

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
LALBABA COLLEGE
P.O. BELURMATH 711202
HOWRAH, WEST BENGAL, INDIA

UGC Sponsored National Seminar on
WOMEN AND POLITICS IN INDIA:
1913 – 2013

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Abstract must be written in 250 words focusing on the main theme as well as those related to the subthemes of the seminar. Full paper should not exceed 4000 words. The paper should be written in New Times Roman font style, with 12 point font size and 1.5 spaces. Every effort will be taken to publish the proceedings of the national seminar in the form of a book by reputed publishers. Papers will be selected by an expert committee nominated for this purpose. Please adhere to Indian Copyright Act and acknowledge the source of information, comments and analysis that you quote in the paper. All abstracts must be submitted only through electronic means to:

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Last date of submission of Abstract: **01/10/2014**
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For Outstation Participants: **Rs. 500/-**
For Local Participants: **Rs. 200/-**
For Research Scholars: **Rs. 100/-**
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DD may be drawn on any Nationalised Bank in favour of the **Principal, Lalbaba College**, payable at **Kolkata**. Registration forms along with DD may be sent to the Convener, UGC Sponsored National Seminar Committee within **15/11/2014**.

Outstation Paper presenters are eligible for II sleeper class Trainfare. Participation in all sessions is mandatory.

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117, G.T. ROAD
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TWO DAY UGC SPONSORED
NATIONAL SEMINAR
ON

**WOMEN AND POLITICS
IN INDIA: 1913 - 2013**

DATE: **26TH & 27TH NOVEMBER 2014**

VENUE: **SARAT CHANDRA SABHAGRIHA**

In Collaboration with:

Women's Studies Centre,
RABINDRA BHARATI UNIVERSITY
KOLKATA 700 050

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ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Lalbaba College is a co-educational undergraduate College, founded in 1964 and is affiliated to the University of Calcutta. It is a conglomeration of nearly four thousand students, more than hundred full-time, part-time, contractual and guest teachers and nearly thirty non-teaching staff. This non-government type grant-in-aid college is located adjacent to Kolkata. It is just on the opposite bank of the river Hooghly next to Belur Math, the world famous monastic establishment founded by Swami Vivekananda. It is easily accessible by rail and road, only six kilometers journey from Howrah and fifteen kilometers from Sealdah. The nearest railway station is Belur.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Political Science was started since the foundation of the College. Currently, the Department offers only Under Graduate Degree. The Department focuses at different aspects of the curriculum and issues such as theoretical aspects of the study of politics, Western as well as Indian political thought, constitutionalism and comparative politics, Constitution of India, International Relations, Sociology, Public Administration and Local Government etc. The Department has been making all efforts to provide the students all pros and cons of politics and administration so that they may be responsible citizens of the nation and be able to lead the society in right direction and contribute for the socio-economic development of the region.

CONCEPT NOTE

Issues relating to women have become very significant today, both from academic and practical standpoints. Women's studies have evolved as a major discourse integrating different disciplinary perspectives. No nation or society can afford to move along the path of development neglecting women, who constitute roughly half of the society. Where women constitute

half the population in a political system which supports equality and where both women and men are legally eligible for political office, women's participation should be equal to that of men. The world's largest democracy, India, falls in the lowest quartile with respect to the number of women in parliament.

While the Indian democratic state is committed to the protection of individual rights within the context of citizenship, a closer look at how it operates for the women reveals that these rights are not accessible to all the women in India. The evolution of Indian democracy through the general elections so far has reflected a low representation of women in Parliament, State legislatures, in political parties and other decision-making bodies. Representation of women leaders at the grassroots level in India is nearly 50%, especially since the passing of the 73rd amendment of 1992, which allotted one-third of all seats to women. Still, in India, the impact of women panchayat members and chiefs (*pradhans*) on the administration of local bodies did remain peripheral. The problem of Indian politics is that reservation is made for women but women are not included in these policies. The under representation of women in the political sphere is inextricably linked with the low and inferior status of women in society in India especially in the context of the declining sex ratio, increasing violence and crimes against women and their marginalized status in employment, education and health sectors.

Thus it seems clear that the actual political power remained something of a male domain and only few crumbs are thrown to women. Women are unjustifiably rare in the decision-making bodies. This is the real situation that exists in India in terms of political participation of women. Often they are treated as subordinates to man almost in every place. As a result, the advancement of women seems constrained at all levels including media.

Media once played an important role in strengthening the women's empowerment movement. Now media's role has changed from being a 'social institution' into a 'trader' or 'businessman' which treats 'citizens' as

'customers'. Glossy supplements of newspapers prefer to use women as commodities to increase their circulation. Reports of violence against women are covered widely for the same reason. Media projects two extreme characters of women, one being traditional (submissive) and the other modern and liberal (aggressive) which is driven by market forces and is an offshoot of the consumerist society. Many of the old stereotype roles like housewife or mother have been modified and have replaced by new stereotypes which emerged due to the changed social economic political scenario in India, due to globalization in the 1990s and parallel developments in the media. Though the number of women journalist is increasing except the mainstream media companies, most women working in newspapers and magazines are in low paying positions. Most women in journalism are sub-editors, who have limited responsibility, and women reporters are often given 'soft' or development beats, not political or important beats.

The objectives of the seminar are as follows:

- to know the role of women in politics in both colonial and post-colonial India,
- to know the condition, position and participation of women in the political life of India during the last hundred years,
- to know the narratives of women in the various sectors of the Indian society during the last century,
- to know the story of women's empowerment,
- to know the women working in the media and the issue of women's empowerment,
- to know the aspect of commodification of women in their representation in media,
- to know the young minds about their views on women in Indian politics and
- to review the Government's spirit about the matter.

The seminar would therefore encourage discussion and papers on these and we welcome proposals in the following areas (but not strictly limited to them):

- **Women & Politics in Pre-Independent India**
- **Women & Politics in Post-Independent India**
- **Women, Media & Empowerment**