't be fair.

**\*SHRI K. SUBBARAYAN:**

**DR. BEESETTI VENKATA SATYAVATHI:** This Bill carries the promise of empowering women, fostering inclusivity, and advancing the cause of gender equality in our political sphere. It sends a powerful message to women across the nation that their voices and perspectives are valuable, and deserve representation at the highest levels of the Government. Now, I would make some suggestions from the YSR Congress party. One is to review the Clause. The provision in Clause 5, to insert

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\* Original in Tamil

Article 330A (1), that the reservation shall cease to exist 15 years after the commencement of the Act, should be reviewed periodically. The second is to include OBCs. The original recommendation of the Joint Committee of 1996 Bill suggested extending reservation to women belonging to the Other Backward Classes once the Constitution allowed for OBCs reservation. The third is to prevent proxy candidates. To prevent proxy candidates and ensure genuine representation of women in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies, it is crucial to establish stringent eligibility criteria. The fourth is to extend the reservation to Upper Houses. While the Bill focuses on the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies, consideration should be given to extending reservation to the Rajya Sabha and the Legislative Councils for a comprehensive approach to gender equality in politics. I would like to state that the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill is a landmark legislation that has the potential to transform our political landscape by empowering women and promoting their active participation in decision-making. It is a significant step towards achieving true gender equality in our democracy.

**SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL:** I rise to support the 128th Constitutional Amendment Bill moved by the Hon'ble Minister. It's definitely becoming a history in itself. It is being consistently said that this Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha in 2010, but the Leader of the Opposition is saying that this Bill could not be passed for certain reasons. Who is going to tell the reasons? In the year 2009, this Bill was referred to the Standing Committee. The Bharatiya Janata Party got the Bill passed in the Rajya Sabha by extending its support to it when it was presented there. At that time, we were in Opposition. Even when it was passed in the Lok Sabha, Sushma Swaraj ji had said that the people of the Bharatiya Janata Party supported the Women's Reservation Bill. Despite this, the Congress-led UPA government did not allow this Bill to be passed. Congress leaders claim that they passed it, it is not lapsed. They should have

knowledge of parliamentary procedure. Amit Shah ji stood up and said that when that Bill was referred to the Rajya Sabha and subsequently brought in the Lok Sabha it was not passed there, it is natural that this Bill had lapsed. Now we have brought this Bill. Speakers from the Samajwadi Party and the Congress were saying that there is no reservation for minorities, OBCs. This clearly shows that they are not in support of this Bill. Today this Bill is historic in the sense that in the coming days, history will remember that the government led by the Hon'ble Prime Minister has done the work of facilitating the full participation of the Indian women by granting them 33 percent reservation enabling them to be part of the law-making process, policy-making process and in the functioning of the Apex institution of the country.

**KUMARI RAMYA HARIDAS:** In India, we always honoured and respected ladies. That is our culture and tradition. In 1989, the Indian Government, under Rajiv Ji's leadership, introduced the 64th Amendment Bill for giving one-third reservation to women. Even though the Bill was passed in Lok Sabha, it was not passed in the Rajya Sabha because of resistance from different parties. It is appreciable that such parties changed their mind after 33 years. We waited till the 73rd and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Bills under Prime Minister Narasimha Rao ji to give reservation in Panchayats. We cannot forget the Constitution (108<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Bill which was introduced in the tenure of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh ji. That historic Bill was passed in Rajya Sabha also. I think this Bill needs more discussion and amendments. I regretfully say here that there is no clear-cut date for the implementation of this Bill. This is because the Census of 2021 is due, and there is no clarification as to when it will be completed. The caste census also needs to be completed in time to notify reservation for different categories. So, I am afraid that this Bill may become just a wild goose chase before the General Election. I would suggest here that this Bill should reserve not only constituencies but also key posts for women. Such provisions should

be included in this Bill. I request you to include all categories of women in this Bill such as SCs, STs and OBCs. I support the Bill adding credible amendments to this Bill.

**MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR)** *intervening said:* As a woman, I salute the efforts made by this Government for bringing this Nari Shakti Vandan Bill, because India's ancient civilization and culture shows that we have always looked upon women as deities and have worshipped them. I congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister for the inauguration of the new Parliament building as well as the new initiative taken apropos the Women's Reservation Bill. I come from a tribal area where no woman MP has been elected so far. When I was elected, I got the opportunity to be the first woman MP. But, I would like to say special thanks to the Hon. Prime Minister for that, because the Government decided that even in case of no reservation being in place, our sisters will get a chance to be there. I once again thank the Hon. Prime Minister on behalf of all the countrymen that this new opportunity has been afforded and a Bill has been brought in honour of all the women. I salute this patriotism very much.

