

Analytical Study of Fifteen Women Contribution in Making the Indian Constitution

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Abstract

Fundamental objective to write the research paper is to delight the role of women in making of Indian Constitution and It's an attempt to look at the lives of the women who participated and played an important role to architect the Indian Constitution. The Constitution of a country is a set of written rules that are accepted by all people living together in a country. A constitution does many things first it generate degree of trust and coordination that is necessary for different kind of people to live together second it specify how the government will be constituted? Who will have power to take which decision?

In December 1946, a newly formed constituent assembly came together to debate and drafts a constitution for a soon-to-be independent India. The debate took place over two years, 11 months and 18days. It was an extraordinary project—an experiment that would determine the ability of a country to govern itself. Among the 299 members of the assembly, 15 were women who had either been voted or chosen to represent their provinces, who left their mark on the making of the republic. The assembly was a platform from which they could assert their equality and craft a politically balanced republic. This research paper is divided in three parts in first part the introduction and in second part the role of women in making of the Indian constitution and in social and political areas. In the last of this paper Analysis and conclusion is described.

Key Words: Women, Constitution, Republic, Women Rights, Minority, Freedom Fighter

Introduction

After the war of independence against British rule, the American government them self a constitution and other country also frame the constitution. Like other countries India's constitution also drawn up under very difficult

circumstances. The making of constitution a huge and diverse country like India was not an easy task/affairs, at that time the country was through a partition on the basis of religious differences. Like this problem the merger of Princely states was also an uncertain and difficult affair. The

makers of the constitution had anxieties about the present and future of the country. Despite all these difficulties, there was one big advantage for the maker of Indian Constitution. As for the back as in 1928 Moti Lal Nehru and 8 other congress leader drafted a constitution for India. In 1931, Indian National Congress session in Karachi the resolution dwelt on how Independent India's constitution shall look like? Thus some basic values were accepted by all leaders much before the Constitution Assembly and met to deliberate on the constitution.

Who then, were the makers of the Indian Constitution? We will found here only 15 women leaders, who played a vital role in making of Indian Constitution. The drafting of the document called the constitution was done by an assembly of elected representatives called the Constitution Asembly, who were elected in July-1946 for Constitution Assembly was elected mainly by the members of the existing Provincial Legislature. This ensured a fair geographical sphere of member from all the regions of the country. The assembly represented members from all language groups, classes, castes, classes, occupations and religions. The constituent assembly debates were also unique, for amongst the 299 members there were 15 women who were voted to sit next to men, who argued, debated, and made their contribution to a stronger republic. Know more about the women who had a hand in creating the Constitution of India. It is very important here to describe their contribution in constitution making and analyze the role in social and political very little is known about these 15 women. They were freedom fighters, lawyers, reformists, suffragettes and politicians. Many of them belonged to women's organizations and had taken part in feminist movements since 1917. They had been to jail during the Dandi March, and the protests

against the Simon Commission. In the assembly, they raised their voice for minority rights, against reservation, and for an independent judiciary.

Objectives of Study ; Main objectives of this paper is

To bring greater attention to 15 women who made ample leaps in history and push for a more inclusive study of our country's achievements.

To satisfy my own thirst for knowing more about the thoughts and pick apart the lives of these women who helped make the republic possible.

An attempt to prove that there were women who took giant strides and paved the path.

Methodology.

The research is limited, in that, researcher relying for the most part on online resources, including the record of the debates in the Lok Sabha archives, Rajya Sabha's selected speeches of the women, books, and other online publications that shed light on the topic.

