

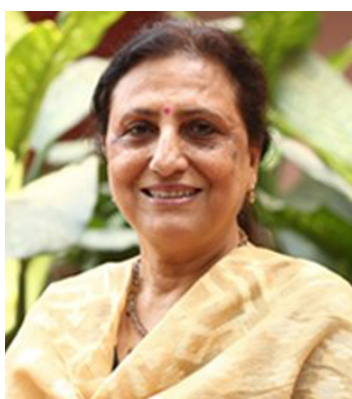


**SHE LEADS**



**STREE SHAKTI**

*The Parallel Force*



**पंचायत से संसद तक**



**PANCHAYATS TO  
PARLIAMENT**





GLOBAL AVERAGE OF WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN NATIONAL LEGISLATURE -  
26.2%



WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN NATIONAL LEGISLATURE IN INDIA-  
14.6%



## LOOKING AT INDIAN POLITICS THROUGH A

# *Gendered Lens*

India's parliamentary democracy bestows on the Parliament the keystone role of shaping the nation's future. Representation of 1.4 billion people, however, is bizarrely distorted if we assess our legislature on the basis of gender inclusivity. Despite the 17th Lok Sabha boasting the highest number of women parliamentarians, it only registers a 14.6% representation, far below the global average of 25.5% representation in the national legislature. This highlights the highly under-represented status of women constituting 685 million in numbers in Indian politics.

### **Women's leadership is ESSENTIAL.**

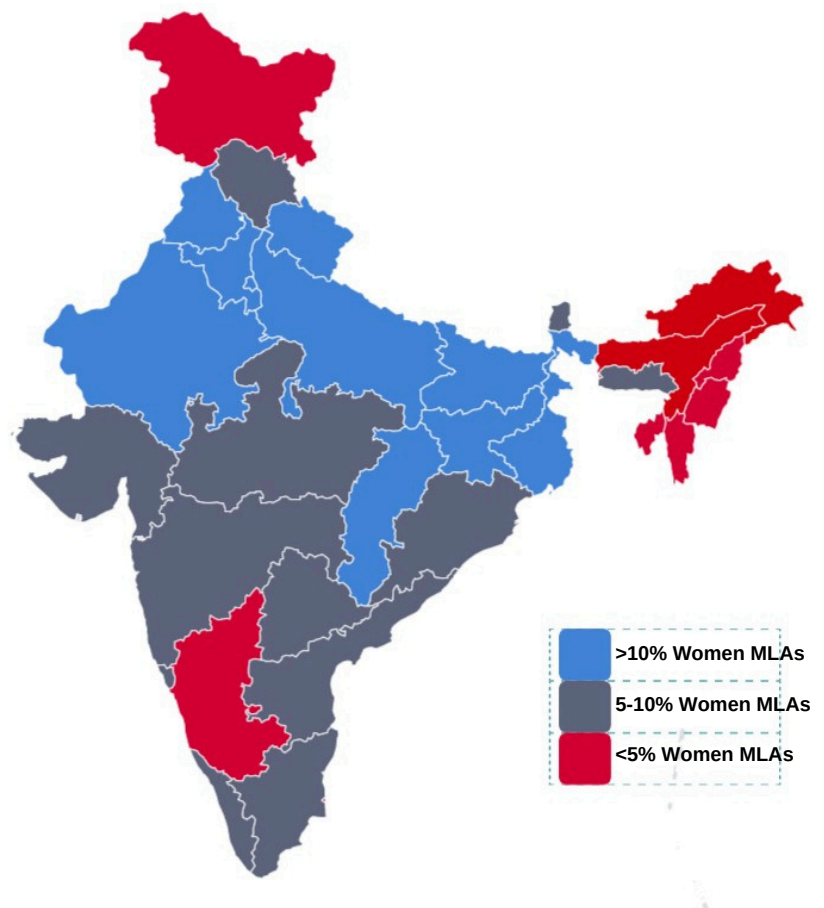
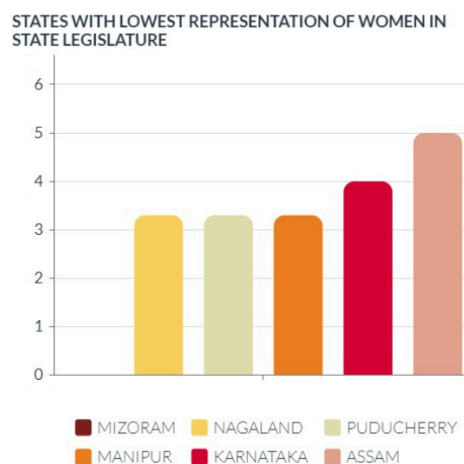
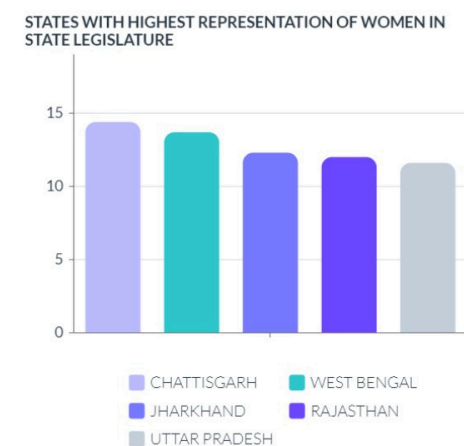
Legislative representation is essential for women empowerment. It can significantly improve the developmental debate, bring qualitative decision-making and empower both women and the nation. Women's political empowerment through spirited multi-stakeholder discussion, collective push, voluntary party system and women's caucus should be advanced to make room for more women leaders - to invite more female prime ministers, cabinet ministers, chief ministers and parliamentarians into Indian politics.