**SUSHRI MAHUA MOITRA:** At the very outset, let us remind ourselves that this is India where in 1946 when the Constituent Assembly was elected, fifteen seats went to women who had to draft the Constitution. India's founders in April 1947 agreed to the principle of Universal Adult Suffrage, simultaneously giving the right to vote to women and men. The demand for a special reservation is an insult to our intelligence and capacity. Today, it is both my pride and my shame that I stand here as a woman in India's Parliament speaking on the Women's Reservation Bill. I belong to a Party that has thirty-seven per cent women among its Members of Parliament. Within women, Parliamentarians, Muslims and Dalits have been consistently underrepresented. In the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, there are only two Muslim women Members. The numbers for male

and female turnout in the last General Election were nearly the same. But women's candidature remained at an abysmal nine per cent up from only seven per cent in 2004. This Government introduced this Bill claiming credit as usual for a groundbreaking move. Article 334 of the Bill says that the reservation shall come into effect only after delimitation has been undertaken. It means we do not know if and actually when we will actually have 33 percent of women sitting in the Lok Sabha. What this Government brought here today is not a women's reservation Bill. It is a women's reservation rescheduling Bill. The question of Women's reservation requires action. Give us this day our equal rights. We have already sent more MPs than what this Bill even envisions. You need to send more than 33 percent of MPs to this Parliament. We do not need any more vandans. Implement the reservation Bill immediately based on today's voter's list.

**THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND  
MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)**

*intervening said:* As per our cultural belief, while entering a new building, it is a woman, commonly looked upon as Lakshmi, places her feet first at the doorstep of the house. If it is looked at from the constitutional point of view, Lakshmi has assumed a constitutional form through this Bill for which I express my special gratitude to this Government, this House and the Chair. In the year 1971, when a Committee was constituted by the then Government, Bharatiya Jan Sangh had said that women should be given a constitutional guarantee. When this Motion was moved in the House yesterday, some people said that this was our Bill. Some people said that this entire constitutional idea was ours. Today's Government guarantees reservation to women for 15 years. Opposition leaders are saying why don't you implement it now? Whether they are of the view that we should not abide by the Constitution? Then it is alleged that why don't you give reservation to OBC and Muslims? They probably do not

realize that reservation on the basis of religion is prohibited in the Constitution. The way the Opposition is trying to mislead the citizens of our country, they should not get trapped in that illusion. We would be grateful if the Opposition does not become a hindrance to the constitutional empowerment of the women of the nation. Our Government has made efforts for the upliftment of women through various units and schemes since 2014. From the gender budget point of view, the figure for the year 2013-14 was Rs 90 thousand crores which rose to Rs 2 lakh 23 thousand crores in the year 2023-24. For the first time in the history of the nation, our Government is making provision for a separate gender inclusion fund for women in the National Education Policy. Also, through Poshan Tracker, it provides digital services to 7.5 crore children and 2.5 crore women of the country through a nutrition campaign. We have enhanced the dignity of women and now it is your turn to not just to deliver speeches but to do something and support this Nari Shakti Vandan Bill.

**ADV. A. M. ARIFF:** I wholeheartedly welcome the Constitution (128<sup>th</sup> Amendment) Bill, 2023 because it aims to provide reservation for women. It is an undisputed fact that women should have a prominent role in the law-making process as well as policy decisions. By introducing this Bill at the far end of the tenure of this Lok Sabha, and that too with the non-implementable provisions in the near future, the Government has exposed the hollowness of its pseudo-hearted attempt before the women of the country. Even though we had no knowledge about this Bill till its introduction, all the people of BJP knew about it in advance. There will be no women's reservation in the coming elections in 2024. There is no mention of a time limit for Census and delimitation. Women will have to wait indefinitely for many years. This Bill was introduced just to give a reply to the hon. Supreme Court with regard to a Public Interest Litigation. I demand the Government to remove political jargon from the Statement of Objects and Reasons, and contain only facts, reasons and the history

of this legislation. I request that without waiting for delimitation and Census, this Women's Reservation Bill should be implemented in the upcoming elections of 2024.

