

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION**Demand to create employment opportunities for women and dismantle the systemic barriers which prevent their participation in the workforce**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Sushri Dola Sen to raise Matter with permission on 'Demand to create employment opportunities for women and dismantle systemic barriers preventing their participation in the workforce'.

MS. DOLA SEN (West Bengal): Thank you, Chairman, Sir, for giving me a chance to speak. My Zero Hour submission today is the need to improve India's female labour force participation. I am proud to say, as a woman, I am President of the AITC trade union wing for the State for 10 years and for the national level for four years, which is quite unlikely in the mainstream politics as trade union is generally a male-dominated sector. I am thankful to my party, All India Trinamool Congress, and our hon. leader, Ms. Mamata Banerjee.

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, *in the Chair.*)

Now, India's female labour force participation remains critically low. Recent Periodic Labour Force Survey indicates female youth labour force participation is 28 per cent only. Additionally, according to Time Use Survey, 2024, of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, females spend 289 minutes, on an average, in a day in unpaid domestic services for household members. Male members spend only 88 minutes in a day in such activities. This presents a significant challenge to both economic growth and gender equality.

Expanding vocational training and skill development, particularly in high growth sectors like technology, healthcare and e-commerce, will equip women with industry relevant expertise. Strengthening maternity benefits, investing in affordable childcare, promoting paternity leave can help balance care-giving responsibilities and making it easier for women to remain in the workforce. Moreover, enforcing anti-discrimination laws, ensuring equal pay and fostering leadership opportunities for women will improve workplace retention and advancement.

The Union Government must take urgent steps to create employment opportunities, implement policies that support women in the workforce and dismantle systemic barriers preventing their participation. Strengthening access to education,

vocational training and workplace flexibility can help bridge this gap and ensure greater economic inclusion for women in India.

Sir, according to our Constitution, everyone has equal rights irrespective of religion, language, caste, creed, gender, etc. But, crude reality is not likewise. Starting from agriculture and farming to tea estates, *bidi* industry, textile sector including jute mill finishing department and cotton industry, female workers neither get same wage nor even gets the mutual respect. And, obviously, the member of female labour force participation is declining gradually. Somehow, we have this attitude towards women in our mindset. So, even working women have to face this dignity issue by our society.

In our State of West Bengal, our hon. Chief Minister, Ms. Mamata Banerjee, is doing a lot for women empowerment and for the social development of women as a whole. That is why Bengal is getting first prize in different aspects at national level and, not only that, Bangla is getting international acknowledgement through various awards by the UNICEF and the UNESCO, which is virtually strengthening our nation's pride.

Thank you, Sir, for allowing me to raise this important issue as Zero Hour submission. I am sure, you will definitely allow all of us to raise the issue of duplication of EPIC voter cards also, which affect both male and female population.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: On this issue, *Dolaji*. Speak on this issue only.

MS. DOLA SEN: Thank you, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The following hon. Members associated themselves with the matter raised by the hon. Member, Ms. Dola Sen : Smt. Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Shrimati Priyanka Chaturvedi (Maharashtra), Shri M. Shanmugam (Tamil Nadu), Shri Niranjana Bishi (Odisha), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra), Dr. Sasmit Patra (Odisha), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri Prakash Chik Baraik (West Bengal), Ms. Sushmita Dev (West Bengal), Shri Sandosh Kumar P (Kerala), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Shri Imran Pratapgarhi (Maharashtra), Shri Sanjay Yadav (Bihar), Shri P. P. Suneer (Kerala), Shri Sanjeev Arora, (Punjab), Shri Manoj Kumar Jha (Bihar), Smt. Sagarika Ghose (West Bengal), Shri Mohammed Nadimul Haque (West Bengal), Smt. Mausam B Noor (West Bengal), Shri Sant Balbir Singh (Punjab), Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala) and Shri R. Girirajan (Tamil Nadu).

Shri Ramji Lal Suman - 'Demand to Amend University Grants Commission Act, 1956'.