



General Elections 2024 in India comes to test the will-power of the political parties towards representation of women in adequate number at the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies

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Abstract : Though all the previous attempts were unsuccessful, the Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023 introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 19th September 2023 received required support of all members of Parliament of India towards allocation of one-third of total seats to women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies including the NCT of Delhi. The Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha unanimously passed this bill within two days after introduction in the month of September 2023. However, the provision made there-under is such that the seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies could be possible only from 2029 general election. In this backdrop, this papers analyses anticipated increase in number of women MPs and MLAs in India based on the constitutional provisions created by the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023. Though skillfully set aside, the upcoming general election of 2024 comes as a test on will-power of the political parties in India towards representation of women in appropriate numbers at the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.

IndexTerms - General Election 2024, Lok Sabha, Parliament of India, Seat reservation, State Legislative Assemblies, will power of the political parties, Women Reservation Bill, the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023.

I. INTRODUCTION

In order to create gender equality and equity in the political sphere to a nearly half of the country's population, consistent efforts were made for amendments in the Constitution of India. The constitutional provision for one-third seats reservations to women in the panchayats and the municipalities were made respectively through the Constitution (Seventy-Third Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Constitution (Seventy-Fourth Amendment) Act, 1992. After the success of political empowerment of women at these institutions of the local-self-governance, the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023 created provisions for one-third of seats reservation to women at the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies. However, the provision made thereunder is such that the seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies in India could be possible only from 2029 general elections. In this connection, this paper presents anticipated quantum of women representation from different states and union territories of India to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies through general election with one-third provision of seats reservations to be held in 2029 and those following afterwards. Though not binding but the general election of 2024 immediately following after passing of the Women Reservation Bill comes as a test on will-power of the political parties in India to represent women in adequate numbers at the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies without any compulsion on provision of seats reservations.

II. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The present study is aimed to determine actual quantum of women representation in the mainstream political system of India upon creation of provisions for one-third of seats reservations. The aims and objectives are therefore consisting of the followings:

- To find out the objectives of the bills introduced in the Parliament of India towards seats reservations to women for their one-third representations in the mainstream politics of India comprising Lok Sabha and State Assemblies.
- To analyze the provisions of the Constitution (106th Amendment) Act 2023 towards seats reservations to women in the House of People and State Legislative Assemblies in India.
- To find out anticipated numbers of women to be elected in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies from different states and union territories upon implementation of provision for one-third seats reservations.
- To review and analyze the performance of women participation at the different general election to the Lok Sabha held in India.

II. METHODOLOGY

In view of both descriptive and exploratory nature of research study, the data for this research were collected from the secondary sources consisting of the reports published by Election Commission of India and Chief Electoral Officer of the states, websites of the Union Ministries and the Parliament of India, PRS Legislative Research etc. on one hand and some research articles published in the journals, books, etc. on the other hand

IV. BILLS INTRODUCED FOR SEATS RESERVATIONS TO WOMEN IN MAINSTREAM POLITICS OF INDIA

The Bills introduced in one or other Houses of the Parliament of India towards seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha or/and State Legislative Assemblies commonly known as the Women Reservation Bills started from the year 1996. The introduction of Women Reservation Bills subsequently continued in the years 1998, 1999, 2008 and 2023 at different assembly sessions in one or other Houses of the Parliament of India. The details of such bills introduced in the Parliament are furnished in the table placed here-below:-

Table 1: Bills introduced in the Parliament of India for seat reservation to women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies

Sr	Name of Bill	Introduced on	Key Provisions	Reason for lapse
1	The Constitution (Eighty-First Amendment) Bill, 1996	Lok Sabha on 12 th September 1996	to allocate at least 1/3 of the total number of seats to women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies	Dissolution of 11th Lok Sabha
2	The Constitution (Eighty-Fourth Amendment) Bill, 1998	Lok Sabha on 14 th December 1998	to grant reservation to women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and the NCT of Delhi for a period of fifteen years	Dissolution of 12th Lok Sabha
3	The Constitution (85 th Amendment) Bill, 1999	Lok Sabha on 23 rd December 1999	to ensure reservation of women in legislative bodies	Lack of consensus amongst the political parties
4	The Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, 2008	Rajya Sabha on 6th May 2008	to allocate at least 1/3 of the total number of seats to women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies	Dissolution of 15th Lok Sabha
5	The Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023	Rajya Sabha on 19 th September 2023	to allocate at least 1/3 of the total number of seats to women in the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and the NCT of Delhi	Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha passed the bill