**SHRIMATI HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL:** In a House of 543 Members, 78 women MPs here represent the voice, the dreams and the challenges of 70 crore women. There are only 14 per cent women, after 75 years, in this House. There were 24 in the 1<sup>st</sup> Lok Sabha and there are 78 in the 17<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. The increase in percentage terms is barely nine per cent in 75 years. It is shocking that 11 out of 13 MPs in this House are men. This is the reason why almost 50 per cent of the Legislative Assemblies in India have never seen a woman legislator from those constituencies. This Reservation Bill is going to come into force after the Census takes place after delimitation. It is for the first time that the Census has been delayed by two years. So, today there is no final date as to when women will get their 33 per cent reservation in this House. Then, what was the urgency to bring this Bill in this Session? As per the Global Gender Gap Report of 2023, India ranks 127 out of 145 countries. Crime against women has increased by 26% in the last 5 years. In this House, 306 MPs have criminal cases, like rape, murder, and kidnapping. Forty-five per cent of them are from the ruling party. The literacy rate in our country is 65 per cent, which is 20 percent lower than the global average. In 2012, Shiromani Akali Dal was the first party in the country which elected the first woman Finance Minister. Being a woman, I definitely support this Bill.

**SHRI E. T. MOHAMMED BASHEER:** On behalf of IUML, I extend my support to this Bill. I also demand 50 per cent of the total seats allotted to women be set apart for OBCs and minorities, like Muslims. Worldwide, women's representation in the legislative bodies is 25.8 per cent whereas in India, it is just 14.94 per cent. So, such legislation was very much necessary. The census is due in 2027 after which the

delimitation exercise will start. Then only, the reservation will be worked out. If the BJP was really interested in giving this, they could have done it earlier, but it is a fact that the BJP is trying to find an escape route. With regard to the implementation of this Bill, after the next delimitation, there are many hurdles. I would like to ask who is going to identify the constituencies. I feel that the people's representatives and political parties must have a say in that mechanism. It should not be left to the Election Commission.

**SHRI DHAIRYASHEEL SAMBHAJIRAO MANE:** 50 percent of the population of our country is women. As a country that believes in matriarchy, this subject has been prevalent in this country for a long time, but it was not respected in the proper manner. Today the Prime Minister has talked about providing a system keeping this reality in mind. If this country has to be taken forward then women should be respected and have equal contribution in the development of this country. For this, Hon'ble Prime Minister has taken the initiative, and I support this Bill on behalf of my party. This proposal has come many times in the Lok Sabha and also in the Rajya Sabha, but mere introduction is not enough for its passing, rather a majority is required for it. This is the first government which has brought this Motion to the House with full majority. It will be passed in this House. My parliamentary constituency Kolhapur is the city of Shahu Ji Maharaj. If anyone has given an idea of reservation in this country for the first time, it has been given by Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj. I on behalf of my party support this Bill.

**SHRIMATI KAVITA SINGH:** Till now, 105 constitutional amendments have been made in the Constitution of India in the interest of the country and today we are again going to write the history of our country in golden letters. Today, women representatives of India are laying the foundation of building an egalitarian society in

India. In our scriptures and Puranas, we have heard about women power from the beginning. Be it the discussion on the Shakti form of Maa Durga, the knowledge form of Maa Saraswati, or the discussion of the wealth form of Maa Lakshmi, women have been playing a leading role. Today, in this era of modernity, when our society and our country is moving forward, this amendment is to ensure the participation of women in it. I, on behalf of my party, support the Women's Reservation Bill with the hope and belief that the issues of women's interest should not remain only on paper but should also be implemented in reality.

**UTPAL KUMAR SINGH**

**Secretary General**

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**LOK SABHA**

**FIRST SUPPLEMENT TO SYNOPSIS OF DEBATES**

(Proceedings other than Question & Answers)

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**Wednesday, September 20, 2023 / Bhadra 29, 1945 (Saka)**

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**THE CONSTITUTION (ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-EIGHTH  
AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023**

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**SHRI C.P. JOSHI:** The new Parliament House of India building is the epitome of the rise of the nation. Independent India's own architectural style has been used in the construction of this new building. The bill that was introduced in the first session as soon as entering this new building indicates that a lot will happen from here onwards which will be decisive and unprecedented. The Nari Shakti Vandana Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha will give women their rights in the true sense. Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji has shown that for his government, it is not merely a slogan, but a resolution that will be accomplished. The Nari Shakti Vandana Bill will portray a new picture and destiny of India. This bill is definitely a result of our glorious tradition. Women's power holds its special place in every field.

**SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI:** This legislation is to ensure that more women get elected to the Parliament and the State Assemblies. If that is the justification, why is that justification not being extended to the OBC women and to the Muslim women whose representation in this august House is minimal and very

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\*\*Speeches made by other hon. Members have already been included in the Synopsis (Main).

less? The Government does not want representation of OBC and Muslim women. This Government does not want to live in a world where marginalized people get substantial representation. This Bill will deny a fair share to OBCs. We know for a fact that with the rise of the Hindu majority and nationalism and with the formation of the Hindu vote bank, Muslim representation has gone down and will go down further. Is this good for our country – the politicization of Muslims? Is this an inclusive legislation? No, it is an exclusive legislation for those people who are already represented in this august House. There are only 120 OBC MPs in this august House whereas 232 Members are from the upper caste. Only 22 percent of OBCs are here in this august House. You talk about Vandan when female workforce participation has declined from 30 to 19 percent. What sort of Vandan is this when 63 million women are missing and have disappeared? What sort of Vandan is this when from 2017 to 2022, 22 million women dropped out of the workforce? This is an anti-OBC and anti-Muslim women Bill. This is not an inclusive Bill. This is an exclusive Bill. Had they been honest, the Muslim representation would have been higher over here.

**SHRI CHIRAG KUMAR PASWAN:** I support the 128th Constitutional Amendment Bill. Almost everyone will agree with this. Dr. Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar had said that if you want to judge the criteria of development of any society or any country, then you will have to see the development of the women there. Why was this law not enacted in the last 27 years? If this law had come at that time, the remaining demands pending today would also have been fulfilled. We want that women coming from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward Classes should be represented in it. I urge that this law should be passed unanimously by all the parties who agree with it as soon as possible.

**SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL:** It would have been better had it been included in the agenda of the all-party meeting held on the 17th, that the Women Reservation Bill, would be introduced, then we would have been able to discuss in detail. We support this Bill. The claims made about the commitment of the Union Government seem to be hollow. We demand that there should be a clause to give proper representation to women belonging to the OBC category in view of the reservation rights given by the Constitution. Today, the women of our country face various crimes. I would like this House to have a discussion the same day on harassment of and atrocities against women. In Rajasthan's Bharatpur, Dholpur and some other States, the Jat community has got OBC status for reservation purposes but it is not at the Central level. They should be given an OBC reservation at the Centre too. Cases registered against the protestors during Gujjar Andolan and Jat Reservation Andolan in Haryana and Rajasthan should be withdrawn. Marathas should also get reservations.

**SHRIMATI NAVNEET RAVI RANA:** I support the Women's Reservation Bill. I would like to thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister for thinking about the representation and participation of women in governance. The women, who are representing here, have come with their own efforts and capability. Many Hon'ble members said that it has been implemented already in many states like Maharashtra or Bengal. It was implemented in Zila Parishads and Gram Panchayats. Sonia ji is supporting this Bill today but she could not get it passed during the last 27 years. But it is the commitment of the present Government that this Bill would be passed. Our Hon'ble Prime Minister is going to ensure the power of women. To date, the names of women have been used for political gains only. No woman has become the Chief Minister of Maharashtra till date. This shows the seriousness towards the women and nothing significant was done for them in Maharashtra. But our great leader is determined to do something great for women. Rani of Jhansi-Laxmibai; Jijabai, and

Savitri ji gave us the right to education. Dr Baba Saheb Ambedkar gave us the right to vote and our Hon'ble Prime Minister is going to give us the right of representation. This Bill will give an opportunity to women of humble backgrounds to show their strength in this House.

**\*SHRIMATI KAVITHA MALOTHU:**

**SHRI KESINENI SRINIVAS:** The Women's Reservation Bill, 2023 holds the potential to reshape our democracy and empower women across our great nation. First and foremost, I want to commend the Government and the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modiji for taking this bold step towards achieving gender parity in our political landscape. India, with its rich history and diverse culture, is home to a vast pool of talent, intelligence, and leadership potential among its women. Let us not forget that the call for gender equality and respect for women's roles in our society is deeply embedded in our culture, tradition and history. In our history, we find inspiring examples of women who displayed unparalleled courage and leadership. Women like Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and Rani Rudramma of the Kakatiya dynasty, a Telugu lady, often referred to as 'Warrior Queens', valiantly resisted colonial rule and continue to inspire us today. Women like Sarojini Naidu, Kasturba Gandhi, Aruna Asaf Ali, Bhikaji Cama, and Durgabai Deshmukh, a lady from Andhra Pradesh, were not just poets, supportive partners, or flag-bearers. They were dedicated freedom fighters who worked tirelessly alongside male leaders, enduring hardships and making immense sacrifices to secure India's independence. Moreover, it is a matter of great pride that the founder of the Telugu Desam Party, Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao Garu was the first in this country to bring in and execute legislation for equal inheritance rights for women way back in 1985 in the State of Andhra Pradesh. This ground-

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\* Please see Supplement

breaking move set a precedent for the entire nation, ensuring that women had an equal share in family property. Our present Leader and former Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu Garu has consistently demonstrated his commitment to women's empowerment. Chandrababu Naidu made history by appointing a woman named Shrimati Pratibha Bharati as the Speaker of the Andhra Pradesh Assembly in the year 1999, making her one of the first women to hold this prestigious position in our country. This move showcased our Party's unwavering dedication to gender equality and empowerment. The Women's Reservation Bill, 2023, is not an isolated legislative effort. It aligns seamlessly with the Telugu Desam Party's long-standing commitment to women's rights and empowerment.

