

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN POLITICS

Sabina Begum

Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Gushkara Mahavidyalaya, Guskara, Purba Bardhaman, West Bengal, India

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ABSTRACT

The ideals of democracy are very far from destination, especially for women in India. Women play a marginal role in politics. Their political participation is almost not visible. But the importance of women's political participation has been increased in all corners of the world. In any country women constitute nearly half percent of the total population, but if it has to adopt a democratic system, it cannot run successfully with half of the population. It will become a crippled democracy. So, a democratic government is impossible without their participation and to empower them socially, economically and politically, their decision-making capabilities are necessary. Moreover, women have various problems, demands and aspirations which cannot be aptly expressed by men. The various problem issues of the people, such as, education, employment, health and nutrition besides foreign policies, relationships with other countries, issues of war and peace, science and technology, protection of the environment do need a women's angle, as they will affect them too in a particular manner. But the world scenario gives us a gloomy picture barring a couple of exceptions, such as, most of the Parliaments have ninety three percent male representatives and just only seven percent are women. The importance of increasing women's participation in Politics had been restated in the World Congress of Women at Beijing in 1995 and in its "Platform of Action" the ways and means had been recommended to increase "space for and visibility" of women in political institutions and processes. This is the most important first step towards women's empowerment. The Women's Reservation Bill in legislatures has shown some light at the end of the dark tunnel. Merely lamenting upon the state would not lead us anywhere. The movement for creating adequate space for women in the process of decision-making, right from within the home to the state and national legislature is required to be taken to its logical end. This article shows the need and imperatives towards enhancing women's participation in politics. An attempt has also been made to glance into the history of women's participation in politics.

KEYWORDS: *Women, Participation in Politics, Decision Making, Democratic Society*