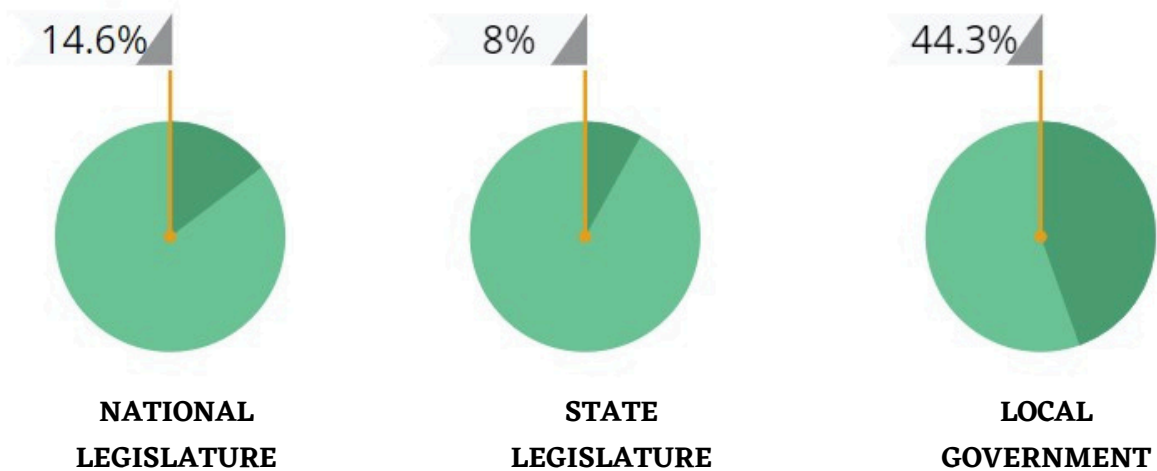
# A STATISTICAL ROUNDABOUT ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN INDIA

Despite the 17th Lok Sabha boasting the highest number of women parliamentarians in India's history, women's representation still stood at only 14.6%—far below the global average of 25.5% in national legislatures. The difference of just 57 women MPs between the first and the current assembly over a span of 70 years (1952–2022) highlights the persistent underrepresentation of women, who constitute approximately 685 million of India's population.

With the recent passage of the Women's Reservation Bill, which mandates 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies, there is now a legislative framework to correct this long-standing gender imbalance. However, until its implementation, disparities remain stark. The highest percentage of women MLAs from any state is merely 14.44%—still significantly lower than the proposed 33%.



In the political empowerment of women, a significant revolution took place in India with the introduction of the **73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts** that sought 33% reservations for women. Its successful results have contributed significantly in India's development.



REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN NATIONAL, STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

India's local governance stands as a global benchmark for women's political participation, with women holding 44.3% of panchayat seats—1.45 million out of 3.2 million representatives—and over 86,000 serving as chairpersons. States like Uttarakhand and Chhattisgarh lead with over 54% women representatives, reflecting the success of mandated reservations at the grassroots level.



In contrast, women's representation in higher legislatures has remained disproportionately low—only 14.6% in the 17th Lok Sabha and an average of 8% in state assemblies. Over 70 years, the increase in women MPs has been just 57, despite women comprising over 685 million of the population. While Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal have the highest number of women MLAs (41 and 40 respectively), no state has crossed 14.44% representation.

The recent passage of the Women's Reservation Bill, mandating 33% seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, marks a historic move toward correcting this imbalance and aligning national leadership with grassroots progress.



# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA

## *Key Milestones*

### **73rd & 74th Constitutional Amendment, 1992**

The P. V. Narasimha Rao government provided for 33% reservation in Panchayats and urban local bodies for women. Today 20 states have made legal provision for 50% reservation for women among members and Sarpanches. The national average is an impressive 46 percent.



### **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005**

The Manmohan Singh government brought in two important legislations- Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, is a legislation to protect women from domestic violence. Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 was introduced to amend the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 and remove gender discriminatory provisions in the original Hindu Succession Act, granting equal inheritance rights to daughters in joint family property.

### **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**

The "Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013" is a comprehensive legislation in India aimed at preventing and addressing instances of sexual harassment in the workplace.

### **Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019**

The "Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Act, 2019" is a legislation enacted in India aimed at prohibiting the practice of instant triple talaq (talaq-e-biddah) among Muslims.