**SHRIMATI SUMALATHA AMBAREESH:** As I stand to speak for the first time in our new Parliament building, I am filled with pride and pleasure—that is, the long-awaited Women's Reservation Bill that I am getting an opportunity to speak about. We have to remember some of our great leaders, like Savitribai Phule, Sarojini Naidu, and, of course, Dr B.R. Ambedkar, who have fought for and pioneered women's rights in our country. We have travelled a long path of challenges to come to realise the aspirations of millions of our women, who are deserving and capable of playing an important role in the most important decision-making bodies of our country. I come from Karnataka, where women like Kittur Rani Chennamma, Abbakka Rani, and Onake Obavva were celebrated as icons of bravery and women's pride. Bharat is the only country that calls a woman a Shakti, or Shakti Swaroopani. It is also, I believe, a reflection of Sanatana Dharma today. This Bill will help us achieve the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goal No. 5, which focuses on women's empowerment and gender equality. I wholeheartedly welcome and support this Bill.

**SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN:** I would like to support the Bill, subject to certain reservations and amendments that I would like to move. This is a Constitution Amendment Bill. The nomenclature of the Bill has to be in English. In parliamentary history, Rajiv Gandhi, for the first time, introduced the Bill by which 33 per cent of reservation for women was provided in the Parliament as well as in the State Legislative Assemblies. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments had come into place, and therein also, 33 percent of reservation had already been provided for women. This law would be applicable only after the Census and only after the delimitation process. What is the need to have a Special Session so as to pass this legislation? 9.5 years have already lapsed. What prevented the Government from making legislation in the first NDA Government led by Shri Narendra Modi Ji? The delay has to be explained. I would like to seek a specific assurance as to when the Government intends to implement the Bill.

**SHRIMATI SANDHYA RAY:** On behalf of the sisters of the country, I thank the Honorable Prime Minister very much for supporting this bill related to women. By bringing the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme, he gave social rights to daughters. He gave pride to daughters by giving benefits of the 'Sukanya Samriddhi' scheme. By running a 'One stop centre', these women were provided with an opportunity to live. Our Government has done the work of providing employment to women by running training and employment schemes and providing them employment by increasing their efficiency and skills. Through E-Haat, women get recognition for their skills and move towards self-reliance. Under the 'Ujjwala' scheme, work has been done to improve the lives of more than 9 crore women in India by providing them with gas connections. Under the 'Deendayal Antyodaya' scheme, work has been done to connect our sisters through 81 lakh self-help groups. Modi Ji's Government worked to give respect to women by providing toilets to more than 11 crore women. Under 'Mudra Loan', Modi

ji's Government has done the work of connecting our sisters to the mainstream of the country by making them entrepreneurs. Today, under Modi ji's Government, women have become self-reliant and are running their families.

**SHRI ARVIND SAWANT:** This is the first Bill of the first session in the new Parliament Building. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj established self-rule with the blessings of Jija Mata. Savitribai Phule opened the doors of education for women. Aruna Asaf Ali led the freedom movement. For the first time in 1931, during British rule, Sarojini Naidu wrote a letter to Britishers stating that reservations should be given to women. The safety of women is important. This reservation will provide many opportunities to women, but we also need to think about the proposed rotation. When rotation comes into play. What will the woman who performed well for five years do after rotation? Will she sit idle or contest the election? If her party gives her a ticket, the reservation will go beyond 33 percent. This bill is entirely a political move. It has been brought in with elections in mind. This is an attempt to cover up major failures of the government on various issues.

