

MAINS MASTERY 2026 · GS PAPER II · QUESTION 2 · STUDENT EDITION

Women's Reservation: From Panchayats to Parliament

THE QUESTION, AS SET IN UPSC CSE MAINS 2026

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Directive: Discuss | 10 marks | 150 words | Polity: representation, vulnerable sections

1 **PYQ Deep Decode**
Demand, hidden demand, structure, form

2 **PYQ Intelligence**
2017 to 2026: women and representation

3 **Additional information**
The basis, the stages, the 2026 position

4 **Pitfalls and variations**
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7 **Quick recall**
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A seven-point self-check

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"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

1 PYQ Deep Decode

Read the question the way the examiner set it: the demand, the hidden demand, the structure that follows from both, and how the answer should be presented, opened and closed.

1.1 The demand

This question has a **lens** and a **task**. The lens is the statement: women are neither a minority nor a backward class. The task is to trace the **evolution** of women's reservation **from local bodies to Parliament**. The statement is not decoration; it explains why women needed a **different constitutional basis**, and why the journey to Parliament took three decades.

Words in the question	What they ask you to do	What goes wrong if you miss them
"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor ... a backward class."	Explain why the usual grounds for reservation (minority status, backwardness) do not fit women, and what ground was used instead: **under-representation as half the population**, and Article 15(3).	Ignoring the statement and starting with the 73rd Amendment.
In the light of this statement	Keep returning to it: each stage of the evolution shows how the State built a **separate, cross-cutting** form of reservation.	A chronology that never connects to the statement.
discuss the evolution	Trace the **stages**, with dates and the reason each mattered, and reach a view.	A list of amendments without explanation.
from local bodies to Parliament	Cover both ends: **1992** for panchayats and municipalities, and **2023-26** for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, with the failed attempts in between.	Stopping at 2023 or skipping the decades of failed bills.

THE DEMAND IN ONE LINE

Explain why women's reservation needed its own basis, then trace its evolution from local bodies (1992) to Parliament (2023-26), and judge how far it reaches.

A note on the statement: it is a legal characterisation of women's position, not a constitutional text. Do not attribute it to a particular judgment or report in the exam; engage with its logic instead.

1.2 The hidden demand

When seats are reserved for women **as a class**, a further question arises: does overall representation address the **inequalities among women**? The 2023 amendment earmarks seats for SC and ST women within the relevant reserved categories but has no separate OBC women's sub-quota. Experience in some panchayats also shows that male relatives may exercise authority on behalf of elected women, though the women themselves legally hold the seats. A strong answer briefly weighs these limitations.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Each stage should carry a date, what it did, and why it mattered for women as a class. The last column is where the hidden demand begins.

Stage	What it did	What it left open
73rd and 74th Amendments, 1992	At least one-third of directly elected local seats for women, and one-third of panchayat chairperson posts.	Proxy representation in some places; real power of the elected woman.
106th Amendment, 2023	One-third of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, including within SC and ST seats.	No OBC sub-quota; tied to delimitation after the next Census.

WEAK

Women's reservation began in 1992 and was extended to Parliament in 2023.

STRONG

Not a minority or backward class, women gained reservation as an under-represented half of the population: in local bodies in 1992, and in legislatures by an amendment of 2023 that is in force but awaits delimitation.

1.3 The structure

The question has a **lens** (the statement), a **main task** (the evolution) and **one hidden demand** (inequalities among women). So the answer has **three parts**. The shares are of the body between the introduction and the conclusion; they are a teaching guide, not a UPSC rule.



Part 1 ### In the light of the statement: the basis **about one-quarter**

Not the usual grounds	Women are about half the population, spread across every caste, class and religion: not a numerical minority or a backward class merely by virtue of sex; Article 16(4) concerns public employment and does not itself govern reservation of elected seats.
The ground used	**Under-representation**, with Article 15(3) supplying the equality rationale; the seats themselves rest on express provisions (243D, 243T, 330A, 332A, 239AA). The reservation runs **across** other categories, not as a separate caste quota.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Part 2 **The evolution from local bodies to Parliament** about three-fifths