Fifteen Women Who Participated in Making of Indian Constituion are;

1. Ammu Swaminathan

Birth and Social life; Ammukutty Swaminadhan was born in 1894 into the upper caste Hindu family Vadakkath family of Anakkara in Ponnani taluk, Kerala Her father, Govinda Menon, was a minor local official. Both of Ammu's parents belonged to the Nair caste, and she was the youngest among thirteen children, which included nine daughters. Ammu never went to school and received only a rudimentary education at home, which consisted of minimal reading and writing in Malayalam, cooking and keeping house, to prepare her for married life. She lost her father at a very young age,

and her mother struggled to raise her children and arrange marriages for her many daughters. Resultantly, when Ammu was 13, her mother arranged an alliance for her which conformed to the Sambandam system which was well accepted in Kerala society at that time. Her spouse was Subbarama Swaminathan, Kerala Iyer Brahmin who was more than twenty years older than Ammu.

She learnt English and moved to Madras. From 1914 onwards, she was drawn to the political and women's rights movement. In 1917, she worked with Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Annie Besant, Muthulakshmi Reddy, and others to set the Women's India Association (WIA) at Adyar, Madras, it worked to tackle social issues such as child marriage and the devadasi practice. It made representations before the Montague Chelmsford Commission, 1917 and Southborough Commission in 1918 and advocated for equality of voting rights for women. Swaminathan was involved in the Quit India Movement in 1942 that led to her imprisonment a year later. Through her work at WIA, she addressed the economic issues and problems of women workers. It was one of the first associations to demand adult franchise and constitutional rights for women. Lakshmi Sahgal, Ammu's second-born, would lead the Rani Jhansi regiment in the Indian National Army under Subhash Chandra Bose.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She became a part of the Constituent Assembly from the Madras Constituency in 1946. She spoke on fundamental rights and directive principles. On 24 November 1949, Ammu stated that fundamental rights and directive principles constituted the core of the Constitution. She was also strongest advocate against caste discrimination. In a speech during the discussion on the motion by Dr B R Ambedkar to pass the draft Constitution on

November 24, 1949, an optimistic and confident Ammu said, "People outside have been saying that India did not give equal rights to her women. Now we can say that when the Indian people themselves framed their Constitution they have given rights to women equal with every other citizen of the country." She spoke strongly for freedom of speech and association.

Later Contributions; She was elected to the first Lok Sabha in 1952 and subsequently to the Rajya Sabha 1954 a member from Madras State. Her interests in movies led her to become the Vice President of the Federation of Film Societies and the Censor Board. And President of the Bharat Scouts and Guides between 1960 and 1965. She was also selected as 'Mother of The Year' in 1975 on the inauguration of International Women's Year. Swaminathan passed away in 1978. Having been at the receiving end of the practice of child marriage herself, she fought hard for the Sarda Act or Child Marriage Restraint Act, Age of Consent Act and the various Hindu Code Bills that pushed for a reform in Hindu religious laws.

2. Dakshayani Velayudhan

Birth and Social life; Dakshayani Velayudhan was born on July 4, 1912, on the island of Bolgatty in Cochin. She leads the (then titled) Depressed Classes. She was the first and only Dalit woman to be elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946. Before her birth, two of Kerala's biggest reformers, Sree Narayana Guru and Ayyankali, had begun movements to end Kerala's virulent casteism. They organized civil disobedience movements that defied restrictions on movement and entry to school for the depressed classes. She was one of the first girls in her Pulaya community to wear an upper cloth. She was part of movements that called for the

democratization of public spaces, education, work security, equality and abolition of caste slavery.

She was the first Dalit woman in the state to earn a B.A. degree and a teacher Training Certificate from Madras University with a scholarship from the Cochin State government. The stigma and institutional discrimination she faced as an educator in a government school pushed her to reconsider her career.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She was nominated to the Cochin legislative council in 1945. The council elected her to the constituent assembly in 1946. She was also one of the youngest (34 Years old) members of the assembly. Velayudhan's life and politics was influenced and defined by the rigid caste system in Kerala Velayudhan's term in the constituent assembly was defined by two objectives, One was, to use the opportunity to make untouchables illegal and unlawful and second was to make the assembly go beyond framing a constitution and offer people "a new framework of life",

In a speech delivered on 28 August 1947, she said: "As long as the Scheduled Castes, or the Harijans or by whatever name they may be called, are economic slaves of other people, there is no meaning demanding either separate electorates or joint electorates. Personally speaking, I am not in favour of any kind of reservation in any place whatsoever."

