



 **KONRAD
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 **FICCI** *Forum of
Parliamentarians*

Reimagine India Series:
Empowered Women, Self Reliant Nation

Smt POONAM MAHAJAN
Hon'ble Member of Parliament and National President,
Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha
AUGUST 13, 2020: 1515-1700 HRS ON WEBEX

JOINED BY CO-CHAIRS, FICCI FORUM OF PARLIAMENTARIANS



Dr. JYOTSNA SURI
Past President, FICCI;
CMD, Lalit Suri Hospitality Group



Mr. HARSHAVARDHAN NEOTIA
Past President, FICCI;
Chairman Ambuja Neotia Group



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REIMAGINE INDIA SERIES

Empowered Women, Self-Reliant Nation

Special Address and Conversation with

**Smt Poonam Mahajan, Member of Parliament and National President of Bharatiya Janata
YuvaMorcha**

August 13, 2020; 1515-1700 hrs on WebEx

Programme Overview

The world is faced with an unprecedented crisis which has affected political, social, economic aspects of life. The global pandemic has created an indelible impact on society where the women have been worst affected. Many decades of organising and advocacy by women's organisations and networks across the world have resulted in global recognition of the contributions that women make to economic development and of the costs to societies of persistent inequalities between women and men.

When gender equality is talked about, it is not only in terms of equal opportunities but also in terms of women's socio-political and economic advancement. It is important to bring women in the centre of economic activities, helping them to create new entrepreneurial ventures for themselves and gain access to new income-generating pursuits.

There is a need to systematically ensure the discussion of women's economic participation becoming a standard and serious component of economic assessment – and including it in discussions of policy where it makes sense, such as tax and financial policy, budgeting and labour market reform, to name a few.

To understand the different perspectives of women empowerment, in the new normal, FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians in partnership with the India Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung organised an interaction with **Smt. Poonam Mahajan**, Member of Parliament and National President of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha, under the banner of **Reimagine India Series**, on **August 13, 2020**, between 1515-1700 hrs on WebEx. The title of the interaction was '**Empowered Women, Self-Reliant Nation**'.

The interaction witnessed the presence of eminent guests including representatives from the industry, academia, diplomats and policy think tanks.

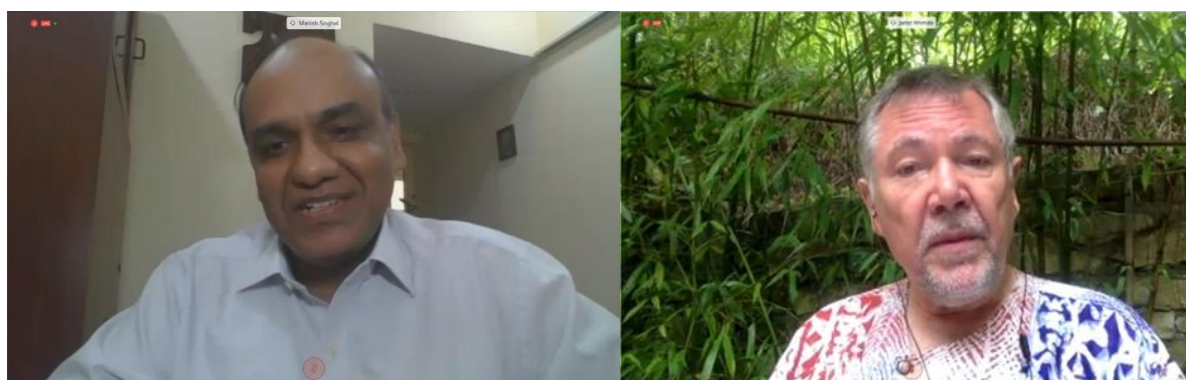
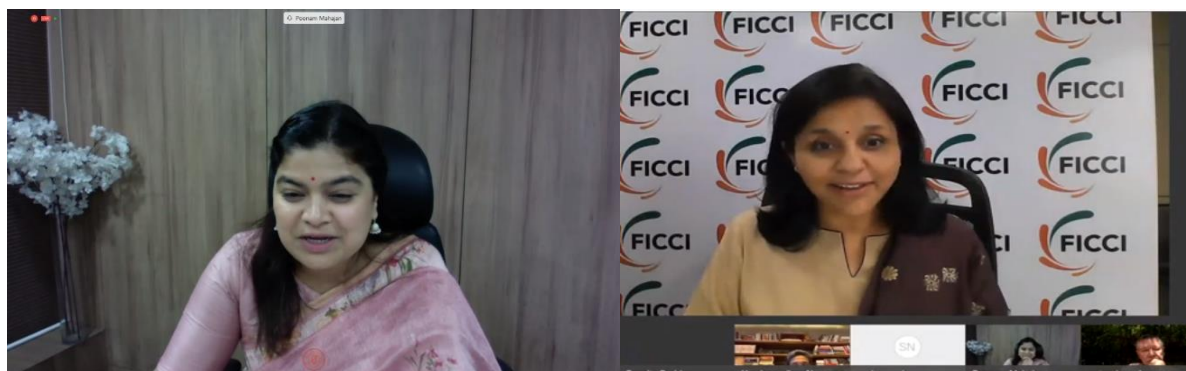
Dr. Sangita Reddy, President FICCI was also present at the discussion along with **Dr. Jyotsna Suri** and **Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia**, Past Presidents, FICCI and Co-Chairs of FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians Council.