**KUMARI AGATHA K. SANGMA:** Women face several challenges entering elected offices because of discriminating social and cultural beliefs regarding a woman's role in society, traditional forms of Indian society, and restricted access to resources, especially education and political access. Various leaders from across party lines like Madam Sushma Swaraj, Madam Sonia Gandhi and Madam Brinda Karat and many other leaders have played a pivotal role in bringing about this kind of a change. Women's representation is important because India ranks 140 out of 186 countries when it comes to women's representation in Parliament. India has 15.1 per cent representation in the Lower House and only about 13.8 per cent in the Upper House. India ranks 127 out of 146 countries in the global gender parity. After the 73rd and

74th Amendments, we have seen that women's representation has increased in the Panchayats. There is a need for women's representation because policies sensitive to women and the girl child will drastically improve when women are there in the policy-making bodies of the country. Article 332(A), Clause 2, which states: "As nearly as may be one-third of the total number of seats shall be reserved," should be changed to "Not less than one-third of the total number of seats shall be reserved." Reservation in the Rajya Sabha could be considered.

**SHRIMATI APARAJITA SARANGI:** I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for creating a favourable and positive environment for women in the country. I would like to mention two things. First, every Government has tried to bring this Bill in the past, but none have succeeded. The Congress introduced it in the Rajya Sabha on March 9, 2010, and at that time, the Bharatiya Janata Party fully supported this Bill. Second, implementation is our strong point. Census will be carried out and delimitation exercise will be done. The implementation will be carried out under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.

**SHRI GIRISH CHANDRA:** Contrary to the existing gender ratio between men and women, Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar ji in the Constituent Assembly envisaged proper educational, economic and political development in the Constitution for half the population of our country. The objective of this Amendment is to educate women, to give them proper representation in Government jobs and in politics also, and to increase their number in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies as well as in the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. By bringing this Bill, the present Government also must not polarise the votes of innocent women, like it was done by the previous Governments, hence our party demands that if this Bill is passed

then the status quo on the already existing quota of a reservation granted to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes should be maintained and regarding the 33 percent reservation that is being brought for women, a provision for granting separate reservation for SC, ST and OBC should also be made by this Government. The then Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh Kumari Mayawati Ji also took many steps for the upliftment of women. A provision was also made under Savitri Bai Phule Financial Assistance Scheme for the upliftment of girls. Mayawati ji also made provisions to provide housing units under the Mahamaya Awas Yojana and pension through the Mahamaya Pension Scheme respectively. Our Government had set up Kasturba Gandhi Vidyalaya and made provisions for the education of girls belonging to Dalit, backward class and weaker sections by also providing them with hostel facilities.

**SHRI P. RAVINDHRANATH:** Earlier, female foeticide used to be a common thing in Tamil Nadu. The former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr Jayalalitha, fought her way to the top primarily on her own strength. She improved the lives of women in a big way. The Cradle Baby Scheme was among the first-ever welfare schemes launched by Amma to save baby girls, by checking female foeticide and gender-based abortions. She was the first to set up the first all-women police station in entire Asia, she introduced other schemes like the Amma Master Health Check-up plan for Women, Amma Baby Care Kit Scheme, Thaalikku Thangam Thittam, which meant gold for marriage and cash up to Rs.50,000 was offered to economically backward women who had completed their diploma or degree. Tamil Nadu is the first State to provide 50 per cent reservation for women in local bodies. I urge that this must be continued in the new reservation policy. I also urge that women from the OBC community should also be considered for reservation in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies. I appreciate the vision and efforts of our hon. Prime Minister for truly extracting the potential of *Nari Shakti* in building a powerful and prosperous

Atma Nirbhar Bharat. For the first time, we have a woman representative from the tribal community in the highest constitutional position, This is the highest example of an inclusive democracy as envisaged by our hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

**SHRI THOMAS CHAZHIKADAN:** I extend my support for this Bill to provide reservation to women in the Parliament and the State Assemblies. By way of the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Acts, one-third of the seats were reserved for women in Panchayati Raj institutions in both urban as well as local bodies. We must remember Shri Rajiv Gandhi for his efforts in 1989 to bring a Bill for reservation for women. It is the credibility of the Government that they are coming up with this Women's Reservation Bill. The current representation of women in Parliament is only around 15 percent. The participation of women as public representatives in policy-making at the State and national level is very good. The Government has not conducted the census in time, that is within the last 10 years. The intention of the Government remains unclear and there is no provision for reservation for OBCs. That needs to be taken care of. Kerala is a pioneer in the empowerment of women. After the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendments, we have passed the Kerala Panchayati Raj Act and the Kerala Municipality Act and we have reserved 33 percent seats for women. Now, the reservation for women is more than 58 percent in Kerala. Kerala has made many remarkable achievements including literacy of women and healthcare facilities for them. Our state is the role model in the country.