## **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam - Women Reservation Act (128th Constitutional Amendment), 2023**

On 21 September 2023, the Government of India enacted the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, marking a historic milestone for gender equality in Indian politics. As the first legislation passed in the new Parliament building, the Act mandates a minimum of 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and all state legislative assemblies. Passed with near-unanimous support—facing only two dissenting votes—it represents a transformative step toward ensuring equitable representation of women in the nation's highest decision-making bodies.



## **Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Second Amendment) Bill 2023 and Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill 2023**

The Parliament on December 18, 2023, passed two crucial Bills — Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Second Amendment) Bill 2023 and the Government of Union Territories (amendment) Bill 2023— that among other things extend Women's reservation in J&K and Puducherry Assemblies.

The Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation (Second Amendment) Bill 2023 seeks to reserve one-third of all elected seats in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly for women. This Bill was introduced in Lok Sabha on December 12, 2023. The reservation for women will also apply to the seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the J&K Assembly.

# A LOOK AT THE GLOBAL SCENARIO

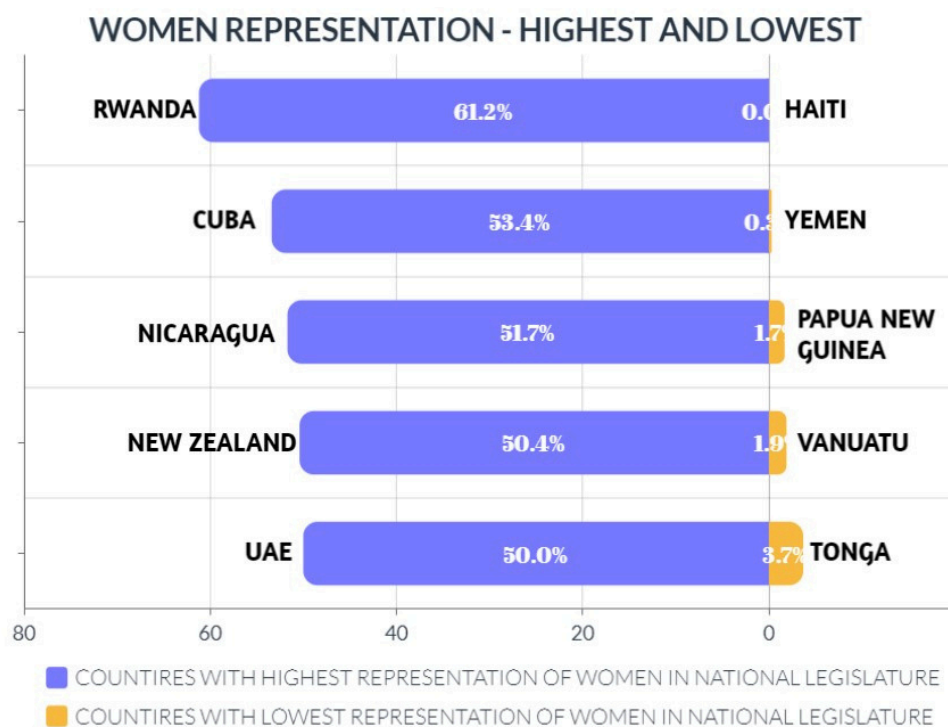
## *Facts and Figures*

As of 1 January 2023, there are **31 countries** where **34 women** serve as Heads of State and/or Government.

**Only 26.5 per cent** of parliamentarians in single or lower houses are women, up from 11 per cent in 1995

Data from 136 countries shows that women constitute nearly **3 million (34 per cent)** of elected members in local deliberative bodies. Only two countries have reached 50 per cent, and an additional 20 countries have more than 40 per cent women in local government

**Only six countries** have 50 per cent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda, Cuba, Nicaragua, Mexico, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates





## OUR EFFORTS, WORKS, AND RELEVANCE @

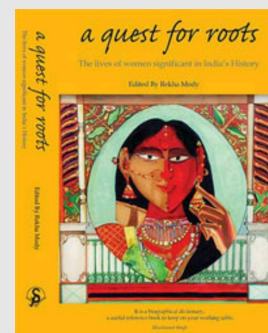
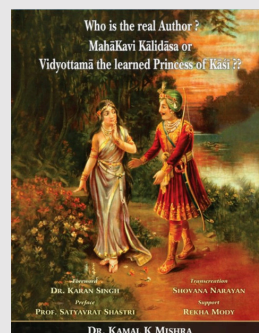
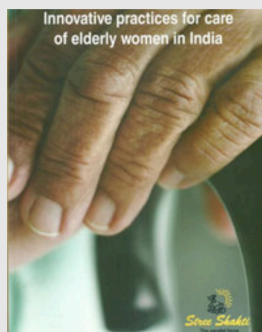
# *Stree Shakti*

We, at Stree Shakti, believe in the **lifecycle approach**. And we bring this organic approach to life in the socio-political sphere. our holistic overview actualises in our training women political leaders under 'She Leads', efforts under South Asian Forum for Ageing Women (SAFAW), and work of tracing gender(ed) history. We also demand free travel for women across India.