Later Contributions; Unlike many of her peers, she moved away from direct electoral politics to creating groups that worked for the uplift of the so-called untouchables. Her final venture into electoral politics was an unsuccessful contest for a Lok Sabha seat in 1971. Her work was an inspiration for her first cousin, K.R. Narayanan, who would become India's first Dalit president.

3. Begum Aizaz Rasul---

Birth and Social life; Begum Aizaa Rasul was born on 4 April 1908, in a princely family in Malerkotla, Punjab. So politics and public life was not new to Begum Aizaz Rasul. She was involved in politics at a very young age- she served her father as his secretary and attended many political conferences with her father. She was married to the young landowner Nawaab Aizaz Rasul. Begum and her husband joined the Muslim League in 1935 and entered electoral politics. She was elected as a member of the U.P. Legislative Assembly in 1937 and continued to be a member of the U.P. Assembly until 1951. Rasul was among the very few women, legislators to be elected from a non-reserved province in British India- a remarkable achievement. Aizaz Rasul formally gave up the pardha after her first election. Rasul confront many traditional norms like the purdah system. She also significantly contributed to popularising Women's Hockey.

Contribution to Constitution Making; During the discussion on fundamental rights, she noted that the restrictions in the Draft Constitution, 1948 essentially negated the fundamental rights guaranteed. Rasul highlighted the need for ensuring 'just compensation' in another one of her interventions around the government's power to acquire property. She represented the United Provinces as a Muslim League member. In the Assembly she intervened in the debates on National language, India remaining a part of the Commonwealth, reservation, property rights, and minority rights. Responding to the demands of making Hindi the National language, she pointed out that very few people understood the language. Instead, she argued for adopting Hindustani as the national language.

Later Contributions; She was elected to the Rajya Sabha in 1952 and was a member of the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly from 1969 to 1990. During her tenure as a member of the U.P. Assembly, she served in important posts like the Deputy President of the Council (1937-1940) and Leader of Opposition (1950-1952). She was a strong opponent of reservation for minorities in legislative assemblies, the partition of India and feudal practices like the zamindari system.

For two decades, she served as the President of Indian Women's Hockey Federation. Later, she went on to head the Asian Women's Hockey Federation. She passed away in December, 2001. Rasul wrote her autobiography titled '*From Purdah to Parliament*'.

4. Durgabai Deshmukh

Birth and Social life; Durgabai Deshmukh a prominent social reformer was born in Rajahmundry on July 15, 1909. At age 12, she left school in protest to the imposition of English-medium education. She later started the Balika Hindi Paathshala in Rajamundry to promote the Hindi. She participated in the Non-Co-operation Movement in the age of twelve along with Andhra Kesari T. Prakasam. She completed her B.A. and her M.A. in political science in the 1930s from Andhra University. She went on to obtain her law degree from Madras University in 1942, and started practicing as an advocate in Madras High Court. [She participated in the Salt Satyagraha movement in Madras city, these activities led to British Raj authorities imprisoning her three times between 1930 and 1933. In 1936, she established the Andhra Mahila Sabha, which within a decade became a great institution of education and social welfare in the city of Madras. Durgabai was the first who advocate the need to set up separate

Family Courts after studying the same during her foreign visits to China, Japan.

Contribution to Constitution Making; Durgabai was elected to the Constituent Assembly from the Madras Province. She was the only woman in the panel of chairmen in the Constituent Assembly. She was instrumental in the enactment of many social welfare laws. She suggested Hindustani as the national language of India and also expressed her fear regarding the forceful campaign for Hindi in South India.

