

# INDIAN ELECTIONS 2014

# WOMANIFESTO

A freedom movement for women has caught fire. Citizens across the country are demanding an end to the generations-deep violence and suppression faced by hundreds of millions of Indian women and girls. Voters are calling on candidates seeking office in upcoming elections to the Lok Sabha to commit to a 6 point reform plan for 2014. This Indian Womanifesto is devised to ensure the freedom, safety, equality and flourishing of India's women and girls.

## 1. EDUCATE FOR EQUALITY

We will implement comprehensive, well-funded and long-term public education programmes to end the culture of gender-based discrimination and violence including: SMS, radio and TV public service campaigns to challenge the mindsets behind violence against women and mistreatment of women; accessible lesson plans for schools and modules for training teachers and professionals such as doctors, lawyers and allied professionals to reach men, women, boys and girls in both urban and rural areas.

## 2. MAKE LAWS COUNT

We will ensure each government agency produces a detailed action-plan to implement laws to end violence against women. All action plans will include infrastructure, personnel, training, monitoring and evaluation, with specified funds allotted for each. I will support the amendment of existing laws that perpetuate violence against women (such as removing the marital rape exception), and those that directly/indirectly sanction discrimination against women on the basis of religion, caste, sexuality, age, economic status or disability. We will implement the Central Government mandate under the sexual harassment law. Action plans will also be created to secure equal pay for equal work in all sectors, provide creches and other critical support to MNREGA workers, minimum wage for all women workers, universal, non-contributory old age pensions for women, and grant government employee status to workers in 'voluntary' schemes where women work with informal honorariums. We will devise a scheme to ensure that women achieve equal property rights in natal families and fair shares through marriage.

## 3. PUT WOMEN IN POWER

We will support the Women's Reservation Bill in the Lok Sabha, and ensure that women will be represented in all councils, committees and task forces related to policy and practice across the board. We will support the adoption of a Code of Conduct to disqualify electoral candidates who have committed offences of gender-related violence and end misogynist comments and behaviour in the Lok Sabha. We will strengthen the autonomous functioning of the National and State Commissions for Women, with experienced professionals being selected through a transparent process.

## 4. POLICE FOR THE PEOPLE

We will establish and enforce a comprehensive response protocol for crimes against women. We will work with state governments to change service rules and ensure police and prosecutorial recruitment, promotion and penalties evaluate attitudes and performances based on gender. We commit to implementing police reforms and ensure that police personnel who breach the new procedures are investigated and disciplined accordingly. There will be zero tolerance of moral policing by State/ non-State actors. We will also establish rape crisis response teams, with rural and urban pilot projects.

## 5. SWIFT, CERTAIN JUSTICE

We will work with state governments to establish responsive and fair fast track courts for crimes of violence against women and raise the number of judges to 30 per 100,000 population. We will increase access to accountable legal aid, ensure swift financial damages and create robust witness protection programmes. We will enact the Prevention of Atrocities (Amendment) Bill to stop crimes against Dalit and Adivasi women and help ensure speedy justice in cases of caste/communal massacres. We will take action against racial discrimination and violence to women from the North-East. We will push to enact a special law to combat honour killings.

## 6. SAFE SPACES, SUPPORT TO SURVIVORS

We will work with state governments to provide comprehensive services to women who are victims of violent crimes, helping them to fund and set up one-stop, 24-hour crisis centres and safe shelters in each police district, and give compensation. We will make sure public toilets are set up, especially in the poorest areas, and that all women have access to regular, safe public transport. We will push to amend the law to address the range of unfair discrimination at work, including the unorganised sector.