Key Takeaways

- The **pandemic and its unprecedented impact have tested the resilience of people.** It has made us realise the fragility of globalisation and shortcomings of global order.
- The Gender Revolution is far from over and the struggle to achieve full parity is still on-going. **Gender parity is a pre-requisite for a self-reliant nation.**
- The **Indian Constitution already has given rights to women** so one has to understand that women empowerment is not about inclusion but it is about equality.
- Two major aspects of women empowerment are **security and justice.** Measures have been taken to ensure the safety of women and laws have been enacted for women safety. The underlying objective behind these measures is to enhance women's involvement in the jurisdiction.
- **India as a nation has the oldest civilisation and youngest population.** India is a country with a young population and the representation of women should also be done at the level of youth leaders to promote synergy between ideas of women and the youth.
- **Women form an integral part in the development agenda of the country** and need to be more self-reliant to make the country self-reliant. The men should also be vocal about gender equality and women empowerment.
- The **various schemes of Government of India focusing women** including the *PM Ujjwala Yojana* of providing a gas connection to every household, the *MUDRA Yojana* where 68 % women could avail the benefit of term loans and working capital loans to become self-reliant.
- *Atmanirbhar Bharat* initiative is 10 per cent of India's GDP. **India has shown the world its strength especially during the pandemic** when India became the second nation to start manufacturing of PPE kits.
- The various packages provided by the Government including the *Gareeb Kalyan Yojana* and the relief package of Rs 1 lakh crore as well as the *PM Kisan Yojana*, are the **efforts made by the Government to not only revive the economy in India but also to make it self-reliant.** Under the *Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana*, Members of Parliament get to adopt two/three villages to ensure the overall development of that village.
- To mention **some specific initiatives:** Steps have been taken to ensure proper sanitation facilities and ODF in rural India, access to education to young girls, broadband connection, healthcare facilities.
- With a **focus to empower tribal women** in Charoti village in Palghar district of Maharashtra, the Anita Dongre Foundation set up a tailoring unit in 2015, which employs around 40 women, who earn Rs 7000-8000 monthly and sustain their lives and livelihood.

- There is a need for a **targeted approach towards uplifting women through various initiatives** where the corporate can play a role in reaching out to marginalised women. The women SHGs need to be tutored well to manufacture products and contribute towards Make in India and self-reliant India.
- In terms of representation in the legislative councils, assembly or the Parliament, women have 33 per cent seats reserved in the lower house and state assemblies under the Women Reservation Bill. Although in the past few years, there has been women representation in the Government and Panchayats, yet the number needs to increase.