Later Contributions; She was nominated to be a member of the Planning Commission in 1952, in that role; she collects support for a national policy on social welfare. The policy resulted in the establishment of a Central Social Welfare Board in 1953. She was the first chairperson of the National Council on Women's Education, established by the Government of India in 1958. In 1963, she was sent to Washington D.C. as a member of the Indian delegation to the World Food Congress. Durgabai Deshmukh wrote herself autobiography '*The Stone That Speaketh*'. She died in 1981, Narasannapeta, Srikakulam district

5. Hansa Jivraj Mehta

Birth and Social life; Hansa Jivraj Mehta was born on 3rd July 1897 in Surat, Gujarat. Her father was the Dewan of Baroda Manubhai Nandshankar Mehta. She completed her journalism and sociology from her education at Baroda University and in London, England. Along with being a reformer and social activist, she was also an educator and writer. She wrote many books in Gujarati language for the children and also translated many English stories including the Gulliver's Travels. Mehta played an integral role in a women's movement that pushed for the abolition of child marriage (the Sarda Act) as well

as the devadasi system. She was elected to the Bombay Schools Committee in 1926 and became President of the All India Women's Conference in 1945. She had started a two-year term at the SNDT Women's University in Bombay, as India's first woman Vice Chancellor. Internationally, in the same year, she served as a member of the UN sub-committee on the status of women, and vice-chair, with Eleanor Roosevelt, on the committee which drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that was adopted by the UN.

Contribution to Constitution Making; Mehta was one of the 15 women architect of the Indian Constitution. She was elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bombay under a Congress Party ticket. In the Assembly, she strongly argued in favour of women's rights and intervened in debates on uniform civil code and reservation. She worked on women's equality and human rights in the UN. She was Member, Advisory Committee, Member, Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights and Member, Provincial Constitution Committee in constituent assembly. On 15 August 1947, a few minutes after midnight, Mehta, on behalf of the "*women of India*", presented the National flag to the assembly—the first flag to fly over independent India.

Later Contributions; While welcoming the reforms suggested by Ambedkar in inheritance laws, divorce, property rights, and adoptions, Mehta said: "This Bill to codify the Hindu Law is a revolutionary Bill and though we are not quite satisfied with it, it will be a great landmark in the social history of the Hindus. Later, Mehta was appointed as the first Female Vice-Chancellor in India at Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The government awarded her with the Padma Bhushan in 1959. She served on the board of UNESCO in 1959. Her husband Jivraj Narayan

Mehta became the first Chief Minister of Gujarat in 1960. She passed away on 4th April 1995.

6. Kamla Chaudhary

Birth and Social life; Kamla Chaudhary was born in Lucknow, on 22nd February 1908 an affluent family Her father, Rai Manmohan Dayal was a deputy collector and a staunch loyalist of the imperial government since last two generations. However, it was still a struggle for her to continue her education. She managed to clear the Ratna and Prabhakar examinations in Hindi literature from Punjab University and in May 1923, got married to Dr. J.M.Chaudhry from Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. Moving away from her family's loyalty to the imperial government, she joined the nationalists and was an active participant in the Civil Disobedience Movement launched by Gandhi in 1930.

Contribution to Constitution Making; The sixth Inspirational Woman that is Kamla Chaudhary, who was a short story writer and one of the 15 lady members of the Constituent Assembly of India. Since 1947, as an elected member of the Constituency Board of India, she played an important role in drafting the Constitution of India.

Later Contributions; Taking forward her love for Hindi literature, Kamla Chaudhry began penning down stories revolving around women and their inner world. Her themes were distinctively feminist and were considered over-sensitive and bold. Her distinguished works are Unmad, Picnic, Yatra, Balpatra, Hindi Ki Chuni hui Kahaniyar, Prasadi Kamandal, Khayyaim Ka Jam, Apna Maran Jagat Ke Hansi, Chitron main Lorian and Gandhi Ban Jaon. She was Vice-president of the All India Congress Committee in its 54th session. Her writing was poignant and known to articulate deep observations about

gender discrimination prevalent in the society. Chaudhary was also a celebrated Hindi story writer and her stories usually dealt with women's inner worlds or the emergence of India as a modern nation. In 1962, she won the general elections from Hapur and became a member of the third Lok Sabha. Kamla Chaudhry actively worked for girls' education in villages and backward areas.