V. OBJECTIVES CONTAINED IN BILLS INTRODUCED FOR SEATS RESERVATIONS TO THE WOMEN IN MAINSTREAM POLITICS OF INDIA

The Constitution (Eighty-First Amendment) Bill, 1996 (Bill No. 100 of 1996), which came as the first Bill for seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and the Vidhan Sabha. It was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 12th September 1996 with the Statement of Reasons and Objects as reproduced in the box placed here-below:-

Box 1: The Statement of Objects and Reasons; The Constitution (81st Amendment) Bill, 1996

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Articles 243D and 243T inserted by the Constitution (Seventy-Third Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Constitution (Seventy-fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 respectively provide that not less than one-third of the seats shall be reserved for women in every Panchayat and every Municipality. Further, the said Articles provide that, from amongst the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, not less than one-third seats shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or, as the case may be, the Scheduled Tribes. The said Articles also provide that such seats reserved for women may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies.

Having provided reservation for women in Panchayats and Municipalities, it is now proposed to provide reservation for women on the same lines in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States by amending the Constitution. The major political parties are in favor of making such reservations for women.

The Bill seeks to achieve the aforesaid object.

New Delhi; The 4th September, 1996.

Ramakant D, Khalap. Minister of State in the Ministry of Law and Justice

Source: The Constitution (Eighty-First Amendment) Bill, 1996. PRS Legislative Research.
<https://prsindia.org/billtrack/the-constitution-eighty-first-amendment-bill-1996>

The 'Statement of Objects and Reasons' appended to 'The Constitution (Eighty-First Amendment) Bill, 1996 (Bill No. 100 of 1996)' clearly manifest the necessity for seats reservations to women in the House of the People and the Legislative Assembly of every State in line with provisions created through insertion of Articles 243D and 243T in the Constitution of India. Whereas, the Statement of Objects and Reasons, attached to and contained in the Constitution (Eighty-Fourth Amendment) Bill 1998 (Bill No. 71 of 1998) as introduced in the Lok Sabha on 14th December 1998 is reproduced in the box here-below:-

Box 2: The Statement of Objects and Reasons; the Constitution (84th Amendment) Bill, 1998

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

Articles 243D and 243T inserted by the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Constitution (Seventy-fourth Amendment) Act, 1992 respectively provide that not less than one-third of the seats shall be reserved for women in every Panchayat and every Municipality. Further, the said Articles provide that, from amongst the seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, not less than one-third seats shall be reserved for women belonging to the Scheduled Castes or, as the case may be, the Scheduled Tribes. The said Articles also provide that such seats reserved for women may be allotted by rotation to different constituencies.

Having provided reservation for women in Panchayats and Municipalities, it was felt that reservation for women on the same lines be provided in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States by amending the Constitution. Accordingly, the Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill, 1996 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 12th September, 1996. The said Bill sought to reserve not less than one-third of the total number of seats filled by direct elections in the

House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States for women, provided the number of seats of the State in the House of the People was more than two.

The aforesaid Bill was referred to a Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament and the Committee in its Report presented to the Eleventh Lok Sabha on 9th March 1996, further strengthened the provisions of the Bill and extended the reservation for women even in those cases where number of seats was less than three. The Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill, 1996, as reported by the Joint Committee, however lapsed with the dissolution of the Eleventh Lok Sabha and now it is proposed to introduce a Bill containing the provisions of the Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill, 1996, as reported by the Joint Committee to provide for reservation for women in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States.

The Bill seeks to achieve the aforesaid object.