Our objective is to look at political development in the larger context of promoting women empowerment. Our intentions extend -

- To recognize successful models of women's leadership
- To promote through media achievements of women in decision making
- To focus on health expenditure and medical education to evolve policies for equal opportunities for all
- To highlight best Climate friendly policies

With an aspiration to document women history and aspirations, Stree Shakti has published three coveted works -





CREATING A UNITED GLOBAL WOMEN'S POLITICAL VOICE

# *Global Efforts*



**UN GENEVA**



**MELBOURNE**



**WIN  
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL  
NETWORKING**



**ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE - NEW YORK**

## **AWARDING EMINENT PERSONALITIES**



**Anula de Silva**  
Eminent writer, Sri Lanka



**Claire Chiang**  
Entrepreneur, activist and  
former Nominated Member of  
Parliament. Singapore



**Lily Thapa**  
SAARC Secretary General,  
founder of Women for Human  
Rights, Nepal

# MEET OUR *Visionary Team*

**Rekha Mody - Founder and President, Stree Shakti & She Leads**



Rekha Mody is a social worker and activist is committed to Women Empowerment.

She is the founder of Divya Chaya Trust established in 1984, Habiart Foundation 1987, Stree Shakti - The Parallel Force 1998. She feels that women all over the world are interconnected on various underlying gender issues. Rekha Mody is an art collector and had launched Kolkata's first FM Radio in 1994.

**Dr Nirja Mattoo - Co Lead**



Dr. Nirja Mattoo is a distinguished social development professional with over four decades of experience.

A former Chair of SPJIMR's Centre for Development of Corporate Citizenship, she has represented Indian academia at global platforms including the UN Global Forum. She also serves on several nonprofit boards and academic committees.

**Deepshikha Sangwan - Researcher**



Deepshikha Sangwan is a graduate in Political Science (Honours) from Miranda House,

University of Delhi. She went on to pursue a Bachelor's in Education and a Master's degree in Political Science. She co-initiated the 'School of Nature', a social change programme and works actively in the sphere of gender studies and research.

**Farzana Mumtaz - Journalist**



Farzana Mumtaz is an ace journalist from J & K, and Editor-in-Chief of leading weekly News Paper- 'News

Kashmir'. A prominent woman face of Journalism in J&K, she holds a visionary command of diverse fields. She has aptly attended scores of national and international conferences in her career spanning over two decades.



## STREE SHAKTI - THE PARALLEL FORCE

# Our Vision

As a pioneer in advocating for "आरक्षण और प्रशिक्षण", that is, "Reservation and Training," Stree Shakti, under the visionary leadership of Ms. Rekha Mody, has invested over 40 years in transforming this vision into reality. We have been advocating for positive change in India focused on providing women opportunities for self and national development. From advancing for free travel of women, to rights of elderly women, from organising several conferences and round table meetings, to providing trainings across states, we have worked relentlessly to pursue 3 major demands -

- *Immediate implementation of the 33% reservation for women in the National and State Legislative Assemblies*
- *Demanding 33% reservation for women in political parties*
- *Encouraging political training to women leaders*

The passing of the Women Reservation Act, 2023 is a cornerstone development in our journey of political empowerment of women.

In this backdrop, *She Leads* programme has been conceptualized to help women become authentic and effective leaders and to increase their engagement and impact at higher levels of governance.

Lobbying for womens' representation in Political parties & State assemblies

## Our Agenda

Imparting political training to aspiring women leaders

# Women Leaders' Conclave, Srinagar, 7-9 April 2025

The Women Leaders' Conclave 2025 (WLC 2025) marked a historic and transformative moment for women's leadership in India. Hosted in the breathtaking city of Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir, this three-day national platform from April 7-9, 2025, convened 500 participants from across the country and different walks of life—government, grassroots, academia, entrepreneurship, media, policy, and civil society.

With a resounding focus on 'Women leading Peace & Prosperity' and hosted by Stree Shakti – The Parallel Force in collaboration with 36 partner organisations and educational institutions from across the nation, the Conclave amplified women's voices and showcased their leadership across social, political, and economic sectors.

## Key Highlights

### Day 1: Literary Evening

- Held at the Golf Course Restaurant, this reflective event featured noted voices like Alka Saraogi, Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Dr. Rashmi Singh IAS, and Dr. Nuzhat Gul setting a tone of dialogue and inspiration.