Glimpses



Key Note Address

Smt. Poonam Mahajan, Member of Parliament and National President of Bharatiya Janata YuvaMorcha



Women empowerment is more than just inclusion, security and justice but it is also about equality. The women in India need to be self-reliant to make the country self-reliant as India will not only then aspire to become self-reliant but also encourage the idea of women in leadership roles.

Smt. Poonam Mahajan mentioned that India is a country with the oldest civilisation and youngest population and offers immense opportunities for women and supports women empowerment. However, various aspects need to be worked upon in terms of giving respect to women and considering them as equal. She opined that although it is a struggle to thrive in a patriarchal society yet one needs to understand that competition is not only in terms of women versus men or vice versa but one must compete with oneself to sustain themselves in today's world.

She opined that the Constitution of India has given various rights to women but one has to fight for equal opportunities be it in terms of women's participation in politics or economy. She noted that the fight against ideological biases and societal pressures are what women have to fight for but the struggle should not only be in terms of inclusion, security and justice for women but in terms of equality and equal opportunities. She remarked that for this, every person has to make an effort and it is not only up to those in power. According to her, the Government is already vouching for gender equality and trying to ensure gender parity in the country. Also, in terms of security, various laws and legislation have been implemented to provide security to women.

She further talked about Hon'ble PM's support to the idea of gender equality and the measures taken by the Government to ensure women empowerment in the country. She noted that PM strongly advocates that till the time women are not empowered, the country will not progress and hence women in India need to be more self-reliant to make India as a self-reliant nation.

Smt. Mahajan implied that the Government is focussed into turning adversity into an opportunity for every woman in every household. She highlighted the various Governmental

schemes for women like a gas connection to every household under the PM UjjwalaYojana, which she said empowers women from a kitchen to developing her skills “Rasoi se Hunar” as well as the Mudra loan for women entrepreneurs wherein 68 per cent of women have been empowered. She also highlighted the various measures taken under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan for providing sanitation by constructing toilets in rural areas as well as making India ODF.

Talking about Aatmanirbhar Bharat, she opined that when every country in the world is faced with the crisis, it is important to have a leader who gives strength to people to fight back and instils confidence in them. Unless there is strong leadership, which provides strength and resilience to people, the nation cannot move forward. She stressed upon the fact that the women leaders in the world have set an example through their efforts to mitigate the effects of the pandemic in countries like Germany and New Zealand. She also talked about the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package, which accounts for 10 per cent of India’s GDP, and noted that India’s quest for becoming a self-reliant nation was taken up by the Government during the pandemic through the various initiatives. She remarked that India started manufacturing PPE kits and became the second nation in the world to manufacture and export PPE kits.

Furthermore, she also talked about Agriculture, one of the major sectors in India, and how the female farmers contribute heavily to agriculture activities. She said the female farmer sows the seeds, maintains the field and farms while the male farmer ploughs it. She also talked about the youth of the country where she noted that the youth needs to be made aware as well as should be included in the agenda of promoting gender-equal ideas. She opined that to take gender equality forward, men should also be vocal about gender equality and women empowerment.

She mentioned that through an initiative to make the tribal women empowered in Charoti village in Palghar district of Maharashtra, The Anita Dongre Foundation had set up a tailoring unit in 2015, which employs around 40 women, who earn Rs 7000-8000 monthly and sustain their lives and livelihood. She remarked that while there is a common misconception that women are tough with fellow women or do not support each other, in a country like India where the civilisational and mythological aspects showcase women as deity and mother figure, there we need to build upon the strength and resilience that women encapsulate.

She concluded her remarks by reiterating the idea that to make India a strong, self- reliant and conscious nation, women need to be empowered and made self- reliant, only can then the nation will move forward.