New Delhi; The 26th June, 1998.

M Thambi Dural. Minister of State in the Ministry of Law and Justice

Source: The Constitution (Eighty-Fourth Amendment) Bill 1998. PRS Legislative Research.
[https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/1998/Constitution_\(Eighty-Fourth_Amendment\)_Bill_1998.pdf](https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/1998/Constitution_(Eighty-Fourth_Amendment)_Bill_1998.pdf)

In addition to provisions created through insertion of Articles 243D and 243T in the Constitution of India for not less than one-third of the seats reserved to women respectively in every Panchayat and every Municipality, the Bill of 1998 further relies on the report submitted by the Joint Committee of the Parliament to the Eleventh Lok Sabha on 9th March 1996 thereby proposing not less than one-third of the seats to be reserved to women in the House of the People and the Legislative Assembly of every State. Whereas, the Statement of Objects and Reasons, accompanying the Constitution (One Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 (Bill No. XXX of 2008) as introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 6th May 2008 states about abridged objectives as compared to the previous ones, as reproduced in the box here-below:-

Box 3: The Statement of Objects and Reasons; the Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, 2008

STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

The issue of empowerment of women has been raised in different fora in the country from time to time. Political empowerment of women is rightly perceived as a powerful and indispensable tool for eliminating gender inequality and discrimination. The Government in its National Common Minimum Programme has stated that it will take lead to introduce legislation for one-third reservation of seats for women in Vidhan Sabhas and in the Lok Sabha. The aforesaid idea followed by debate amongst the political parties and in intellectuals has paved way in getting the insight in the matter.

As a first step to achieve the aforesaid objective, reservation for women in Panchayats and Municipalities was provided by insertion of articles 243D and 243T in the Constitution vide the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 and the Constitution (Seventy-fourth Amendment) Act, 1992, respectively. The next step towards this direction was the introduction of the Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill, 1996 in the Eleventh Lok Sabha on 12th September, 1996 which sought to reserve not less than one-third of total number of seats filled by direct election in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States for women. The said Bill was referred to the Joint Committee of Parliament which further strengthened some of the provisions of the Bill by extending the provision of reservation for women even in those cases where the number of seats was less than three in a State or a Union territory. The Constitution (Eighty-first Amendment) Bill, 1996, as reported by the Joint Committee, however, lapsed with the dissolution of the Eleventh Lok Sabha.

Again, attempt was made to provide reservation for women in Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies and in the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of the proposed enactment, by introducing the Constitution (Eighty-fourth Amendment) Bill, 1998 in Lok Sabha on 14th December, 1998. The said Bill lapsed on the dissolution of the Twelfth Lok Sabha. Yet, another attempt was made by introducing the Constitution (Eighty-fifth Amendment) Bill, 1999 in Lok Sabha on 23rd December, 1999. But this Bill also had not been pursued due to lack of consensus amongst the political parties.

The Government has decided to reintroduce a Bill on the lines of the aforesaid Bills seeking to provide for reservation for women in the House of the People and in the Legislative Assemblies of the States. This is in fulfillment of the people's mandate.

The Bill seeks to achieve the aforesaid objectives.

New Delhi; The 5th May, 2008.

Hans Raj Bardwaj. Minister of Law and Justice

Source: Women's reservation Bill [the Constitution (108th Amendment) bill, 2008]. PRS Legislative Research.
<https://prsindia.org/billtrack/womens-reservation-bill-the-constitution-108th-amendment-bill-2008-45>

The Objects and Reasons contained in the Bill No. XXX of 2008 considers political empowerment of women as an indispensable tool for eliminating gender inequality and positive discrimination. In this backdrop and the Government's decision contained in the National Common Minimum Programme, the Bill of 2008 was introduced for one-third reservation of seats for women in the Vidhan Sabhas and the Lok Sabha. It further relies on reasons contained in the Bills of 1996, 1998 and 1999. In a series of Bills introduced, the Statement of Reasons and Objects attached in the latest Bill of 2023, i.e. The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023 (Bill No. 124 of 2023) introduced in the Parliament on 19th September 2023 for reservation of one third of seats to women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies is reproduced in the box placed here-below:-

Box 4: The Statement of Objects and Reasons; The Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023**STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS**

After completing 75 years of Independence, the nation has begun its journey into Amritkal with a goal of becoming “Vikas Bharat” by 2047. Realisation of this goal will require contribution of all sections of society in the spirit of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas”. The role of women, constituting a half of the population, is extremely important in realisation of this goal.