7. Leela Naag/Roy

Birth and Social life; Leela Roy was born in Goalpara, Assam in October 3, 1900. Her father was a deputy magistrate and sympathized with the Nationalist Movement. She graduated from Bethune College in 1921 and became an assistant secretary to the All Bengal Women's Suffrage Committee and arranged meetings to demand women's rights. She has participated in revolutionary activities as a member of student federation since the college time. In 1923, with her friends, she founded a revolutionary organization 'Dipali Sangha' for training the women for revolutionary movement and established schools which became centres of political discussion. Later, in 1926, the Chhatri Sangha, an association of women students in Dacca and Kolkata, was founded. She became the editor of a Nationalist journal, Jaya Shree in 1931 which was banned for women.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She became the member of constitution assembly in 1946 and demands for the property rights for women.

Later Contributions; She was a freedom fighter & social worker who, worked for the education of women in India, Roy was the only elected woman member from Bengal to the Assembly. She resigned from her post to stage a

protest against the partition of India. She was a close associate of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose.

8. Malati Choudhury

Birth and Social life; Malati Choudhury was born in 26 April 1904 in Patna. His father name was Kumud Nath Sen, a man from east Bengal who was practicing as a barrister, died when she was only two and a half years old. At the age of 16 in 1921, Malati Choudhury was sent to Santi Niketan, where she got admitted to Viswa-Bharati. During the Salt Satyagraha, she accompanied by her husband Nabakrushna Choudhury, joined the Indian National Congress and participated in the movement. They educated and communicated with the people to create a favorable environment for Satyagraha. Malati along with her husband became the backbone of the Prajamandal peasant movement. Due to the participation in Gandhi's Quit India Movement In 1942, she was arrested and sentenced to three years imprisonment. She had organized the 'Krusaka Andolana' (Farmers Movement) as part of the freedom struggle against the zamindars and moneylenders, who exploited the poor.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She was elected as a member of the Indian Constituent Assembly in 9 December, 1946, from Utkal Pradesh and participated in drafting the Indian Constitution like other women. But she resigned soon from constituent assembly and did her utmost to stress the importance of education of the scheduled tribes, dalits and farmer's children's. She also elected as the President of the Congress Committee same time from Utkal Pradesh.

Later Contributions; After Independence, Malati Choudhury, as a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, and as the President of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee, tried her best to emphasize the role of education, especially

adult education in rural reconstruction. She also joined the Bhoodan Movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, and was deeply influenced by both, Tagore and Gandhi. In 1948, she formed 'Utkal Nabajiban Mandal' for the education of the children of poor and tribal. She and her husband were arrested during an emergency in 1975. She died on 15 March 1998 at the age of 93. She has won many awards for her contribution to the society like; National Award for Child Welfare (1987), Jammalal Bajaj Award (1988), Utkal Seva Sammaan (1994), Tagore Literacy Award (1995) and so on--.

9. Purnima Banerjee

Birth and Social life; Purnima Banerji was born into a Bengali Brahmo family in Barisal district of Eastern Bengal in 1911, later settled in the United Province. Her father, a restaurant owner, and mother Ambalika Devi. She was group of five siblings younger to Aruna Asaf Ali (a renowned freedom fighter). Purnima Banerjee was the secretary of the Indian National Congress committee in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh. She was one of a radical network of women from Uttar Pradesh, who stood at the forefront of the freedom movement in the late 1930s and '40s. She was arrested for her participation in the Satyagraha and Quit India Movement.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She represented the United Provinces in the Constituent assembly. She is famous for her many debates in the Constituent Assembly where she stood up for the fundamental rights of the Indian citizens. Even when Purnima Banerji stood up in support of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar to pass the Draft Constitution, she was never hesitant to express her apprehensions. She intervened in discussions around the Preamble, preventive detention and qualifications of Rajya Sabha members.