Remarks

Mr. Peter Rimmele, Resident Representative to India, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)



Mr. Peter Rimmele talked about women's role in politics and economy and remarked that India has made an inspiring history when it comes to women in leadership positions. He talked about KAS's commitment towards women inclusion through the various scholarship programs which empowers promising young people of all walks of life. It stems from a long tradition of remarkable female German politicians in the Christian Democratic Union.

He further mentioned about women in German politics and talked about notable events in history concerning women's right to vote in 1919 and a tradition of strong women in politics. He talked about Chancellor Merkel's ascension to the chancellorship in 2005, Ursula von der Leyen's nomination as first female Minister of Defense in Germany in 2013, Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer's position as fourth female Chief Minister of a German state, the second female president of the Christian Democratic Union and second female Minister of Defense.

He also talked about the gender-revolution in Germany and noted that there have been debates about whether the electoral system should change to mandate parity in electing the Bundestag. He remarked that the history of powerful women is a history of great courage and exceptional strength. It is a testament to the power of personal convictions and political will but only rarely testament to an environment conducive to fostering women leadership.

Mr. Rimmele remarked that Covid-19 has disrupted the intricate web of international trade and laid bare some of the shortcomings of the global order. The production stoppages in countries have led to the supply-demand gap through a decrease in a country's domestic consumption and capacity for re-export and manufacturing/ supply chains. In this context, he touched upon the idea of a self-reliant nation and opined that self-reliance is not about achieving autarky but it is about becoming selective.

He alluded that like-minded partners need to stand together on the world stage and need to work together for shared goals and their common good. According to him, self-reliance is interlinked to women empowerment where gender parity is a pre-requisite for a self-reliant nation.

In Conversation with the Panel

Q. How can the Government as well as the industry work on empowering marginalised women in India especially in terms of knowledge creation and implementing ideas into policy actions? ~ Dr. Sangita Reddy

A. People need to get out of cities and focus on capacity building as well as empowering women in rural areas. There is a need for a targeted approach towards uplifting women through various initiatives where the Corporate can play a role in reaching out to marginalised women. The women SHGs need to be tutored well to manufacture products and contribute towards Make in India and self-reliant India.

Q. In India, there is only 10-12 per cent of women representation in Parliament, however, women in legislative positions can help bring about a greater change in the condition of women in the country. How can women representation in Parliament be increased?

A. In terms of representation in the legislative councils, assembly or the Parliament, women have 33 per cent seats reserved in the lower house and state assemblies under the Women Reservation Bill. Although in the past few years, there has been women representation in the Government and Panchayats, yet the number needs to increase.

Q. The role of women in sports in India is not as impactful as it should be except a few. As we know you are associated with the Maharashtra Basketball Association, what are your thoughts on how can the status of women's participation in sports can be increased? How can the insecurities of parents be assuaged with regard to societal pressures and safety of their daughters in sports?

A. In India, the idea of women in sports is increasingly becoming conceivable and acceptable where movies are being made and people are starting to go beyond Cricket and take interest in other sports. Khelo India has become the biggest platform since past few years wherein the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has been supporting women sportspersons. Also, it can be seen that in Maharashtra, the participation of women players are more than men and although it is seen that in terms of society, the states of Haryana and Punjab are backward yet the number of women sportspersons from these states as well as the North East are more in number. And empowering women and achieving gender equality in sports is a priority for the Indian Government.

Q. There always has been a social stigma around the aspect of women managing both work and home. You are a mother, an MP, a traveller so how do you juggle so many roles? Where do you get this inspiration from and what would be your advice to young women?

A. It is the inner strength which makes a woman manage everything so swiftly. However, the present condition and the societal pressures do have a toll on a woman's life but it is also true that adversity can make a woman stronger. Also, it is important to take care of our

mental health as an entire household depends upon a woman who has to manage both worlds.