**\*SHRI INDRA HANG SUBBA:**

**SHRI VIJAY KUMAR HANSDAK:** Hon. Chairperson Sir, on behalf of my party JJM, I welcome this Bill. The Members sitting in this House must be aware of

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\* Please see Supplement

the community to which I belong to, about the customary law existing in our community and the way women are respected and accorded equal status in our society. Women in many communities have to change their surname after their marriage, but the Santhal women do not have to change their surname. Today, we have moved from the Old House to the new one, but we did not see the presence of the first citizen of our country, Hon. President in any event of the House.

**SMT. SHARDA ANIL PATEL:** Today women are performing their duties in every field. Women are also contributing to democracy for the all-round development of the country. On the very first day, the Bill for 33 percent reservation in the Assembly and Lok Sabha, has been passed. This bill will increase the representation of women in this House and State Legislatures and along with it the responsibilities of women will also increase. Capable and educated women should be selected and sent to the State Legislatures and centre. Women should work for the development of their constituencies as per their capability because the Constitution of the country gives them this power.

**SHRI TOKHEHO YEPHOMI:** Let us not forget our past leaders who have given their best in bringing 33 percent reservation for women. Much has been discussed about the Women's Reservation Bill. Delimitation has been completed in Jammu and Kashmir and also in Assam. The Gazette Notification has been placed on the floor of this House. Very soon, there is going to be delimitation in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. Whether women's reservation is going to be implemented in those States where delimitation has been completed or is due to be completed. Since, 1974, delimitation has not been done in Nagaland. There was a proposal to have delimitation in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh along with Jammu and Kashmir, but because of litigation, delimitation could not take place there. There is a lot of disparity

in the State of Nagaland in respect of delimitation. A time-bound schedule should be given as to when this reservation will be implemented in those States where delimitation has been completed.

**DR. LORHO PFOZE:** In the past, this Bill was attempted to be passed many times and yet, it failed. As we have come to the new Parliament Building, there is a new vision, new hope and new attitude. The people of North East India have always given a very special place for women in matters concerning the governance of villages and societies. Manipur has had its role of producing women of great character and calibre and freedom fighters among the tribal communities. Women's associations of various communities amongst the tribals have played a great role in preventing atrocities and attacks on human rights by armed forces and social cleansing by staging prohibition campaigns against alcohol and drugs at local village levels. Good governance in villages has also been propagated by women forces in those States. For equality and participation of women in all developmental and decision-making processes of the nation, women are equally gifted as men to deliver. Empowerment is the need of the hour in this age.

**SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL:** Nobody can deny the issue of women's empowerment today. Shri Rajiv Gandhi had brought the original Bill. When he took this Bill to the Rajya Sabha, the BJP party did not support the Bill. The Women's Bill should be passed. Our party fully supports it. It is the women's right to get a reservation. For a moment, think about the women who are not educated enough to understand the integrity of the Parliament. Even if they want to enter politics, they do not get support from a party. All these big parties are reluctant to give tickets to these women. There is no point in only making speeches at the Parliament, we need to work

at the grassroots level. In Assam, our people are suffering due to floods and erosion. The larger part of the population has been reduced. Assam is getting destroyed.

**SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR RINKU:** The great mother of Sahib Sri Gobind Singh Ji, Gurjar Kaur Ji, from my state Punjab, had made many sacrifices during her lifetime. The women of our country must get their due respect. There are some things that could be improved in this Bill which are creating hurdles and hampering the immediate implementation of this Bill. When all of us entered this new Parliament House, we all had noticed the absence of the Custodian of the House and our Honourable Madam President. I would like to request that if we had taken up and passed the Bill which was already passed in the Rajya Sabha earlier when it was introduced by the then Prime Minister late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji, then the women of our country would have benefited from it without any delay. On one hand, I support this Bill while on the other hand, I strongly oppose the shortcomings of the Bill.

**\*DR. THOL THIRUMAAVALAVAN:**

**SHRIMATI SATABDI ROY (BANERJEE):** During the speeches in the House, everyone gives the status of goddess to women but the ground reality is completely different. If not a goddess then we must at least consider them as human beings, even that much would be enough. Rape against women must stop. This country and this world equally belong to women. Mamta Banerjee ji was already supportive of this Bill and is again supporting it. Women must be completely empowered through this Bill. Only when men and women become equal, women would get their due respect. We are waiting for the day when men and women will be treated as equals.