1974-1989	Towards Equality (1974) proposed statutory women's panchayats and municipal seats as transitional measures, not legislative quotas; the National Perspective Plan for Women (1988) set a 30% target in local bodies; the 64th Amendment Bill (1989), on panchayats including women's seats, passed the Lok Sabha but failed in the Rajya Sabha.
1992-93	**73rd and 74th Amendments**: not less than one-third of directly elected seats (Articles 243D, 243T) and of panchayat chairperson posts (243D(4)); municipal chairpersons left to State law (243T(4)); in force 1993.
1996-2014	Bills of 1996, 1998 and 1999 lapsed; the 108th Amendment Bill (2008) passed the Rajya Sabha on **9 March 2010** (186-1) but never the Lok Sabha, and lapsed in 2014.
2006 onwards	States raise it: Bihar to 50% in panchayats in 2006; the Ministry of Panchayati Raj reports 21 States with 50% in Panchayati Raj Institutions.
2023-26	**106th Amendment** (Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam): one-third in the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and the Delhi Assembly, taking effect after Census-linked delimitation, for fifteen years from the Act's commencement under Article 334A(1), continuable by Parliament under 334A(2); in force from **16 April 2026**; a bill to bring it forward to 2029 was defeated on **17 April 2026**.

Part 3 **Does reservation for women as a class reach inequalities among women?** about one-sixth

SC and ST women have a share within SC and ST seats; OBC women are eligible for the general women's seats but have **no assured share**; the Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils are outside; and in some panchayats, **proxy** exercise of authority shows that seats alone do not transfer power.

1.4 How to present it

The form follows the question. "Evolution from local bodies to Parliament" describes a **journey in stages**, so a **timeline** shows it best, with the basis before it and the hidden part after it as short points.

Form	Fit here	Reason
Timeline	**Best**	Stages and dates in one line; the gaps between them tell the story.
Table: level, provision, year	Good	Clear for local bodies against legislatures.
Points only	Possible	Works, but hides the long gap between 1992 and 2023.

1.5 The introduction and the conclusion

The introduction serves the whole question. It engages the statement at once: women are neither a minority nor a backward class, so their reservation rests on **under-representation** and runs across all groups, which frames the evolution that follows.

The conclusion settles the demand. "Discuss" needs a view: reservation has been **extended in principle from local bodies to directly elected legislatures, but remains non-operational there** and excludes the Upper Houses, and representation will mean power only if it reaches women across castes and classes.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

2 PYQ Intelligence: selected related questions, 2017 to 2026

The question's context in 2026, its place in a line of questions on women, representation and local government, and what to prepare next.

2.1 Why the subject was topical in 2026

The 106th Constitutional Amendment came into force on 16 April 2026, but reservation of legislative seats remained non-operational; on 17 April the Lok Sabha rejected the 131st Amendment Bill, which sought earlier implementation through delimitation based on the latest published Census. UPSC never states why it sets a question, so treat this as **context, not cause**.

When	What happened	Why it matters for this question
September 2023	The Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill passes the Lok Sabha (454-2) and the Rajya Sabha (214-0); assent on **28 September 2023**; it becomes the 106th Amendment.	The legislatures stage of the evolution.
June 2024	**74 women** elected to the 18th Lok Sabha, about 13.6%, down from 78 in 2019.	The under-representation the reservation addresses.
16 April 2026	The 106th Amendment is notified into force; reservation itself still begins only after delimitation following the first Census after the Act.	Law in force, reservation not yet operational.
17 April 2026	The Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, introduced on 16 April with a Delimitation Bill, 2026, to allow an earlier delimitation on the latest published Census (2011) and an expanded Lok Sabha, so that reservation could operate by 2029, fails in the Lok Sabha: **298 for, 230 against**, short of the special majority.	Women's reservation became entangled with the delimitation debate between States.

2.2 The skill UPSC keeps testing

These questions share one concern: **whether formal inclusion of women becomes real power**, and for which women.

Year	The question, as UPSC set it	What it asked of you	What changed in 2026
2017 GS II · Q1 · 10 marks	"The local self-government system in India has not proved to be effective instrument of governance." Critically examine the statement and give your views to improve the situation.	Judge local bodies' effectiveness.	The first stage of the 2026 evolution.
2018 GS I · Q18 · 15 marks	"Women's movement in India has not addressed the issues of women of lower social strata." Substantiate your view.	Inequalities among women.	The hidden demand of 2026.
2019 GS II ·	"The reservation of seats for women in the institutions of local self-government has had a	Judge the impact of local reservation.	The closest precedent: now the whole journey, to Parliament.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Year	The question, as UPSC set it	What it asked of you	What changed in 2026
Q13 · 15 marks	limited impact on the patriarchal character of the Indian Political Process." Comment.		
2023 GS II · Q14 · 15 marks	Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures in India.	How civil society advances meaningful participation and representation in State legislatures.	From mechanisms that support participation to the constitutional evolution of reserved seats.