Social Media Coverage





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Programme

1515 – 1530 hrs	Logging into respective devices for webinar
1530 – 1535 hrs	Welcome Remarks by FICCI
1535 – 1540 hrs	Remarks by Mr. Peter Rimmele , Resident Representative to India, KAS
1540 – 1545 hrs	Introduction of Smt. Poonam Mahajan by Dr. Jyotsna Suri , Past President, FICCI and Co-Chair of FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians Council
1545 – 1605 hrs	Key Note Address by Smt. Poonam Mahajan , Hon'ble Member of Parliament and National President of BJYM
	<i>Dr. Sangita Reddy, President FICCI joins at 1600 hrs</i>

1605 – 1630 hrs	A conversation with Smt. Mahajan led by Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia , Past President, FICCI and Co-Chair of FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians Council
1630 – 1655 hrs	Audience interaction Moderated by Mr. Dilip Chenoy , Secretary General, FICCI
1655 – 1700 hrs	Vote of Thanks by Mr. Harshavardhan Neotia , Past President, FICCI and Co-Chair of FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians Council



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**Smt. Poonam Mahajan, Member of Parliament and National President of Bharatiya Janata
YuvaMorcha**

August 13, 2020: 1515-1630 hrs on WebEx

Special Address and Interaction

**Smt. Poonam Mahajan, Member of Parliament and National President of Bharatiya Janata
YuvaMorcha**



Smt. Poonam Mahajan is the National President of Bharatiya Janata YuvaMorcha, the Youth Wing of BJP. She has been elected for the 2nd term as Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha from North Central Mumbai, Maharashtra. She is also the Member of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs, and Member of the Consultative committee of Ministry of Textiles. She is the Chairperson of Indo-Israel FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians and Co-Chair of Indo-Japan FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians.

Smt. Mahajan is also the President of the Maharashtra Basketball Association, a Patron of Mumbai Youth Forum, a Patron of Swachhalay, a non-profit organisation and the Parade Ambassador for Elephant Family India.

Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Past President, FICCI; Co-Chair, FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians and CMD, Lalit Suri Hospitality Group



Dr. Jyotsna Suri has been associated with Bharat Hotels since its inception. In the year 1989, she became the Group's Joint Managing Director. In 2006, she took on the mantle of Chairperson & Managing Director and since then, has been the driving force of the Group's operations.

Under her stewardship, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group became one of the leading privately-owned domestic hotel brands in India, engaged in the business of operating and managing hotels, palaces and resorts, with a focus on the luxury segment. The Group operates 12 luxury hotels, palaces and resorts under The LaLiT brand and two mid-segment hotels under The LaLiT Traveller brand across India's key business and leisure travel destinations, offering 2,261 rooms. In addition, the Group holds exclusive rights to operate and provide management consultancy services to a hotel in London, The LaLiT London, offering 70 rooms.

Dr. Suri was conferred with the Order of The Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star by Japan Government recently for her contribution towards strengthening strategic ties between India and Japan in economic and tourism sectors. She is the first Indian Woman to have received the Imperial honour since its commencement for foreign nationals in 1981.

Besides this she has been recipient of over 30 National and International awards and recognitions. She has also been featured in several power and business listings by renowned publications like Business World, Fortune India, Forbes Asia to name a few.

Dr. Suri holds various portfolios with Industry Associations – Past President FICCI; Co-Chair FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians; Chairperson FICCI Tourism Committee; Chairperson, Creative Industries Committee, FICCI; Executive Member of HAI; Council Member of World Travel & Tourism Council, India Initiative; Member of Board of Governors for National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology and Member of Board of Governors of Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs.

