

## Bill for women's quota in urban bodies in Lok Sabha

A bill seeking 50 percent reservation for women in urban local bodies was introduced Tuesday in Parliament.

Introducing the constitutional (112th Amendment) bill in the Lok Sabha, Urban Development Minister S. Jaipal Reddy said: 'Enhancement of reservation for women in urban local bodies will not only ensure their increased representation and participation... but also mainstream gender concerns in governance and decision making process, particularly, those related to women's issues such as water supply, sanitation, solid waste management, health and education.'

'This is only desirable since women constitute nearly half of the population,' he said.

In her address to parliament June 4, President Pratibha Patil had said that 'a bill providing 50 percent reservation for women in urban local bodies would be moved by the government as women suffer multiple deprivations of class, caste and gender and enhancing reservation in urban local bodies will lead to more women entering the public sphere.'

Reddy said the bill has been prepared after inter-ministerial consultations and with the state governments.

'The state governments of Himachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh have supported the proposal for providing 50 percent reservation for women in urban local bodies,' Reddy said.

The state governments of Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have already provided for 50 percent reservation for women in urban local bodies.

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