CARRY THIS METHOD TO ANY "EVOLUTION" QUESTION

1. **State the basis** for the policy.
2. **Mark the stages** with dates.
3. **Explain the gaps** between stages.
4. **Give the present position** precisely.
5. **Ask who is left out.**

2.3 What to prepare next

RELATED CONSTITUTIONAL IDEAS

Horizontal and vertical reservation	Cross-cutting in character: seats are earmarked for SC and ST women within their reserved seats, with other women's seats in the overall quota; there is no OBC women's sub-quota. Service-style horizontal reservation is an analogy, not an identical electoral mechanism.
Delimitation	Seat freeze on the 1971 Census (42nd and 84th Amendments) and the North-South debate.
Article 15(3)	Special provisions for women and children: the equality rationale, not the seat quota itself.
Indra Sawhney (1992)	General 50% ceiling for SC/ST/OBC vertical reservation, subject to exceptional circumstances; EWS reservation under Articles 15(6) and 16(6) has a distinct constitutional basis.

WOMEN IN POLITICS, LIKELY NEXT

Proxy representation	"Sarpanch pati" and measures against it.
Party tickets	Share of women candidates in elections.
Women voters	Rising turnout and welfare politics.
Global comparison	Quotas in Rwanda, Mexico and others.

3 Additional information

Everything needed to answer this question well. Tier 1 holds what the demand needs; Tier 2 places it within the wider debate on representation, quotas and power.

TIER 1 · ESSENTIAL: THE BASIS, THE STAGES, THE PRESENT POSITION

From local bodies to Parliament: the stages

1974
Towards Equality: women's panchayats, municipal seats; no

1988–89
NPP: 30% local target; 64th Amendment Bill fails.

1992–93
73rd, 74th Amendments: one-third in local bodies.

1996–99
Legislature bills of 1996, 1998, 1999 lapse.

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legislative quota.

2006
Bihar: 50% in panchayats; other States follow.

2008–14
108th Bill: Rajya Sabha passes it 9 Mar 2010; lapses 2014.

Sep 2023
106th Amendment: one-third in legislatures.

Apr 2026
In force 16 April; 131st Amendment Bill rejected 17 April.