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\* Please see Supplement

**SHRI RAHUL GANDHI:** A huge step forward in the devolution of power to the women of India was the Panchayati Raj, wherein they were given reservation and were allowed to enter the political system. This is another step. It is a big step. I am sure everybody in this House agrees that this is a very important step for the women of our country. There is one thing, in my view, that makes this Bill incomplete. I would like to have seen OBC reservation included in this Bill. I think it is very important that a large chunk of India's population, a large chunk of India's women, should have access to this reservation, and that is missing in this Bill. There are also two things that seem strange to me. One is the idea that you require a new census to implement this Bill. And, secondly you require a new delimitation to implement this Bill. In my view, it is quite simple. This Bill can be implemented today by giving 33 per cent of the seats in the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabhas to India's women. So, I wonder if this is not designed to push the ball forward seven, eight, or nine years, and then let this thing play out the way it does.

**MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION (SHRI AMIT SHAH)** *intervening said:* Tomorrow will be recorded in the history of Indian Parliament in golden letters because on this day the Bill to give reservation and rights to women was introduced in this House, which had been lying pending for years together. Once this constitutional amendment is passed in Lok Sabha, one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha and legislative assemblies of all the states of the country will be reserved for women. With this, a long battle for women's rights will draw to a close. A new era of development led by women has started with this Bill because now the women of this country will not only get their share in the policies, but will also be able to secure their position in policy-making. Women empowerment may be a political agenda for some parties, but for my party and the hon'ble Prime Minister, women empowerment is not a political issue. The Prime Minister has been committed to

women's empowerment and welfare throughout his political journey. Beti Bachao and Beti Padhao is an example of initiatives taken to this end. On the other hand, the legacy that the Congress party left behind in Gujarat has come down from 37 per cent to 0.70 per cent. That is why I say that for us it is not a political issue. It is an issue of our work culture. With this reservation Bill, the participation of women in decision-making and policy-making will be ensured. This reservation has been brought to honour this. We have come here today with 50 per cent reservation to honour women for increasing their participation to correct the historical damage done to them. Attributed to the social system. This is not the first time that the Women's Reservation Bill has come up, this is the fifth attempt in this regard. It first came in the form of the 81st Constitutional Amendment Bill on 12th September, 1996, during the tenure of former Prime Minister Deve Gowda and this Bill was referred to a Joint Committee headed by Gita Mukherjee. Then on December 14, 1998, the 84th Constitutional Amendment Bill came and this Bill lapsed with the dissolution of the Twelfth Lok Sabha. Thereafter in the thirteenth Lok Sabha, the Bill was brought in during the tenure of Shri A B Vajpayee. Subsequently, 108<sup>th</sup> amendment of the Constitution was brought by Dr. Manmohan Singh and it was first placed in the Rajya Sabha. The amendment Bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha, but there was no chance to bring it in the Lok Sabha and that Bill also lapsed. The Bill came up four times and could not be passed on those times. I would like to implore all the parties in the Treasury benches and the Opposition today to come together to make a new beginning today by unanimously amending the Constitution and giving reservation to the mother power. I want to urge upon MPs of all the parties. If you think there is anything incomplete in it, we will correct it tomorrow, but what we have brought in is a matter of respect for women. Please support that. Four times we have disappointed this Parliament, the mothers of the country. This time, all of us should support this Bill by rising above political parties

and opposition, irrespective of party politics. Let us all pass it together. That is my request to all of you.

**THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL)** *replying said:* I thank Honourable Speaker for giving me an opportunity to speak on the 128th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2023. As per the data of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the average representation of women in National Legislative Bodies of the world is 24 percent. In India representation of women in Lok Sabha is 15.1 percent. In the wake of passage of this Nari Shakti Vandan Bill, we will be able to ensure 33 percent reservation for women by rising above the global average and our ranking will also improve. Honourable Prime Minister has a vision to strive rapidly for women-led development and this Bill is another step forward in this regard. This Bill provides appropriate representation to women. This Bill provides horizontal as well as vertical reservation to women. There is a need for delimitation for it as there is already a provision for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in parliament. Members have also raised some other issues. An issue was raised regarding the need for delimitation. A question was also raised about the need for seat readjustment. Shri Nishikant ji had also quoted Article 82 which clearly states that readjustment of seats is a part of delimitation. Lastly, I would like to emphasize that India is the mother of democracy. Today, we are saluting women's power through the empowerment of women in this temple of democracy by passing this Nari Shakti Vandan Bill. Under the leadership of Honourable Prime Minister of India a new chapter is going to be added to the glorious history of democracy in India.

*The Bill, as amended, was passed.*

**UTPAL KUMAR SINGH**  
**Secretary General**

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\*\*\*Second Supplement covering the rest of the proceedings is being issued separately.

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NOTE: It is the verbatim Debates of the Lok Sabha and not the Synopsis that should be considered authoritative

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