



Public Affairs Forum of India

**PRESS RELEASE**

***“The first consideration in the new Parliament building was the Women Reservation Bill ”: Smt. Smriti Irani***

*“The Bill has a methodology for implementation and also envisages a procedure to go back to the Parliament after 15 years for reflection”*

**26 October 2023, New Delhi:** At a stellar gathering at the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the Public Affairs Forum of India (PAFI), the Minister of Women & Child Development, Minister of Minority Affairs, Government of India, Smt. Smriti Irani spoke about women in various spheres, be it corporate or rural areas. The minister emphasized the need for women to actively participate in the workforce.

**Highlighting the importance of the Women Reservation Bill, the Hon’ble Minister mentioned,** “The bill will ensure reservation for women for 15 years, and after 15 years, we go back to the Parliament to again reflect on the need for it and again find Constitutional mandates.”

Smt. Smriti Irani emphasized that representation of women is not limited to Parliament, but there are 2.5 million women actively engaged in the panchayats where the reservation for them is for 33%, but representation is of 40%, which comes at a time of a generational shift that empowers women.

Giving reference to a WHO study, Smt. Smriti Irani said, “A study about how much a woman inhale in terms of smoke is around 144 cigarettes per day. Today, the Modi government has given clean fuel to close to nine crore customers. You can imagine the healthcare cost impact for these women, who had to sustain their life in an environment which compelled them to ingest that much of smoke every day.”

In the end, she stressed that 26 weeks of maternity leave assigned to women is a welcome initiative. Corporates have a responsibility and they support women. This responsibility should not be limited to only CSR activities. Sustainable development is another key factor that is needed at this juncture. It could well be achieved through a general inclusion fund, which would account for infrastructure and education for women. In collaboration with the education ministry, the enrolment of girls for primary education has increased.

The event was moderated by **Priya Sahgal**, Senior Executive Editor, NewsX and a welcome speech was given by **Medha Girotra**, Treasurer, PAFI.

**Rakesh Dubey**, Director, Global Government Affairs, The Carlyle Group, gave the vote of thanks.



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## **PAFI (Public Affairs Forum of India)**

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