Subject	What it is	Why it matters for the answer
THE BASIS		
Why not a minority or backward class	Women are about half the population and are found in every group; backwardness under Article 16(4) is assessed for classes of citizens, not for a sex as a whole.	Explains the statement in the question.
Article 15(3)	Permits special provisions for women and children.	The equality rationale; the elected-seat quotas rest on express articles (243D, 243T, 330A, 332A, 239AA).
Horizontal reservation	Women's political reservation is cross-cutting in effect, but Articles 330A and 332A earmark seats for SC/ST women without creating an OBC women's sub-quota. Rajesh Kumar Daria (2007) concerns horizontal reservation in public employment; its adjustment method is not the electoral rule.	By analogy: women's seats cut across categories rather than adding a caste quota; the 50% ceiling of service cases does not apply mechanically to constitutional seat reservation.
Towards Equality (1974)	The Committee on the Status of Women in India proposed statutory women's panchayats and reserved municipal seats as transitional measures, and did not endorse legislative quotas; Lotika Sarkar and Vina Mazumdar dissented on that point.	The early reasoning behind the statement: women are not a concentrated group.
LOCAL BODIES		
73rd and 74th Amendments	Passed 1992; in force **24 April 1993** (panchayats) and **1 June 1993** (municipalities). Articles 243D and 243T: not less than one-third of directly elected seats, including within SC and ST seats; Articles 243D(3) and 243T(3) say such seats may be allotted by rotation; 243D(4) adds one-third of panchayat chairperson posts, while 243T(4) leaves municipal chairpersons to State law.	The first stage.
States at 50%	Bihar first in 2006; the Ministry of Panchayati Raj reports 21 States (and two UTs, February 2024) with 50% in Panchayati Raj Institutions.	States went beyond the constitutional floor.
Evidence of impact	Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004), studying village councils in West Bengal and Rajasthan, found that women heads shifted public investment towards goods women prioritised, such as drinking water; not a claim about every woman leader.	Representation changed policy, not only numbers.
LEGISLATURES		
The long attempt	81st Amendment Bill (1996), examined by a Joint Committee chaired by Geeta Mukherjee, which suggested considering OBC women and the Upper Houses; reintroduced 1998, 1999; 108th Amendment Bill (2008) passed by the Rajya Sabha on 9 March 2010; lapsed with the 15th Lok Sabha in 2014.	Why the journey to Parliament took three decades.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Subject	What it is	Why it matters for the answer
106th Amendment, 2023	Inserts Articles 330A (Lok Sabha), 332A (State Assemblies), 334A, and clauses (ba) to (bc) in Article 239AA(2) (Delhi): as nearly as may be one-third of seats, including one-third of SC- and ST-reserved seats (Articles 330A, 332A; for Delhi, Article 239AA(2)(bb) covers SC women within SC-reserved seats); takes effect after delimitation on the first Census published after the Act; ceases fifteen years from the Act's commencement (Article 334A(1)), continuable until a date Parliament fixes by law (334A(2)); rotation after each later delimitation, as Parliament may by law determine (334A(3)).	The final stage, and its conditions.
Not covered	No separate OBC sub-quota; no reservation in the Rajya Sabha or State Legislative Councils.	The hidden demand.
2026	In force from 16 April 2026 (Notification S.O. 1922(E)); the 131st Amendment Bill, with a Delimitation Bill to expand the Lok Sabha, failed on 17 April 2026 (298 to 230). Census 2027's general reference date is 1 March 2027, with earlier dates for some regions.	The present position: law in force, seats not yet reserved.

In force is not the same as operational. The 106th Amendment is part of the Constitution and in force since 16 April 2026, but Article 334A makes the reservation itself begin only after delimitation based on the first Census after the Act. Write both halves; the distinction is where marks are gained.

Why local bodies came first. Women's reservation in local bodies was built into the broader constitutional restructuring of local self-government. Legislative reservation proved more contentious because it affected representation in Parliament and the Assemblies and raised disputes over constituency allocation, rotation and sub-quotas.

TIER 2 · EXTENDED UNDERSTANDING: THE WHOLE TOPIC AROUND IT

The case for reservation in legislatures

1. **Representation:** half the population, under 14% of the Lok Sabha.
2. **Policy:** evidence that women representatives change priorities.
3. **Pipeline:** local leadership can rise to State and national level.
4. **Symbol:** equal citizenship made visible.

The concerns

1. **Proxy:** male relatives exercising power.
2. **Elite capture:** benefits to already privileged women.
3. **OBC women:** no assured share within the quota.
4. **Rotation:** may disrupt constituency continuity; Article 334A(3) ties rotation to each later delimitation, not to every general election.
5. **Delay:** tied to Census and delimitation.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Two debates worth knowing

Quota or party tickets?

One approach would require parties to nominate a minimum proportion of women; another favours reserved seats because nominations do not guarantee election and parties have historically fielded few women. Both preserve voter choice, though reserved constituencies restrict candidate eligibility. The balanced reading: **reserved seats are a minimum guarantee, complemented by reform of party nominations and leadership**.

Should women's reservation wait for delimitation?

Linking it to fresh delimitation lets seats be reserved on new boundaries. Delinking it would let women gain seats sooner, but on old boundaries. The balanced reading: **the link delayed a reform Parliament had passed almost unanimously**, and 2026 showed how it ties women's representation to the separate debate between States.

4 Pitfalls and variations

The mistakes that cost marks here, the claims never to make, and how the answer changes when the question changes.

4.1 Six pitfalls, each with its correction

Ignoring the statement

~~The 73rd Amendment gave women one-third reservation in panchayats.~~

Not a minority or backward class, women gained reservation as an under-represented half of the population, first in panchayats.

Calling it operational

~~Women now have 33% reservation in the Lok Sabha.~~

The 106th Amendment is in force, but reservation begins after delimitation following the next Census.