Later Contributions; She was the first woman to lead the chorus of Jana Gana Mana, after it was officially adopted as our National Anthem on 24th Jan, 1950. As secretary for the city committee, she was responsible for engaging and organizing trade unions, kisan meetings and work towards greater rural engagement. Owing to her ill health, she died prematurely in 1951 in Nainital. Her life was definitely short-lived but its impact is evergreen.

10. Rajkumari Dame Bibiji Amrit Kaur

Birth and Social life; Amrit Kaur was born on February 2, 1889, in Badshah Bagh, Lucknow University Campus, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Her father name was Raja Sir Harnam Singh Ahluwalia. Amrit Kaur was the youngest, and their only daughter amongst 10 children. She did her early education at the Sherborne School for Girls in Dorset, England, and had her college education at Oxford University. She returned to India in 1918, and gave it all up to become Mahatma Gandhi's secretary for 16 years. She was later appointed secretary of Indian National congress party in 1930 and president in 1933. She was appointed the first Health Minister of India in 1947 and she held that post for ten years. She was the founder of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). Kaur served as the Chairperson of the All India Women's Education Fund Association. She was a member of the Executive Committee of Lady Irwin College in New Delhi. She was sent as a member of the Indian delegation to UNESCO conferences in London and Paris in 1945 and 1946, respectively. She also served as a member of the Board of Trustees of the All India Spinners' Association

Contribution to Constitution Making; Amrit Kaur was elected to the Constituent

Assembly from the United Provinces. She was also a member of Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights and Sub-Committee on Minorities. As a member of the Constituent Assembly, she supported a proposal for a Uniform Civil Code in India. She also advocated for universal franchise, opposed affirmative action for women, and debated the language concerning the protection of religious rights.

Later Contributions; Her most significant contribution was in ensuring extensive political participation of women. She was a firm believer in women's education, their participation in sports and their healthcare. She was elected the president of World Health Assembly. As Health Minister, Kaur led a major campaign to fight the spread of malaria in India. Kaur introduced a bill in the Lok Sabha for the establishment of AIIMS in 1956. Her contribution to establish the Indian Red Cross cannot be forgotten. From 1957 until her death in 1964, she remained a member of Rajya Sabha. Between 1958 and 1963 Kaur was the president of the All-India Motor Transport Congress in Delhi. Until her death, she continued to hold the presidencies of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the Tuberculosis Association of India, and the St. John's Ambulance Corps. She also was awarded the Rene Sand Memorial Award, and was named TIME Magazine's Woman of the Year in 1947. She campaigned to abolish the devadasi system in India, and was strongly opposed to the practice of purdah and to child marriage, and Kaur worked to reduce illiteracy and eradicate the custom of child marriages. She strongly supported the universal suffrage, and testified before the committee of Indian franchise and constitutional reforms. Kaur died in New Delhi on 6 February 1964, she never married, and had no children.

11. Renuka Ray

Birth and Social life; She was born in 1904, and married to Satyendra Nath Ray. Her father name was Satish Chandra Mukherjee, an ICS officer. She came in contact with Mahatma Gandhi at an early age of sixteen and was greatly influenced by him. Renuka Ray lived in London to complete her BA from the London School of Economics. Ray was the First Indian to receive a D.Phil from Oxford University. She submitted a document titled Legal Disabilities of Women in India; A Plea for a Commission of Enquiry in the year 1934, as legal secretary of the AIWC. She joined All India Women's Conference and worked hard to champion women's rights and inheritance rights in parental property. In 1932, 53, and 54 she became President of All India Women's Conference. From 1943 to 1946 she was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, then of the Constituent Assembly and the Provisional Parliament

Contribution to Constitution Making; As part of the Constituent Assembly from West Bengal, she made several interventions in the Assembly including on women's rights issues, minorities rights and bicameral legislature provision. She also joined the All-India Women's Conference & campaigned hard for women's rights and inheritance rights in parental property.