Government has taken a number of steps to bring “Nari shakti” to the forefront through women’s empowerment and women led development resulting in substantial improvement in financial independence of women and availability of equal access to education and health. Government has also emphasised “Ease of Living”, especially of women, through various initiatives including Ujjawala Yojana, access to toilets under Swacch Bharat Mission, financial inclusion through the Mudra Yojana, etc. However, true empowerment of women will require greater participation of women in the decision-making process as they bring different perspectives and enrich the quality of legislative debates and decision-making.

While women participate substantively in the Panchayat Raj Institutions and municipal bodies, their representation in the State Legislatures as well as in Parliament is still limited. Providing for higher representation of women at State and national level has also been a long pending demand. There have been several efforts to introduce women’s reservation in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. The last such attempt was made in 2010, when the Rajya Sabha had passed a Bill for women’s reservation, but the same could not be passed in the Lok Sabha.

In order to enable greater participation of women as public representative in policy making at State and national level, it is decided to introduce a fresh legislation for Constitutional amendment to provide for, as nearly as may be, one-third of total seats in the House of the People, the legislative assembly of every State and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi to be reserved for women.

The Bill seeks to achieve the above objectives.

New Delhi; The 18th September, 2023.

Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of Law and Justice

Source: Ministry of Law and Justice, Govt. of India. The Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023. prsindia.org. [https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2023/Constitution_\(128th_Amendment\)_Bill_2023.pdf](https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2023/Constitution_(128th_Amendment)_Bill_2023.pdf)

The Statement of Objects and Reasons of Bill No. 124 of 2023 manifests the Government of India’s perspectives indicating pro-women policies and schemes for their empowerment in all spheres. Whereas, need for their true empowerment is stated to be fulfilled with their greater participation in the decision-making process at the State and national levels to bring different perspectives and enrich quality of legislative debates. In this background, the objects of the Bill brings out necessity for introduction of Bill towards reservation of one-third of total seats to women in the House of the People, the Legislative Assembly of every State and the Legislative Assembly of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Whereas, in core, reservation of one-third of total seats to women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies can be summarized as one point agenda of the Statement of Objects and Reasons contained in all the Women Reservation Bills introduced in the Parliament of India.

VI. REVIEW OF KEY PROVISIONS OF THE WOMEN RESERVATION BILL OF 2023 & ACT MADE THEREOF

The Lok Sabha passed the 128th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2023 (Bill No. 124 of 2023) with 454 members in favor on 20th September 2023 and on the following day, the Rajya Sabha also approved the Bill unanimously.

Consequent to passing of the Women Reservation Bill of 2023 by both Houses of Parliament, it was endorsed by the Vice President of India (also the Chairman of Rajya Sabha), and then sent to the President of India for her approval. Thereafter the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 received the assent of the President of India on the 28th September 2023 and got published for general information in the Gazette of India bearing No. 36 dated: 28th September 2023.

This Act brings amendment to Article 239AA (special provisions related to the NCT of Delhi) with insertion of three new Articles, namely Articles 330A, 332A, and 334A. The introduction of the first two Articles in the Constitution of India brings out one-third of seats reservations to women in the House of the People (Lok Sabha) and the State Legislative Assemblies respectively. However, the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 provides that it shall come into force only from such date as the Central Government may appoint and notify in the Official Gazette. Further, seats reservations to women are set to be enforced following a delimitation exercise conducted for this purpose only after enactment of Act. In light of this, the 128th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2023 consists of some important provisions to impact seats reservations to women as listed but not limited to those stated here-below:-