Skipping the failed bills

~~After 1992, reservation was extended to Parliament in 2023.~~

Bills of 1996, 1998 and 1999 lapsed; the 2008 Bill passed the Rajya Sabha in 2010 but lapsed in 2014.

Wrong articles

~~Article 243 reserves seats for women in Parliament.~~

Articles 243D and 243T cover local bodies; 330A and 332A cover legislatures.

Overstating coverage

~~The Act reserves seats in both Houses of Parliament.~~

It covers the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and Delhi; not the Rajya Sabha or Councils.

No view

~~Thus women's reservation has evolved over time.~~

Reservation now extends in principle to legislatures but is not yet operational there, and must reach all women.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

4.2 Never write these

- "Women's reservation in legislatures applied in the 2024 election."
  It begins only after delimitation.
- "There is an OBC women's quota in the 106th Amendment."
  There is no assured OBC share; OBC women compete for the general women's seats.
- "Article 15(3) creates women's seats in legislatures."
  It supplies the rationale; Articles 330A and 332A create the seats.
- "Municipal chairpersons have a one-third quota under the Constitution."
  Article 243T(4) leaves it to State law.
- "Women's reservation breaches the 50% ceiling."
  Constitutional women's seat reservation is cross-cutting in effect; the 50% ceiling governing specified vertical quotas cannot simply be applied to it.
- "The 2010 Bill became law."
  It passed only the Rajya Sabha and lapsed in 2014.
- "The 131st Amendment Bill was passed in 2026."
  It failed in the Lok Sabha on 17 April 2026.

4.3 If the question changes

If it asks	The structure becomes	What must change
Critically examine the 106th Amendment	1. Provisions; 2. Merits; 3. Limitations; 4. Way forward	OBC, delimitation, rotation and proxies carry weight.
Impact of reservation in **local bodies**	1. Gains in numbers and policy; 2. Limits: proxies, capacity; 3. Measures	Evidence such as Chattopadhyay and Duflo.
Should women's reservation be **delinked from delimitation**?	Both positions and a reasoned stand	The 2026 vote becomes central.
The same question for **15 marks**	The same three parts, with evidence of impact and the 2026 debate	Add the case and the concerns.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

5 The model answer

One answer, written to the 150-word limit, in the form this question calls for: the basis first, a timeline for the evolution, and a short part for the hidden demand. The introduction covers the whole question; the conclusion settles its demand.

Model answer **Premise and timeline** **150 words**

Though neither a numerical minority nor a backward class collectively, women remain under-represented; Article 15(3) supports special measures, implemented through separate constitutional mandates.

1974-88: Towards Equality proposed local-level measures; the National Perspective Plan recommended 30% reservation in local bodies.

1992-93: The 73rd and 74th Amendments mandated at least one-third of directly elected panchayat and municipal seats for women, including SC/ST women; panchayat chairperson posts were also reserved.

1996-99: Parliamentary women's-reservation bills repeatedly lapsed.

2006 onward: Bihar and other States raised panchayat quotas to 50%.

2008-14: The 108th Amendment Bill passed the Rajya Sabha in 2010 but lapsed in 2014.

2023-26: The 106th Amendment provided nearly one-third reservation in the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies and Delhi Assembly. In force since April 2026, the quotas await Census-linked delimitation; a 2026 attempt to advance implementation failed.

With no OBC sub-quota and Upper Houses excluded, genuine empowerment also demands independent political agency and accountability.

DEMAND
The premise answered, then the evolution from 1974 to 2023-26

HIDDEN DEMAND
Which women gain: no OBC sub-quota, Upper Houses excluded

STRUCTURE
Premise, strict chronology, conclusion on real empowerment

BALANCE
Introduction 23 words, conclusion 17 words; 150 words in all

Why it works: the introduction answers the question's premise at once and names the constitutional basis; a strictly chronological timeline traces the journey from the 1974 report through local bodies to the 106th Amendment and its 2026 status; the conclusion asks which women gain and what real empowerment needs.

6 Other ways to write it

The model answer above remains the answer. These outlines show how a different, equally valid answer could be built, and when each choice works.