Mr. HarshavardhanNeotia, Past President, FICCI; Co-Chair, FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians and Chairman, AmbujaNeotia Group



Mr. HarshavardhanNeotia is Chairman of AmbujaNeotia Group that operates across the Real Estate spectrum alongside four verticals - Hospitality, Healthcare, Education and Start-Up Incubation. He has been instrumental in turning AmbujaNeotia into a pioneer in India's social housing sector, gifting Kolkata and eastern India world-class homes and malls, hospitals and hotels, educational institutions and smart workplaces. A Padma Shri awardee, a connoisseur of art, and Past President of FICCI as well as All India Management Association, Mr. HarshavardhanNeotia is also the Honorary Consul of Israel in West Bengal and Co-Chair of the FICCI Forum of Parliamentarians.

ORGANISERS

Mr. DilipChenoy, Secretary General, FICCI



Mr. DilipChenoy is currently Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). He leads the permanent secretariat of the industry chamber, which is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India, and a potent voice for policy change. FICCI represents over 2,50,000 members through Member Bodies covering all the States of India.

Before joining FICCI, Dilip served as Managing Director & CEO of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC). NSDC fosters private sector investment and initiatives in training and skill development.

Dilip has also worked in several key industry organizations, including SIAM as its Director General. He was a member of the Harvard Business School project under Professor Michael Porter that worked on the competitiveness of Indian industry. With varied experiences of working in the private sector, he advises start-ups including organisations in the digital, education, skills and livelihood space. Dilip has also served as Chairman of an Engineering Institute.

A fellow of the World Academy of Productivity Science (WAPS), he was awarded the Indian Achievers Award in 2018, The Game Changer Award in 2015 and the Rashtriya Media Ratan Award in 2013.

Mr. Peter Rimmele, Resident Representative, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)



Mr. Peter Rimmele is currently the Resident Representative of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Office, India.

He has a First Law Degree from Freiburg University, as well as a Second Law Degree from the Ministry of Justice Baden-Württemberg, Germany and a M.A. in Geography.

After working as, a jurist, judge and lecturer, he took public office as Ministerialrat, Head of Division at the State Ministry of the Interior in Saxony, Germany, from November 1991 on until 2000.

There he first served in the Police and Security and later in the Local Government Department.

On behalf of the German Foreign Ministry he served in East Timor as Registrar General, Head of Civil Registry and Notary Services (UNTAET), and became later the principal Advisor for Governance Reform for GIZ (German International Cooperation) to the Ministry of Administrative Reform and the Anti-Corruption-Commission of the Republic of Indonesia, where he served for 7 years. He then moved to Rwanda, also as Principal Advisor Good Governance/Justice Program. Earlier he was Resident Representative Lebanon, Director of Rule of Law Program Middle East North Africa, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

About the Partners

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)

Established in 1927, FICCI is the largest and oldest apex business organisation in India. Its history is closely interwoven with India's struggle for independence, its industrialization, and its emergence as one of the most rapidly growing global economies.

A non-government, not-for-profit organisation, FICCI is the voice of India's business and industry. From influencing policy to encouraging debate, engaging with policy makers and civil society, FICCI articulates the views and concerns of industry. It serves its members from the Indian private and public corporate sectors and multinational companies, drawing its strength from diverse regional chambers of commerce and industry across states, reaching out to over 2,50,000 companies.

FICCI provides a platform for networking and consensus building within and across sectors and is the first port of call for Indian industry, policy makers and the international business community. FICCI's vision is to be the thought leader for industry, its voice for policy change and its guardian for effective implementation.

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)

Freedom, justice and solidarity are the basic principles underlying the work of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS). The KAS is a political foundation, with a strong presence throughout Germany and all over the world. We cooperate with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organisations building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, we seek to intensify political cooperation at the national and international levels on the foundations of our objectives and values. Together with our partners, we contribute to the creation of an international order that enables every country to develop in freedom and under its own responsibility. The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has organized its program priorities in India into five working areas:

- Political Dialogue and cooperation
- Foreign and Security Policy including Energy Policy
- Economic policy and management
- Rule of Law
- Media and training programmes for students of journalism

The India Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung takes great pride in its cooperation with Indian partner organisations who implement jointly curated projects and programmes.