### Day 2: Thematic Dialogues at IIM Jammu (Srinagar Campus)

- Nine panels curated by Dr. Nirja Mattoo explored themes including - *Entrepreneurship & Economic Empowerment – Redefining the Future of Work; Women's Health and Holistic Wellbeing; Building and Strengthening Ecosystems for Care and Support; Inclusion, Diversity & Equity for Prosperity; Empowered and Protected – Rethinking Women's Safety; Partners in Progress – Bridging the Gender Divide Together; Empowering Women – Innovation and Social Change and Her Story – Women Rewriting the Narrative*

### Day 3: Main Conclave at SKICC

- Inaugurated by Dr. Farooq Abdullah and led by voices like Sara Abdullah, Supriya Badve, Dr. Ritu Singh, Bureeda Majeed, Dr Aruna Oswal, Blossom Kochhar and Dr Muqbil Burhan, the Conclave featured powerful plenary sessions on leadership, STEM, and sustainability. The day closed with awards, including the Stree Shakti Samman recognizing Farzana Mumtaz and Dr Kashinath Nyaupane.

### Closing: Gala Dinner

- Renowned philanthropist Rajarshi Bhupendra Modi inspired the audience with a call to action and reaffirmed commitment to mentorship, partnerships, and collective leadership.





SHE LEADS



## Mega Conclave at Jammu, 09 January 2024

In a historic development for the women empowerment and feminine progress in all levels of electoral polity, a mega conclave of women and senior politicians of the country under the banner of Stree Shakti and joint collaboration with Dr Ritu Singh gathered at Hari Niwas Palace, on January 9, 2024.

Member Parliament Dr. Farooq Abdullah, Senior People's Democratic leader and DDC Chairman Safina Baig, Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta participated along with Rekha Mody, Founder Stree Shakti, Dr. Ritu Singh, educationist and Chairman Maharaja Hari Singh Foundation, Farzana Mumtaz, Editor in Chief News Kashmir reflected their opinions. Stree Shakti celebrating women reservation in electoral polity at Jammu. Eminent women faces in polity and diverse fields Seema Murthy, Ritika Trehan, Neha Mahajan, Indu Khuda and Veena Handa affirmed their views on the topic.





## Deliberation on 'Women in J&K: From Panchayats to Parliament', 8 January 2024

The deliberation at Sai Shyam College of Education, Ghou Manhasan, Jammu, focused on women in politics in J&K, and the roadmap from panchayats to parliament in an interaction with academia, NGOs and organisations. Notable members of the panel included Dr. Usha Tickoo, Principal, Ms Rekha Mody, Stree Shakti and Farzana Mumtaz, Editor, News Kashmir. The event also formed as a cornerstone for the mega conclave on January 9, 2024 at Hari Niwas Palace, Jammu.



## Jantar Mantar March to Commemorate Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, 8 December 2023

The passing of the Women Reservation Bill is a cornerstone development in our journey of political empowerment of women. Recognizing the historical significance of this bill, Stree Shakti, in collaboration with leading women organisations, including Women Power Connect, Centre for Social Research, CEQUIN, A.Ni.S. I,U & We, Gyan Gangotri, Angaja Foundation, Action India, and others, marched in solidarity to Jantar Mantar on December 8, 2023, commemorating this historic passage.





## She Leads Training Programme in Leadership for Women, Chandigarh, 23 June 2023

Stree Shakti, with support from Chevening India, orchestrated a remarkable leadership training program for women at Chandigarh Press Club on June 23, 2023. The day commenced with an insightful opening remark by Dr. Kamal Kishor Mishra, and was followed by eclectic sessions by Ms. Abha Bannerjee and Dr. Pam Rajput. A riveting panel discussion followed, featuring Ms. Sheilza Bhatia, Party Spokesperson and Secretary General of the Jannayak Janta Party, and Dr. Ritu Lehel, the Dean of Women Studies at Punjabi University. The closing remarks of the day were shared by Ms. Caroline Rowett, British Deputy High Commissioner, Chandigarh.



## She Leads Training Programme in Leadership for Women, Kolkata, 15-16 June 2023

Stree Shakti, in collaboration with Chevening India, organised a two-day leadership training program for women in Kolkata on June 15-16, 2023. The event was graced by esteemed experts from various fields, including professors, scholars, industrialists, and social workers. Participants from West Bengal, Orissa, and Chattisgarh actively took part in the training. The training program concluded with remarks by Mr. Yemi Odanye, Deputy British High Commissioner. It was unanimously resonated that such training programs are very vital for the emerging force of women who are asserting their rights and roles in the Indian socio-political landscape.



## Conference on 'Women Pioneering Change for Peace and Prosperity' in Srinagar, 9 May 2023

Under the auspices of She leads, a one day session was held on 10th May at State Guest House Srinagar on the theme- 'Women Pioneering Change for Peace and Prosperity'. The meet was organised by Ms. Rekha Mody with support from Ms. Farzana Mumtaz, Editor - Founder, New Kashmir. Ms. Safina Baig, Chairman DDC Baramulla and Haj Committee, Jammu and Kashmir, Researcher Dr. Ovee Thorat, Professor Shafiya from Baramulla College, educationist Javed Kamli, social entrepreneur Dr Ritu Singh, State Commissioner of taxes Dr Rashmi Singh IAS, Researchers Mushtaq Ul Haq Sikander and Sheikh Sameer and Journalist Mir Sabeen Gulrez, AIWC member Roshan Ara attended the programme.