Approach	How it is built	When it works
Table by level	Rows for local bodies and legislatures; columns for provision, year, present status.	When you want the two levels compared.
Open with data	Introduction: 74 women in the 2024 Lok Sabha, about 13.6%; then the statement and the evolution.	When under-representation is your strongest opening.
Three phases	Phase 1 local bodies; Phase 2 failed legislature bills; Phase 3 the 2023 amendment and 2026.	When the long gap is the point you want to stress.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

Approach	How it is built	When it works
For 15 marks	Add evidence of impact and the delimitation debate.	When there is room for analysis.

7 Quick recall and Prelims crossover

Facts for rapid revision and Prelims.

1	**Towards Equality**: report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, **1974**; dissent by Lotika Sarkar and Vina Mazumdar.	9	106th Amendment inserts **330A, 332A, 334A** and **239AA(2)(ba)-(bc)**.
2	**National Perspective Plan for Women**: **1988**.	10	**Fifteen years** from the Act's commencement (334A(1)); continuable by law (334A(2)); rotation after each later delimitation (334A(3)).
3	**64th Amendment Bill** (1989): passed the Lok Sabha, failed in the Rajya Sabha.	11	One-third of **SC and ST** seats reserved for SC and ST women.
4	**73rd** in force **24 April 1993**; **74th** in force **1 June 1993**.	12	No reservation in the **Rajya Sabha** or **Legislative Councils**; no OBC sub-quota.
5	Articles **243D** (panchayats) and **243T** (municipalities).	13	Passed: Lok Sabha **454-2**, Rajya Sabha **214-0**; assent **28 September 2023**.
6	**Bihar**: first State with 50% in panchayats, **2006**.	14	In force from **16 April 2026**.
7	Rajya Sabha passed the 108th Amendment Bill on **9 March 2010** (186-1).	15	**131st Amendment Bill** failed in the Lok Sabha, **17 April 2026** (298-230).
8	Constitution (128th Amendment) Bill, 2023 became the **106th Amendment**.	16	**74** women in the 18th Lok Sabha (2024), about **13.6%**.

THE ONE SENTENCE TO CARRY OUT OF THIS DOCUMENT

Women were given reservation not as a minority or a backward class but as half the people, and the framework that takes it to Parliament now awaits the Census, delimitation and the laws that implement it.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

8 Write it yourself

Write the answer in 150 words without looking back, then check it against each line below.

	Check	Yes / No
1	Does the introduction engage **the statement** and give the basis?	
2	Are Article 15(3) (rationale) and the **express articles** (243D, 243T, 330A, 332A) kept distinct?	
3	Does the evolution trace the **early antecedents (1974-88)**, local-body reservation, the failed bills and 2023-26?	
4	Is the 2026 position precise: **in force, not yet operational**?	
5	Does the conclusion assess **which women** gain (no OBC sub-quota, Upper Houses excluded) and the need for real political agency?	
6	Does the conclusion give a **view**, at about the length of the introduction?	
7	Is it **within the 150-word limit**, with no claim from section 4.2?	

Sources

- Constitution of India: Articles 15(3), 243D, 243T, 239AA, 330A, 332A, 334A; Constitution (Seventy-third and Seventy-fourth Amendment) Acts, 1992; Constitution (One Hundred and Sixth Amendment) Act, 2023.
- Government of India, Towards Equality: Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (1974); National Perspective Plan for Women (1988).
- Gazette Notification S.O. 1922(E), 16 April 2026 (commencement of the 106th Amendment); Lok Sabha proceedings of 17 April 2026 on the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2026; PRS Legislative Research bill summaries.
- Ministry of Panchayati Raj, reply on States with 50% reservation in PRIs (February 2024).
- Election Commission of India data on women MPs, 2024; R. Chattopadhyay and E. Duflo, "Women as Policy Makers", Econometrica (2004).
- UPSC Civil Services (Main), official question papers: GS II 2017 Q1; GS I 2018 Q18; GS II 2019 Q13; GS II 2023 Q14; GS II 2026 Q2.

"Women as a class neither belong to a minority group nor are they regarded as forming a backward class." In the light of this statement, discuss the evolution of women's reservation from local bodies to Parliament.

YOUR NEXT STEP

Now write GS Paper II 2026 again.

You now know what this question asked, what it expected without saying so, and how its answer is built. Write the whole paper under the clock, have it evaluated, and read the feedback against this document.



1 Write the full paper in three hours

2 Self-check this answer with section 8

3 Have the paper evaluated

4 Read the feedback against this document

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