- Seats reservations for Women: The Bill seeks to provide at least one-third of the total number of seats to be reserved for women in (i) the Lok Sabha, (ii) all State Legislative Assemblies and (iii) the Legislative Assembly of the NCT of Delhi.
- Period for reservation: The Bill intends to provide seats reservations for a specified period of fifteen years from the date of commencement of the Act.
- Commencement of Reservation: The reservation will be applicable only after delimitation of constituencies upon publication of results of 1st Census after 2023. Alternatively, reservation for women is to be made tentatively applicable from 2029 general elections onwards. However, it do not make any implication in the general election scheduled to be held in the year 2024.
- Rotation of Seats: The Bill provides for rotation of seats after every delimitation of the constituencies, as determined by a law made by Parliament.

Despite of being landmark legislation for the political representation of women to one-third of total seats of the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies of India, the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 is widely criticized for the reasons listed but not limited to those stated here-below:-

- The Act do not provide seats reservations to women either in the Rajya Sabha or/and Legislative Councils of the States in India.

- (b) The reservation of seats for women is dependent on the Census and delimitation of the Constituencies to be undertaken immediately after general election of 2024. This process delays and defers implementation of law brought for seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assembly of every State and the NCT of Delhi. It appears to be a tactic for delaying the decision to grant benefits of seats reservations and skip the general election scheduled in the year 2024.
- (c) The seats reservations of women are scheduled to remain in effect for a period of fifteen years from date of commencement of Act. In terms of time period, it appears to be a temporary provision but not permanent solution for political representation of women in the mainstream politics in India.

As the Women Reservation Bill of 2023 intends to come into effect only after a process of delimitation of the constituencies is carried out upon publication of reports of the first census, the benefit of seats reservation to women becomes subjected to terms and conditions. However, such conditional provision was not available in all the similar Bills of 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2008 introduced in the Parliament of India. With the Covid-19 pandemics, the scheduled Census of 2021 in India got postponded but expected to be held only after the 2024 general election of the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. In order to ensure timely implementation of the Act, timely conduct and publication of census data is necessary. Any delay in the next Census will further delay in delimitation of the Constituencies, which is necessary for appointment of date for implementation of Act.

Accordingly, the terms and conditions stipulated for implementation of the one-third of seats reservations to women shall therefore automatically skips granting of such benefits to women in general election scheduled to be held in the year 2024

VII. NUMBERS OF WOMEN REPRESENTATIONS IN THE LOK SABHA AND STATE ASSEMBLIES AFTER IMPLEMENTATION OF PROVISIONS FOR ONE-THIRD OF THEIR SEATS RESERVATION

The Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 enabled one-third of seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. In case of the Lower House of the Parliament considering its total strength of 545 members, one-third of seats reservation to women for the first, second and third instances of general election held in the different States and Union Territories can be presented in an approximate number as shown in the table placed here-below:-

Table 2: Anticipated numbers of women representations in the Lok Sabha after one-third of seats reservation