## Consultation at Constitution Club, 30 March 2022

The Constitution Club consultation was attended by BJD Rajya Sabha MP Amar Patnaik, BJP MP Gopal Shetty, ex MLA Reshma Aarif and members of Supreme Court Women Lawyers' Association along with members of different political parties. Concern was expressed about the low percentage 8.4 of women in states, with North East states having even lower percentage of women representation.



## Consultation at India International Centre, 29 April 2022

The consultation meeting at India International Centre focused on interaction with academia, NGOs and organisations like Indian School of Democracy and Shakti. Emphasis was laid on vouching for women reservation and imparting political training for aspiring women leaders.



## National Consultation on Women's Reservation in Electoral Politics, Srinagar, J&K, 30 May 2022

Stree Shakti convened a national consultation on Women's Reservation in electoral politics in Srinagar. The event shed light on the critical role of women in Legislative assemblies and advocated for the immediate implementation of 33% reservation in Union Territories to achieve sustainable development goals and balanced progress for India. It was attended by Prof. (Dr.) Kamal K. Mishra, Hon'ble Junaid Azim Mattu, the Mayor of Srinagar, Hon'ble Dr. Hina Shafi Bhat, the Vice-Chairperson of Jammu & Kashmir Khadi and Village Industries Board, and Hon'ble Safina Baig, Chairperson of District Development Council Baramulla. Academics, educators, doctors, journalists, civil society members, representatives of various NGOs, and entrepreneurs were invited to share their views.





TRANSFORMING POLITICS, EMPOWERING WOMEN

# *She Leads*

In 2021, we sowed a seed of hope. And we named it 'She Leads'. An ode to all women that carry the vision of a better future, **She Leads a unique leadership training programme** designed to support aspiring women leaders across all backgrounds run for political office in India. By creating a supportive environment for women to engage in political leadership, She Leads is pioneering a brighter future for India, one where women from all backgrounds have an equal opportunity to shape the political landscape of their country. **Between 2021-2023, the programme has trained 150 'She Leaders'**, emphasising the holistic enhancement of select women candidates' capacities by enhancing their proficiency in various conventional political procedures in a comprehensive manner.

**3 Years** ○ **6 Cohorts** ○ **250 'She Leaders'**

With the ultimate goal of amplifying women's voices and representation in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies, it is a multi-faceted capacity-building and advocacy platform that supports women at all levels of political leadership.





# EXPERTS FROM *Political Space*

She Leads invites seasoned politicians and political experts from a myriad political landscape to engage with the participants and provide them invaluable lessons from on-ground experiences. We have had the pleasure of hosting Ms. Margaret Alva (Former Governor and Union Minister, INC), Dr Heena Gavit (MP, BJP), Mr. Ghanshaym Tiwari (Spokesperson, Samajwadi Party), Mr. M.V. Rajeev Gowda (MP, INC), Ms. Shazia Ilmi (BJP), Ms. Archana Chitnis (MLA, BJP), Ms. Bandana Kumari (MLA, AAP), Mr. Prithvi Reddy (MLA, AAP), Dr. Amar Patnaik (MP, BJD), Ms. Sunita Duggal (MP, BJP), Ms. Kumari Selja (MP, INC), Ms. Priyanka Chaturvedi (MP, Shiv Sena), Ms. Sushmita Dev (MP, AITC), Ms. Charu Pragya (BJP), among others.





# SHE LEADS PROGRAMME 2021

The training of the first She Leads cohort took place from February 24-28, and March 6-8, 2021. The seven-day training program was planned so that each day follows an overall pattern while being dedicated to a separate theme of politics. The first cohort of She Leads was trained using online methods due to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. Over 75 applications were received from across the country, with applicants hailing from 16

different Indian states. A total of 50 participants from 13 different states of India formed the first cohort of She Leads. A large number of participants were from Haryana and Delhi, followed by Kerala.



# SHE LEADS PROGRAMME 2022

The Second Cohort of the She Leads programme was conducted over five days from 23rd February to 27th February 2022. The five-day training program was based on certain broad themes. The expert sessions were moderated by She Leads' alumni from Cohort 2021.

Over 92 applications were received from across the country, with applicants hailing from 18 different Indian states spread

across the length and breadth of the country. Over 50 participants from 15 different Indian states formed the second cohort of She Leads, including Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Assam, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh.



# SHE LEADS PROGRAMME 2023

The third cohort of She Leads was conducted from February 22-26, 2023. It saw a phenomenal 280 applications being received from across the country, hailing from 16 different Indian states and 2 Union territories spread across the length and breadth of the country. A large number of participants were from Karnataka and Delhi, followed by Uttar Pradesh. Numerous participants from Haryana, Maharashtra, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Assam,



Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Goa completed the cohort. It helped participants understand the complexities of political life, provided them with new information, and enabled them to form a network with like-minded individuals.

