

CONFERENCE



Chintan
Research
Foundation



SASHAKT NARI, VIKSIT BHARAT

Women-Led
Development @2047

26th February, 2026 | 10AM Onwards | Hyatt Regency, New Delhi



ABOUT CHINTAN RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) is an emerging independent think tank dedicated to shaping policy through rigorous research and thought leadership. With a strong focus on fostering collaboration between policymakers and industry, CRF integrates practical insights into its research and advocacy efforts. It conducts comprehensive research to support informed decision-making and engages with stakeholders through discussions, events, and publications. CRF's research is focused on three core areas – Climate Change & Energy Transition, Economy & Trade, and Geopolitics & Strategic Studies.

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BACKGROUND NOTE

In the past decade, the Indian government have been taking several initiatives to empower women, in the country from the Prime Minister's vision of women-led development to breaking down barriers through various initiatives, such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Jan Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity, and Digital India Programmes. Through these initiatives, India has shown commitment to women economic empowerment which reflects the government's strategic approach towards development of the women, by the women and for the women. The initiatives and programmes focus at providing access to education, employment, finance, and technology, thereby, investing in the Nari Shakti, the power of women to drive economic and social transformation.

While much progress has been achieved which is visible through successful stories of women leading key businesses, breaking stereotypes, contributing to sustainable livelihood and economy, women's economic participation remains hampered by socio-economic barriers. As Simone de Beauvoir profoundly asserted, "one is not born a woman, but becomes one," highlighting the social construction of womanhood, shaped by cultural, historical, and social factors. In India and extendable to the Global South, these factors are deeply intertwined with systems of patriarchy, hierarchy and power, thereby access to resources and opportunities, affecting power dynamics, as well as cultural narratives.

Only 30% women participate through the labour force to the economy (NSSO, MoSPI, 2024). Much of their labor, both within and outside the home, goes unseen and undervalued. Though participation has increased across sectors, from agriculture to services sector, their contribution accounts to only 18% of the country's GDP which is one of the lowest proportions in the world. Furthermore, the rise of women entrepreneurs in the self-employment sector, has gained significant governmental and societal support. From Self-Help Groups and producer collectives to women-led start-ups in manufacturing, services and the digital economy, new entrepreneurial models are beginning to challenge traditional value chains and expand women's economic agency. By acknowledging the breadth and depth of women's economic engagement, we can move towards achieving the goal of equitable and inclusive Viksit Bharat by 2047.

However, the economic position of women is shaped by the social construction, which is further complicated by India's rich cultural history and diverse social structures, including caste, class, and ethnicity, which play a crucial role in shaping norms and expectations. For instance, the Khasi tribe in Meghalaya practices matrilineal inheritance, where property and social status are passed down through generations of women, contrasting sharply with the patriarchal norms prevalent in many other parts of the country. But here also the role of brother and husband is important. Such variation illustrates how women's access to law, justice and state or customary institutions is mediated by identity, and how these

institutions can both enable and constrain women's claims to land, finance, bodily autonomy and public office. Additionally, limited access to education and healthcare persists and issues such as violence against women continue, therefore, underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding of equitable justice in India.

These layered inequalities do not exist in isolation; they are amplified when societies face environmental and political shocks. Women in India and across the wider Global South stand at the frontlines of climate change, conflict and displacement. In such situations, they are often the primary targets who face the brunt of each of these calamities through loss of livelihoods, heightened insecurity, increased care burdens and greater exposure to violence.

This conference aims to provide a platform for comprehensive and interdisciplinary discussions on the position and perception of women through an Indian perspective. Rather than merely diagnosing problems, it seeks to explore measurable impacts and propose actionable solutions that can foster transformative change. The conference shall bring forth the unprecedented and exceptional examples from India of women-led development in bringing women in positions of economic independence and growth and increased political power. By engaging with experts and changemakers in the sphere of gender equality, empowerment and development the discussions shall endeavor to create a multifaceted conversation around the concerns that faced, at an application level, in efforts towards equal opportunity. Drawing on insights from sociology, anthropology, economics, and political science, the event shall work towards providing a platform for policymakers, scholars, and activists to navigate the intricate and evolving landscape of the stature and power of women in India, their increased presence in positions of power and steps towards higher political involvement.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the event is to contribute meaningfully to the evolving discourse on women's development and women-led development in India by adopting an interdisciplinary and solution-oriented approach. The panel discussions and speeches will be curated to create a nuanced conversation around women development and women-led development, recognizing that experiences of inequality are shaped by multiple factors. Further, the panels will focus on assessing the impacts of these disparities and exploring innovative, and evidence-based interventions. This approach aims to move beyond theoretical discussions and towards pragmatic and actionable strategies that lead to tangible outcomes in promoting equality. The event shall have panel discussions focusing on the key aspects of economic equality, political inclusion, entrepreneurship and a special focus on the Global south.

PROGRAMME AGENDA

Schedule	Particulars
09:30 - 10:00 AM	Registration & Networking
	Inaugural Session
10:00- 10:10 AM	Opening Remarks on Sashakt Nari, Visit Bharat Shishir Priyadarshi, President, CRF
10:10 - 10:25 AM	Special Address Chief Guest: Smt Annpurna Devi, Minister for WCD, Govt of India
10:25 – 10:45 AM	Keynote Address Guest of Honor: Dr. Priti Adani, Chairperson, Adani Foundation
10:45 – 11:00 AM	Book Launch “Sashakt Nari, Viksit Bharat: Women-Led Development @ 2047”
11:00 - 11:15 AM	Networking Tea Break
11:15 – 12:00 PM	Panel Discussion I Enterprise, Equity, Empowerment: Women Driving Growth
12:00 – 12:30 PM	Fireside Chat I Nurturing the economy - Unpaid Care Work at Homes
12:30 – 01:15 PM	Panel Discussion II Breaking Lines of Control and Patriarchy: Law and Security
01:15 - 02:15 PM	Networking Lunch Break
02:15 – 02:45 PM	Fireside Chat II Winning on Uneven Surfaces: Women in Sports
02:45 - 03:30 PM	Panel Discussion III Bearing the Brunt, Driving the Solutions: Women and Climate Action
03:30 - 03:45 PM	Networking Tea Break
03:45 - 04:30 PM	Panel Discussion IV From Panchayats to Parliament: Women Redefining Indian Leadership
04:30 - 05:00 PM	Fireside Chat III Diplomacy Through Her Lens: Women Leading Global Engagement
05:00 - 05:45 PM	Panel Discussion V Changing the Script: Women, Media, and Cultural Power
05:45 - 06:15 PM	High Tea
06:15 – 07:15 PM	Musical Programme
07:15 - 07:45 PM	Awards
07:45 – 07:55 PM	Vote of Thanks
08:00 PM Onwards	Networking Dinner



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