Sr	States/ UTs	Lok Sabha Seats				1/3rd seat reservation to women in the general elections											
						First election				Second election				Third election			
		SC	ST	Gen	Total	SC	ST	Gen	Total	SC	ST	Gen	Total	SC	ST	Gen	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	7	3	32	42	2	1	11	14	2	1	11	14	2	1	11	14
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
3	Assam	1	2	11	14	1	1	3	5	-	1	4	5	-	-	5	5
4	Bihar	6	-	34	40	2	-	11	13	2	-	11	13	2	-	11	13
5	Chattisgarh	1	4	6	11	1	1	2	4	-	1	3	4	-	1	3	4
6	Goa	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
7	Gujarat	2	4	20	26	1	1	7	9	1	1	7	9	-	1	8	9
8	Haryana	2	-	8	10	1	-	2	3	1	-	2	3	-	-	3	3
9	HP	1	-	3	4	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
10	J&K	-	-	6	6	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	2
11	Jharkhand	1	5	8	14	1	2	2	5	-	2	3	5	-	2	3	5
12	Karnataka	5	2	21	28	2	1	6	9	2	1	6	9	2	-	7	9
13	Kerala	2	-	18	20	1	-	6	7	1	-	6	7	-	-	7	7
14	MP	4	6	19	29	1	2	7	10	1	2	7	10	1	2	7	10
15	Maharashtra	5	4	39	48	2	1	13	16	2	1	13	16	2	1	13	16
16	Manipur	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	Meghalaya	-	2	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
18	Mizoram	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	Nagaland	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	Orissa	3	5	13	21	1	2	4	7	1	2	4	7	1	2	4	7
21	Punjab	4	-	9	13	1	-	3	4	1	-	3	4	1	-	3	4
22	Rajasthan	4	3	18	25	1	1	6	8	1	1	6	8	1	1	6	8
23	Sikkim	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	TN	7	-	32	39	2	-	11	13	2	-	11	13	2	-	11	13
25	Tripura	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26	Uttarakhand	1	-	4	5	1	-	1	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	2
27	UP	17	-	63	80	6	-	21	27	6	-	21	27	6	-	21	27
28	WB	10	2	30	42	3	1	10	14	3	1	10	14	3	-	11	14
29	Delhi	1	-	6	7	1	-	1	2	-	-	2	2	-	-	2	2
30	Puducherry	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31	Andaman	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32	Chandigarh	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
33	Dadra	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	Daman	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

35	Lakshadweep	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
36	Anglo-Indian	-	-	2	2	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Grand Total	84	47	414	545	32	20	140	192	26	15	138	179	23	11	141	175

Source: PRS Legislative Research. (2023, November 16). *No of seats reserved - PRS legislative research.*
https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2008/no_of_seats_reserved.xls

A total of 192 women MPs representing different Parliamentary Constituencies from different States and Union Territories of the country are likely to become members in the House of the People at the Parliament of India in the first stance while 179 and 175 in the second and third occasions. Similarly, with the provisions of one-third of seats reserved to women, anticipated number of women representations as MLAs at the different State Legislative Assemblies across the country shall be arrived on first, second and third instances of Assembly elections as shown in the table place here-below:-

Table 3: Anticipated numbers of women representations in the State Assemblies after one-third of seats reservation

Sr	States/ UTs	Seats in State Legislative Assemblies				1/3rd seat reservation to women in the general elections											
						First election				Second election				Third election			
		SC	ST	Gen.	Total	SC	ST	Gen.	Total	SC	ST	Gen.	Total	SC	ST	Gen.	Total
1	Andhra Pradesh	48	19	227	294	16	6	76	98	16	6	76	98	16	6	76	98
2	Arunachal Pradesh	-	59	1	60	-	20	1	21	-	20	-	20	-	20	-	20
3	Assam	8	16	102	126	3	5	34	42	3	5	34	42	3	5	34	42
4	Bihar	38	2	203	243	13	1	67	81	13	1	67	81	13	-	68	81
5	Chattisgarh	10	29	51	90	3	10	17	30	3	10	17	30	3	10	17	30
6	Goa	1	-	39	40	1	-	12	13	-	-	13	13	-	-	13	13
7	Gujarat	13	27	142	182	4	9	48	61	4	9	48	61	4	9	48	61
8	Haryana	17	-	73	90	6	-	24	30	6	-	24	30	6	-	24	30
9	HP	17	3	48	68	6	1	16	23	6	1	16	23	6	1	16	23
10	J&K	-	-	87	87	-	-	29	29	-	-	29	29	-	-	29	29
11	Jharkhand	9	28	44	81	3	9	15	27	3	9	15	27	3	9	15	27
12	Karnataka	36	15	173	224	12	5	58	75	12	5	58	75	12	5	58	75
13	Kerala	14	2	124	140	5	1	41	47	5	1	41	47	5	-	42	47
14	MP	35	47	148	230	12	16	49	77	12	16	49	77	12	16	49	77
15	Maharashtra	29	25	234	288	10	8	78	96	10	8	78	96	10	8	78	96
16	Manipur	1	19	40	60	1	6	13	20	-	6	14	20	-	6	14	20
17	Meghalaya	-	55	5	60	-	18	2	20	-	18	2	20	-	18	2	20
18	Mizoram	-	38	2	40	-	13	1	14	-	13	1	14	-	13	-	13
19	Nagaland	-	59	1	60	-	20	1	21	-	20	-	20	-	20	-	20
20	Orissa	24	33	90	147	8	11	30	49	8	11	30	49	8	11	30	49
21	Punjab	34	-	83	117	11	-	28	39	11	-	28	39	11	-	28	39
22	Rajasthan	34	25	141	200	11	8	48	67	11	8	48	67	11	8	48	67
23	Sikkim	2	12	18	32	1	4	6	11	1	4	6	11	-	4	7	11
24	TN	44	2	188	234	15	1	62	78	15	1	62	78	15	-	63	78
25	Tripura	10	20	30	60	3	7	10	20	3	7	10	20	3	7	10	20
26	Uttarakhand	13	2	55	70	4	1	18	23	4	1	18	23	4	-	19	23
27	UP	85	-	318	403	28	-	106	134	28	-	106	134	28	-	106	134
28	WB	68	16	210	294	23	5	70	98	23	5	70	98	23	5	70	98
29	Delhi	12	-	58	70	4	-	19	23	4	-	19	23	4	-	19	23
30	Puducherry*	5	-	25	30	2	-	8	10	2	-	8	10	2	-	8	10
	Total	607	553	2960	4120	205	185	987	1377	203	185	987	1375	202	181	991	1374
	Total excl. Puducherry	602	553	2935	4090	203	185	979	1367	201	185	979	1365	200	181	983	1364