## TRAINING OF YOUNG WOMEN AT KURUKSHETRA UNIVERSITY, 2021

She Leads, in association with Kurukshetra University, conducted a two-day training programme for young women at the University campus, on November 16-17, 2021. The Chief guest of the occasion was Professor Neera Verma, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences and Ms. Monika Singh, IRS, Government of India was the keynote speaker at the inaugural session.

The keynote address was delivered by Ms. Monika Singh, IRS, Additional Commissioner of Income Tax, Panipat, Haryana. Three sessions were conducted that explored several critical themes,

including, identities and biases, women in politics-reality and challenges, pathways into politics, and why women need to be in politics. The programme ended with a certificate distribution ceremony and vote of thanks to all the attendees.





## Dr. Farooq Abdullah lays path for Stree Shakti Women center in Kashmir (Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave In Kashmir)

In a significant development, during the Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave held under the leadership of Rekha Mody, at the Conclave Honorary Session at SKICC, the prominent leader of the country, former Chief Minister and NC patron Dr. Farooq Abdullah, while applauding the works of Stree Shakti, praised women's power and urged women to realize their full potential.

During his speech, Dr. Farooq Abdullah laid out a vision for establishing a Women center under Stree Shakti in Kashmir, dealing with holistic issues of women of Jammu and Kashmir. Dr. Farooq Abdullah has promised suitable land for establishing the center, wherein under the Stree Shakti and leadership of Rekha Mody, the women of the country find a voice.

This initiative is expected to empower women in Kashmir by providing them with a platform to address their concerns and work towards their betterment. The center will likely focus on promoting women's health, education, and economic independence, ultimately contributing to the region's overall development.

Voices relayed to empowering women online that establishing such a women's center in Jammu and Kashmir is overdue, and with a seasoned organization like Stree Shakti providing such leadership, it is bound to thrive as a platform for women.



## Women's Conclave: A festival of coming togetherness and connections

Musab Bial

Every once in a while you inhale deeply and feel that now you have experienced life, and then life gives you troubles and then at times you exhale and you proudly stand feeling that you have experienced the best thing in your life but then, the most beautiful comes knocking on your door. That's what happened to me at Rekha Mody, Farzana Mumtaz, and Madhura Mir visited our campus last month. They later met us regarding the conclave festival to be held on 18th and 19th April and we had tremendous interactions with one another and about twenty of us were selected as the volunteers for this conclave festival. I knew this would be something other than another ordinary event. This was going to be an experience that will be with me forever. Among all the colleges in our city, ours was the one selected, and more so, to be among the twenty volunteers. Twenty of us with varying stories, varying backgrounds, but with one common passion to be part of something greater than ourselves. That in itself was a lovely start.

The conclave gathered amazing women from so many different backgrounds, artists, entrepreneurs, and dreamers. What made it so unique wasn't necessarily the magnitude of the event or the motivational speeches, but the real connection that was established, but even more than that men who shattered the stereotypes of misogyny and stereotypes and taught everyone that why it is crucial to have men in the dialogue of empowering women, be it in the context of the flow of the event, assisting guests, and ensuring that every last detail was immaculate, we were having deep conversations with individuals we've never met before but somehow felt immediately connected to.

I still recall standing beneath the golden night sky, seeing participants share stories, phone numbers, and ideas, while photographers clicked glowing moments of happiness and unity. The background of the Dal Lake at SKICC, with an almost dreamlike touch to the event. The soft waves of the lake sparkled in the sun, while the snow-covered peaks bordered every picture-perfect moment. It seemed as if nature itself was parting with us.

And then, of course, there was the lovely image of all women dressed in some hue of pink, while photographing the proceedings where you could spot all the heads covered with some hue of pink. It made the conclave a living festival of color and solidarity. Pink dresses, bright fuchsia, rich magentas — the color palette of pink was a potent metaphor for solidarity, power, and self-love. Amidst all this pink sea, we acknowledged one another as not strangers but fellow travelers on the journey to empowerment. In which Farzana Mumtaz was also honored by Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti Saman Award. For me and my friends, the experience went far beyond volunteering. It was personal growth. Together, we stepped out of our comfort zone, made an effort to talk to incredible women, and created bridges that led us to new opportunities. We discovered that genuine networking is not about accumulating contacts — it's about quality conversations, about listening, giving and learning from every conversation. And there was the Gala Dinner! It was like the ultimate celebration of all that the conclave represented. The meal was just heavenly — a buffet that catered to every taste, brimming with flavors that reflected the warmth and richness of the whole event. Srinagar's charm, the local and looking back at the day there was an overall feeling of accomplishment in the air. It was just about successfully pulling off an event; it was about the relationship we had created and the memories we had made. One personal victory for me was making it to my doctor's appointment after the first day of volunteering. It might seem like a small thing, but it reminded me of how far I've come in balancing responsibilities, personal growth, and self-care — although the spirit of the conclave quietly encouraged.