Later Contributions; She was appointed as Minister of Relief & Rehabilitation, West Bengal in the years 1952-57. She was also Lok Sabha member for the years 1957-1967 from Malda Lok Sabha constituency. In year 1959 she headed a committee on Social Welfare and Welfare of Backward Classes, which is popularly known as Renuka Ray Committee. She is authoring of the book, 'My Reminiscences: Social Development during the Gandhian Era

and After'. She was awarded the Padma Bhushan by the Government of India in 1988. She was died in 1997.

12. Sarojini Naidu

Birth and Social life; Sarojini Naidu, also known as the Nightingale of India, was born on February 13, 1879, in a Bengali family in Hyderabad, India. Her father name was Aghorenath Chattopadhyay and mother was Varada Sundari Devi. Her parental home was at Brahmangaon, Bikampur, Dhaka, Bengal province. His father was Begali Brahmin and the principal of Nizam College. Sarojini Naidu passed her matriculation examination earning the highest rank in 1891. From 1895-98 in the age of twelve, she studied at King's College in England and Girton College, Cambridge, with a scholarship from the Nizam of Hyderabad. She was educated in Madras, London and Cambridge. Beginning in 1904, Naidu became an increasingly popular orator, promoting Indian independence and women's rights, especially women's education. She was the first Indian woman to become the president of the Indian National Congress in 1925. Sarojini Naidu was an Indian independence activist and poet. Naidu's poetry includes both children's poems and others written on more serious themes including patriotism, romance, and tragedy. In 1912, "*In the Bazaars of Hyderabad*" remains one of her most popular poems.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She was appointed to the constituent Assembly from Bihar. She spoke about the importance to adopting a National Flag in the Assembly. She advocated for the women right to vote.

Later Contributions; Following India's independence from the British rule in 1947, she was appointed the governor of the United Provinces, making her India's First Women

Governor. She remained her office till her death on 2 March, 1949 at the Government House in Lucknow.

13. Sucheta Kriplani.

Birth and Social life; Sucheta Kriplani Majumdar was born on 25 June 1908 into a Bengali Brahmo family, in present day Haryana's Ambala city. Her father Surendranath Majumdar, worked as a medical officer, a job that required many transfers. As a result, she attended a number of schools, her final degree is a Master's in History from St. Stephen's College, Delhi. She was a shy child, self-conscious about her appearance and intellect, as she points out in her book, '*An Unfinished Autobiography*'. She studied at Indra Prastha College and Punjab University before becoming a Professor of Constitutional History at Banaras Hindu University. In 1936, she married J. B. Kriplani, a prominent figure of the Indian National Congress, who was twenty years her senior. The marriage was opposed by both families, as well as by Gandhi himself, although he eventually relented. She was also the founder of the All India Mahilla Congress, established in 1940. She is especially remembered for her role in the Quit India Movement of 1942.

Contribution to Constitution Making; She was one of the few women who were elected to the Constituent Assembly of India. She became a part of the subcommittee that laid down the charter for the constitution of India. On 14 August 1947, she sang *Vande Mataram* in the Independence Session of the Constituent Assembly a few minutes before Nehru delivered his famous "*Tryst with Destiny*" speech.

Later Contributions; She was an Indian freedom fighter and politician. Post-independence, Kriplani's political stint included serving as an MP from New Delhi, for the first

Lok Sabha elections in 1952. She was elected one last time to the Lok Sabha in 1967, from Gonda constituency in Uttar Pradesh. From 1960 to 1963, she served as the Minister of Labour, Community Development and Industry in Uttar Pradesh's state government. In October 1963, she becomes India's first Female Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh government from 1963 to 1967 from the Kanpur constituency.

14. Vijalakshami Pandit

Birth and Social life; Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit was born in Allahabad on August 18, 1900, and she was the Sister of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Her mother was Swarup Rani and Father was, Moti Lal Nehru. She was married to Ranjit Sitaram Pandit in 1921. She was imprisoned by the British on three different occasions, in 1932-1933, 1940, and 1942-1943. Pandit's political career began with her election to the Allahabad Municipal Board. In 1936, she was elected to the Assembly of the United Provinces, and she became a First Indian women cabinet minister in the United Provinces of British India in 1937 and served in department of local self-government and public health.