Note: *- Reservation for Puducherry Assembly does not require an Amendment to the Constitution of India, and was thus not part of the Bill. It requires an ordinary Act of Parliament.

Source: PRS Legislative Research. (2023, November 16). *No of seats reserved - PRS legislative research.*
https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts/bills_parliament/2008/no_of_seats_reserved.xls

Taking together both the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies, a minimum of 1500 women will become people's representatives in the largest democratic country at a time in the first instance after implementation of provisions for their one-third of seats reservations as per Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023. Such representation of women is anticipated to bring motivation and encouragement for the aspiring women in the mainstream politics. This will also have a way paved for the elected women representatives of the local-self-governance to move on to the higher and highest level of politics in the country.

VIII. PERFORMANCE OF WOMEN CONTESTANTS IN THE GENERAL ELECTIONS TO THE LOK SABHA

In addition to active participation of women in electoral politics, the women are taking part in contesting every general elections of the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies held in India. However, in case of general elections to the Lok Sabha, the number of the

contestants and those elected from different parliamentary constituencies can be viewed as performance of women candidates. The table placed here-below presents the performance of the women in the general elections to different Lok Sabha held in India.

Table 4: Performance of women contestants in the general elections to the Lok Sabha in India

Lok Sabha elections		Total seats	Number of women candidates			% of elected women over	
Series	Year		Contestants	Elected	Deposits Forfeited	women contestants	Total seats
6 th	1977	542	70	19	31	27.14	3.51
7 th	1980	542	143	28	79	19.58	5.17
8 th	1984-85	541	171	43	109	25.15	7.95
9 th	1989	529	198	29	115	14.65	5.48
10 th	1991-92	537	330	39	250	11.82	7.26
11 th	1996	543	599	40	518	6.68	7.37
12 th	1998	543	274	43	184	15.69	7.92
13 th	1999	543	284	49	183	17.25	9.02
14 th	2004	543	355	45	239	12.68	8.29
15 th	2009	543	556	59	441	10.61	10.87
16 th	2014	543	668	62	525	9.28	11.42
17 th	2019	543	726	78	575	10.74	14.36

Note: [a] Due to lack of gender-wise break up, data of elections held from 1951 and 1971 are not shown. [b] 8th Lok Sabha elections consisted of general elections held in the year 1984 (29 states and UTs) and 1985 (states of Assam and Punjab). [c] 10th Lok Sabha elections consisted of general elections held in the year 1991 (31 states and UTs) and 1992 (Punjab). [d] The total seats do not include result of by-poll elections held (if any).

