Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians India Region meet in Bengaluru

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News

The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) India Region conference is being held on 17 and 18 November 2026 at Vidhana Soudha, the Karnataka legislature building in Bengaluru. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will inaugurate it on 17 November; Karnataka Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar will deliver the keynote address. The theme is 'Strong Foundations, Stronger Voices: Inclusive Cyberspace and Mentorship Pathways for New Women Legislators'. Women members of Parliament and of State/UT legislatures are taking part; the two plenary sessions are on safe cyberspace and on capacity building and mentorship for women legislators. CWP India Region Chairperson Daggubati Purandeswari and Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh are among the speakers; Karnataka Governor Dr Sudha Yadav will address the valedictory on 18 November. According to reports, the Karnataka legislature has described it as the first standalone CWP India Region conference of its kind in the country.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Event	CWP India Region Conference
Date, venue	17–18 Nov 2026; Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru
Inauguration	Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla (17 Nov)

Point	Details
Keynote	Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar
CWP India chair	Daggubati Purandeswari
Theme	Inclusive cyberspace; mentorship for new women legislators
CWP origin	1989 – at the 35th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Barbados
CPA	Founded 1911 as 'Empire Parliamentary Association'; HQ London
Women's quota	106th Amendment 2023 – one-third in Lok Sabha and Assemblies

Background

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA): founded in 1911 as the 'Empire Parliamentary Association', it took its present name in 1948 and is headquartered in London. The national and sub-national legislatures of Commonwealth countries are its branches. The India Region is one of the CPA's nine regions, and the Lok Sabha Speaker heads it. The CWP is the network of women members within the CPA; it began at the 35th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Barbados in 1989 and was formally recognised in 1996.
- Constitution: the 106th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2023 ('Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam') reserves one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha (Article 330A), State Legislative Assemblies (Article 332A) and the Delhi Assembly (Article 239AA). Under Article 334A it takes effect only after the delimitation that follows the first census held after its commencement, and it lasts 15 years. The earlier 108th Amendment Bill (2008) passed the Rajya Sabha in 2010 but lapsed in the Lok Sabha. In local bodies, the 73rd and 74th Amendments (1992) already reserve one-third of seats under Articles 243D and 243T.
- Venue: Vidhana Soudha – the Karnataka legislature building in Bengaluru, built at the initiative of the then Mysore State Chief Minister Kengal Hanumanthaiah and completed in 1956. Karnataka has two Houses – the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council (one of six States with a bicameral legislature). The winter session is held at the 'Suvarna Vidhana Soudha' in Belagavi.
- Why this theme: women politicians face more online harassment, fake news and deepfakes. The meet also aims to mentor newly elected women legislators in legislative procedure. UN Women India is holding a side session on menopause. PIB lists the plenary titles as 'Empowering Women Digitally: Safe Cyberspace, Smart Choices' (17 Nov) and 'Capacity Building and Mentorship for Women Legislators' (18 Nov).

Tamil Nadu link: Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy, nominated to the Madras Legislative Council in 1927, was the first woman legislator in British India; she was also elected Deputy President of the Council. Rukmini Lakshmipathi, elected to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937, later became the first woman minister of the Madras Presidency. Tamil Nadu raised women's reservation in local bodies to 50% in 2016. Women legislators from all States, including Tamil Nadu, have been invited to the meet.

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Event: CWP India Region Conference; Date, venue: 17–18 Nov 2026; Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru; Inauguration: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla (17 Nov); Keynote: Karnataka CM D.K. Shivakumar.

What is the background to this news?

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA): founded in 1911 as the 'Empire Parliamentary Association', it took its present name in 1948 and is headquartered in London.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Which Constitutional Amendment reserves one-third of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies?

A) 104th Amendment

B) 105th Amendment

C) 106th Amendment

D) 108th Amendment

Answer: C – Explanation: 106th Amendment (2023) – Articles 330A, 332A. The 2008 Bill (108th Amendment) lapsed without passing the Lok Sabha.

2. Who became British India's first woman legislator on being nominated to the Madras Legislative Council in 1927?

A) Muthulakshmi Reddy

B) Sarojini Naidu

C) Annie Besant

D) Rukmini Lakshmipathi

Answer: A – Explanation: Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy – also elected Deputy President of the Council. Rukmini Lakshmipathi was Madras Presidency's first woman minister.

3. Under what name was the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) founded in 1911?

A) Imperial Legislature

B) Empire Parliamentary Association

C) Commonwealth Assembly

D) Inter-Parliamentary Union

Answer: B – Explanation: Empire Parliamentary Association – renamed CPA in 1948; HQ London. The IPU is a separate body (founded 1889 in Paris; HQ Geneva).

4. The Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru, venue of the meet, was built at the initiative of which Chief Minister?

A) Kengal Hanumanthaiah

B) S. Nijalingappa

C) Devaraj Urs

D) K.C. Reddy

Answer: A – Explanation: Kengal Hanumanthaiah (Mysore State CM) – completed in 1956. Belagavi has the 'Suvarna Vidhana Soudha'.

5. Which Article of the Constitution reserves not less than one-third of seats in Panchayats for women?

A) Article 243A

B) Article 243D

C) Article 243G

D) Article 243K

Answer: B – Explanation: Article 243D (73rd Amendment, 1992). 243A – Gram Sabha; 243G – powers; 243K – State Election Commission. Tamil Nadu made it 50% in 2016.

Sources: DD India – ddindia.co.in/2026/11/lok-sabha-speaker-om-birla-to-inaugurate-commonwealth-women-parliamentarians-conference-in-bengaluru-on-nov-17/; PIB (Lok Sabha Secretariat release, 15 Nov 2026) – pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=2336480; CPA – cpahq.org/our-networks/commonwealth-women-parliamentarians/; Gazette of India – Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.