The Women's Conclave was more than an experience; it was a living and breathing celebration of connection, empowerment, and coming together. It brought the right people, interested in right voices, and provided a platform where every woman felt heard, seen, and valued. I left not merely with memories but with lessons that will stay with me long after the pink shawl of the conclave fades into the sunset.

The writer is an author, columnist, speaker and is pursuing Bachelor's in Honorary at Amn College. Can be reached at: musab.bial2106@gmail.com

HEADLINES TODAY

Srinagar, TUESDAY 08-APRIL-2025

HT - NEWS

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## Empowering Women, Empowering India : Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave 2025 Begins in Kashmir

InfoAsia

Srinagar, APRIL 7, 2025: In a first, the Women Leaders Conclave 2025, organized by Stree Shakti, the leading force for women's empowerment, has commenced in Srinagar. The event, which is a three-day affair, is being held at the Sheraton Hotel, Srinagar. The conclave is a platform for women leaders from across the country to share their experiences, challenges, and success stories. It is also a time for networking and learning from each other. The conclave is being organized by Stree Shakti, a leading organization for women's empowerment in India. The conclave is a platform for women leaders from across the country to share their experiences, challenges, and success stories. It is also a time for networking and learning from each other. The conclave is being organized by Stree Shakti, a leading organization for women's empowerment in India.



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News Kashmir

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## News Kashmir Creates History Editor-in-Chief Farzana Mumtaz bags globally prestigious Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti award



By Rameez Mahkdooni

In a development worthy of pride and accolades, News Kashmir Editor-in-Chief Farzana Mumtaz has bagged the prestigious Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti Saman. She became the 22nd recipient of this globally prestigious award and the first woman from Jammu and Kashmir to receive it.

The award was presented during the 3-day historic Women Leaders Conclave held in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.



SKICC Srinagar, Rekha Mody, the welcome flame, and Former Chief Minister and NC patron Dr. Farooq Abdullah were the guest of honor. Eminent women leaders spoke on the occasion, with Aruna Oswal, an eminent social worker, observing, "Let us create a vibrant Bharat for every woman of the country where she acts boldly and thinks freely." Dr. Farooq Abdullah emphasized the need for women to work hard to rise and make use of reservation opportunities without being controlled by men. He also offered land to Stree Shakti to establish a Center for the holistic welfare of women.

This would be first such center of its kind in Jammu and Kashmir, offering hope to women of world.

Dr. Farooq Abdullah promised suitable land for Stree Shakti to establish women's center in Jammu and Kashmir.

The conclave concluded with the presentation of awards, including the prestigious and historic Dayawati Modi Stree Shakti Award to prominent journalist Farzana Mumtaz, Editor-in-Chief of Weekly News Kashmir, for her outstanding contributions to media and women's leadership. The award is a recognition of her dedication to promoting women's empowerment and leadership. The conclave's legacy will continue to inspire women leaders and promote gender equity in the region. Professor Kashinath, a renowned global scholar of Sanskrit from Nepal was conferred the prestigious Vidushi Vidya award for his scholarly contributions.

Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave has crafted an unique history in the women leadership of not just region but entire country and world.

## Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave generates illuminating sessions at IIM Nowgam



Rameez Mahkdooni

In continuation with the historic Women Leaders Conclave by Stree Shakti, The Purified Power and the Lewis, the series of powerful sessions titled Tracks were held at the Indian Institutes of Management (IIM) Nowgam, Srinagar. The speakers from eminent walls of life brought and delivered in the language sessions featuring burning topics such as Entrepreneurship and Eco-

the future of work, Women's health and holistic well-being, Sports enhancing Gender Equality, Her Story: Women Rewriting the Narrative, and several other tracks, issues were discussed during day-long deliberations. The two-day Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave is a first of its kind, focusing on diverse issues and outlooks of women from the country and the world.

As a matter of fact, more than 100 women leaders, scholars and entrepreneurs

their expertise on these illuminating sessions.

The conclave's comprehensive approach to addressing women's issues was widely appreciated, with many participants expressing their gratitude for the opportunity to engage with thought leaders and change-makers. The event served as a catalyst for meaningful conversations, inspiring a new wave of women's empowerment and leadership in the region. Rekha Mody, the founder

also an eminent women leader of the country, opined that Kashmir has been an epitome of positive power and spirituality, and they are not there just for women empowerment but to give a message of peace and prosperity to the entire world. She observed that already burning demands raised by Stree Shakti and the Lewis, like free transport for women and reservation issues, have been addressed, and more recommendations would come up through

## Stree Shakti Women Leaders Conclave In Kashmir creates history for women leadership and empowerment

By Nigman News Desk — April 10, 2025, in Opinion



MEDIA Coverage

er Alka Sarop discussed her novel "Gandhi and Sarla Devi", highlighting

ed perspective on the milestones accomplished by Jammu and Kashmir in

ers Conclave witnessed an enthralling vibrancy on its final day at prestigious

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Website - [www.streeshakti.com](http://www.streeshakti.com)

E-mail - [streeshaktik@gmail.com](mailto:streeshaktik@gmail.com)