Source: Election Commission of India

In the 6th Lok Sabha election, out of 70 contestants only 19 women candidates were elected thereby making a 27.14% winning benchmark. Though winning percentages of women candidates were reduced in all the subsequent elections, the number of contestants substantially increased from 70 in the 6th Lok Sabha election to 726 in the 17th Lok Sabha election. The 78 elected out of 726 makes just 10.74 percent but the quantum in series of elected MPs is the highest so far. It is notable to state here that the number of elected women candidates of the Lok Sabha increased from 19 of the year 1977 to 78 in the year 2019. This goes to manifest changes in socio-political circumstances for women in the country with the passage of time and situations thereby leading to increase in the participation of women at the Lok Sabha. However, consequent upon provision created for one-third of seats reservation to women, the number of contestants is anticipated to substantially increase in the coming elections of the Lok Sabha to be held in India.

IX. GENERAL ELECTION 2024: A TEST ON WILL-POWER OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN INDIA

There are two crucial general election of the Lok Sabha scheduled to be held in the year 2024 and 2029; one upon passing of the Women Reservation Bill, 2023 and another after delimitation of constituencies upon conduct of Census. The Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 does not mandate for seats reservation to women during 2024 general election of the Lok Sabha. However, in the general election of 2029 and all subsequent ones, it shall be mandatorily required for entire nation and all the political parties of the country to enable and support women to contest election against one-third of total seats reserved for them. It may be worthwhile to mention that the Women Reservation Bill 2023 and Act made thereof is tactfully and skillfully planned to exclude one-third seats reservations to women in the State Legislative Assemblies and 18th Lok Sabha General Elections scheduled to be held in the year 2024. Though not binding but the political parties are equally going to be tested voluntarily by the general election 2024 on the number of women given ticket for contesting general election.

Till recently, the political parties did not have any compulsion to make women as contestants but the next election of 2029 will make a tie on the neck. The Women Reservation Bill 2023 passed in both Houses of the Parliament received support of almost all of the political parties joining hand in voting bill at the Parliament. Their support makes their intention, effort and ideology very clear towards political empowerment of women in the mainstream politics of the country. However, the general election scheduled to be held in the year 2024 comes as an intermediate test in terms of testing their honesty and will-power to provide party ticket and support the women candidates in contesting election voluntarily. In this connection, the number of women represented as MPs and MLAs respectively from different parliamentary and state assembly constituencies during 2024 general election shall present a fair view and status on will-power of the political parties towards political empowerment of women in India. In fact, giving party ticket to women voluntarily shall be at the cost of reducing tickets from the list of either probable or aspiring or seasoned male contestants.

X. CONCLUSION

The majority of political parties failed to represent a fair number of women at the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies in the past many years since country independence. In pursuance to constitutional provision for gender equality and equity, the women were given seats reservation in the institutions of the local-self-governance from 1992. Whereas, for their representation in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies, the efforts undertaken since 1996 got finally materialized in the year 2023. Though, the Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023 ensures one-third of seats reservations to women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies in India, but the said Act is scheduled to be implemented only after delimitation of constituencies upon conduct of Census on completion of 2024 general elections. It shall be mandatorily required for all the political parties to provide ticket in the general election to be held in the year 2029 and onwards to ensure minimum of thirty-three percentages of women representation in the mainstream politics. However, it excludes intervening general election scheduled in the

year 2024. But the number of women elected as MPs and MLAs in the general election of 2024 shall go to reflect the result of test on will-power of the political parties who exhibited their support in passing the Women Reservation Bill of 2023. Alternatively, it can be stated that the general election of 2024 in India is a test on will-power of the political parties towards representations of women in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies. Besides, numbers of women representation in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies through 2024 election shall also determines the level of will-power of political parties and manifest their core values and ideologies on women and also their intention to support overall political empowerment of women in India.

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