

## **Need for women to organize pressure groups for rights in politics**

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New Delhi: There is a need for women to organize themselves as pressure groups to be able to carve a niche in the political sphere, opined the three leading journalists - Ms. Navika Kumar, Ms. Nistula Hebbar and Ms. Smita Sharma - representing the fourth estate of democracy. Participation of women was dismal in legislatures as they have not been able to stress the need to be heard.

At a panel discussion on 'Women & Politics: Elections Today & Tomorrow' organized by FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), these journalists shed light on why women have been left behind in the political arena both as leaders and voters when they have excelled in private and public sectors in the last few decades.

In 1911, women were allowed to vote in just two countries in the world. Today, a century later, that right is virtually universal and a fundamental right. But how many women actually step out and exercise their electoral rights? How are women issues placed in the manifestoes of political parties? How many women candidates are actually fielded by political parties to contest elections? What is happening to the women reservation bill?

These were some of the questions that were largely focused on during the panel discussion.



The panelists suggested that women leaders must be identified who can represent the cause of women in the Parliament. Political parties must become more sensitive towards women and should reserve 33% for women in organizational posts or give them party tickets. It was also highlighted that the