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Title: Need to pass the Women's Reservation Bill providing for 33% seats to women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This discussion will continue during next week. Now, we take up matters of urgent public importance.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (KENDRAPARA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the need to have 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Parliament. Even after 60 years of Independence, adequate representation of women in Indian Parliament still remains a dream.

The House may be aware that 10 years ago, the Government headed by Shri Devegowda brought a Bill seeking to reserve 33 per cent of seats for women in Parliament. Later, a Joint Parliamentary Committee was formed and a consensus Bill emerged from there. The Bill was there even during the Government headed by Shri Gujral. It was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Government headed by Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee during 1998, for the first time. After the dissolution of that Lok Sabha, it was again introduced in Lok Sabha in 1999.

However, it is painful to note that the Bill is still pending before the House. The present Lok Sabha has only 8 per cent representation of women. During 2004-06, the average representation of women in State Legislative Assemblies is just 6.5 per cent. Therefore, it is evident that till a constitutional mandate is imposed on Parliament, democratic rights of women will continue to suffer.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to bring a Bill seeking one-third reservation of seats for women in Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies and get the same passed during the current Session itself.

SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (KANAKAPURA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the views expressed by Shrimati Archana Nayak. ...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. M. RAMADASS (PONDICHERRY): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to associate myself with the matter raised by Shrimati Archana Nayak.

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, on behalf of the DMK, we would like to associate ourselves with the views expressed by Shrimati Archana Nayak just now. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (NAGERCOIL): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would also like to associate myself with the views expressed by Shrimati Archana Nayak. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The names of Shrimati Tejaswini See Ramesh, Shri Ramdas Athawale, Prof. M. Ramadass, Shri A. Krishnaswamy, Shri E. G. Sugavanam, Shrimati M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran, Shrimati V. Radhika Selvi, Shri A.V. Bellarmin and Shri P. Mohan will be associated with the views expressed by Shrimati Archana Nayak.