

## **Namo Bharat Dialogues Highlights Women-Led Development as Pillar of Viksit Bharat**

### **New Delhi | 7 February 2026**

The Namo Bharat Dialogues Lecture Series hosted an insightful session on “**Women Leadership & Viksit Bharat**” on Saturday, 7 February 2026 at 5:30 PM at the Samrasta Auditorium, Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi. The dialogue brought together senior leaders from governance, public policy and corporate sectors to deliberate on the evolving role of women in India’s development journey.

The distinguished panel featured **Mugdha Sinha**, Director General (Tourism), Government of India; **Karuna Gopal Vartakavi**, President, Foundation for Futuristic Cities and Independent Director, Engineers India Ltd; and **Nandini Singh**, Executive Director & Partner, IBM Consulting India & South Asia.

### **Women at the Centre of Development**

The speakers emphasised that India’s vision of *Viksit Bharat* rests on women-led development rather than women-centric welfare. The conversation highlighted a paradigm shift — women are no longer beneficiaries of policy but active policy-makers shaping governance, administration, technology and global engagement.

The panel underlined that empowerment must move beyond welfare delivery towards dignity, participation and leadership. Economic independence, autonomy of choice and equal opportunity were identified as essential to inclusive national growth.

### **Impact of Public Policy**

Several flagship national initiatives were cited as foundational steps enabling women’s participation in development, including financial inclusion, entrepreneurship promotion, housing security, clean energy access, sanitation dignity and political representation. These measures

were recognised for transforming social protection into empowerment-driven participation.

### **Civilisational and Economic Perspective**

The discussion placed women's leadership within India's civilisational ethos that accords intrinsic respect and value to women beyond economic productivity. Speakers noted that leadership emerges through ecosystem support — policy scaffolding, gender budgeting and institutional backing.

The care economy, contributing significantly yet remaining largely invisible, was identified as an area requiring policy recognition and support.

### **Data, Education and Workforce Participation**

The panel stressed the importance of gender-segregated data for evidence-based policymaking and highlighted continuing global gaps in pay parity and leadership representation. Education and STEM inclusion were recognised as long-term solutions to strengthen leadership pipelines, supported by mobility, housing and career-continuity measures.

### **Urban and Digital Future**

Participants emphasised the need for women-centric urban planning in an increasingly digital economy. Safe mobility infrastructure, digital literacy, mentorship and capacity-building were identified as key enablers for equitable participation in future cities.

### **Challenges and Way Forward**

The dialogue identified major challenges including leadership gaps, pay disparity, lack of gender-specific research and career interruptions due to caregiving responsibilities. The panel recommended family-centric

workplace policies, recognition of care work and structured pathways from entry-level roles to leadership positions.

## Conclusion

The session concluded that women are already shaping leadership across sectors, and the next step is building supportive ecosystems that sustain and accelerate this participation.

The central message emerging from the NamO Bharat Dialogues was clear: **India's journey toward Viksit Bharat will be defined by the strength of its women leaders and the systems that empower them.**