Contribution to Constitution Making; Vijayalakshmi Pandit As an activist, minister, ambassador and diplomat, she was among the few revolutionizing the role of women in nation-building, Pandit was one of the first leaders to call for an Indian Constituent Assembly to frame a constitution. She was elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1946 from the United Provinces with her brother Jawahar Lal Nehru. She kept her opinion on issues related to the Women equality.

Later Contributions; Noted for her participation in the Indian independence movement, she was jailed several times during the movement. She led the Indian delegation

(1946-48 and 1952-53) to the United Nation. Thereafter she was appointed ambassador to Moscow, Washington and Mexico. She becomes the first woman president of the United Nations General Assembly from 1953-54. A year later, she concurrently served as an ambassador to Ireland and England. After this she was appointed as the 6th Governor of Maharashtra from 1962-64. After the death of Jawahar Lal Nehru in 1967, she was elected for the Lok Sabha from Phulpur and was in the Parliament till 1971. She died in the year of 1990.

15. Annie Mascarene

Birth and Social life; Mascarene was born into a Latin Catholic family of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, on 6th June, 1902. She attained a double M.A. in history and economics from Colleges for Arts and Law, Trivandrum and went on to become a lecturer in Sri Lanka. After her return to Trivandrum, she acquired a law degree. She was the first woman to be part of the Travancore State Congress Working Committee. She was one of the leaders of the movements for independence and integration with the Indian nation in the Travancore State.

Contribution to Constitution Making; Mascarene represented the Princely State of Travancore and Cochin Union in the Constituent Assembly. She also served on the Constituent Assembly's select committee that looked into the Hindu Code Bill. On 18th November 1949, a few days before the adoption of the Constitution, she supported the federal framework with a strong centre.

Later Contributions; She was a M.L.A. to Travancore-Cochin between 1948 and 1952, where she served briefly as a minister in charge of Health and Power. Mascarene was the first woman from Kerala to have been elected to the

first Lok Sabha as an independent candidate. Her political career took a hit after her an unsuccessful attempt in the 1957 Lok Sabha elections.

Conclusion

In 1925, Mahatma Gandhi remarked that “Going beyond the actual freedom movement itself, women parliamentarians played a critical role in guiding the Constituent Assembly, thereby, playing a significant role in determining the form and the future of the Indian Constitution”. Most women of the Constituent Assembly have gradually faded from the public conscience.

The Constituent Assembly debates were, in many ways, shaped by the contributions of Begum Aizaz Rasul, Durgabhai Deshmukh, Renuka Ray, Purnima Banerjee and several others. They all were freedom fighters, lawyers, reformists, suffragettes and politicians. Many of them belonged to women’s organizations and had taken part in feminist movements since 1917. All are members of different – different social and political organizations and contribute to eliminate the social and political evils. They also represents the Scheduled Caste, Minorities, Scheduled Tribe, Princely States and all the areas of the then territory and create very important institutions which, makes India as a modern and powerful country today. In such word their political and social contribution in making the constitution and social reforms cannot be forgotten. After Independent of India they all got prestigious post someone was appointed First CM, Governor, Minister, Ambassador and so on.

However, for all the extraordinary contributions of the women of the Constituent Assembly, we have struggled to actualize and institutionalise the role of women in the politics of the present day. From a representation of 5%

in the first Lok Sabha election, the percentage of women representatives in the house has gone up to a mere 14%. Since 1962, of the 543 constituencies in India. The 2019 election, however, shows that change is at hand. Apart from sending the highest number of women to the Parliament, the present government has tasked women to lead critical ministries. The message sent to the young women of India is not particularly subtle. While women continue to cast their votes in greater numbers, the real chances of senior leadership at the state and national levels are few and far between. Their contribution is a key to living up to the hopes and dreams embodied by the women who shaped our Constitution.

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