

**Power, Politics and the Issue of  
Gender Based Violence  
Vol-2**



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**Editor**  
Dr. Abul Foyes Md Malik

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Mobile : 9068440609 ; e-mail : agrabooki@gmail.com

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## Woman of ERA - Sushma Swaraj



*Dr. Sudha Pal  
Dr. Jitendra Pal Singh*



In current decades, present include be calls for larger gender equal opportunity while attractive the need to close the gender earnings gap. Although wonderful strides have been made in this feature, there is still a elementary lack of women in leadership roles. Apart from physical features, men and women differ greatly. Their varying personalities and behavior have always been a point of discussion. These are both due to innate biological aspects and different socio-cultural factors.

History is proof that women can be and have been successful leaders. Their underrepresentation in almost every field has given the world women leaders who have propagated the fight for women's rights. These women took charge for better treatment and society when they weren't even allowed to get out of their houses.

The a range of reasons of low women symbol in politics are patriarchal frame of mind with male power of most fields, women creature viewed as homemaker only, child bearing role is emphasized as the most important main concern of women, nonappearance of equal opportunities etc. The want of the hour is to bring about behavioral change from end to end socialization process with significant role being played by relatives, school, with peers. Also political parties are unwilling to deal out tickets to female contestant as they are measured feeble by the civilization therefore dropping the probability of engaging vote. The patriarchal directorial machines, not have of facts and skill of political performance also creates hurdles in the well-organized effective of selected female legislature.

Sushma Swaraj was an Indian politician and member of the Bharatiya Janata Party. She was the Union Minister for External Affairs in the government of India. She had served as a member of parliament for the sixth term and was the leader of opposition in the 15th Lok Sabha. She twice became MLA from

Haryana during 1977-1982 and 1987-1990, and once from Delhi in 1998. In October 1998 she held the position of the first woman chief minister of Delhi. Her political career graph is a manifestation of her role in Indian politics. She held key positions both as a member of the ruling party and as that of opposition. She was a role model for many such young women who aspire to tread the path of Indian politics.

Sushma Swaraj was born on 14 February 1952 at Ambala Cantonment, Haryana. Her father, Hardev Sharma, was a prominent RSS member. She was educated at Sanatan Dharma College in Ambala Cantonment. She earned her bachelor's degree in Sanskrit and Political Science. She had made mark with oratory skills from childhood. She became champion for Hindi speech competition for consecutive three years. Later she studied Law at Panjab University, Chandigarh and started practicing law in Supreme Court of India in 1973.

Sushma Swaraj was born on 14 February 1952 at Ambala cantonment to Shri Hardev Sharma and Shrimati Laxmi Devi. Her father was an eminent member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. She completed her graduation in B.A. with Political Science and Sanskrit as major subjects from the S.D. College of Ambala Cantonment. She did a degree course in LL.B. from the Department of Laws of the Punjab University at Chandigarh. In 1970 she received the Best Student award from S.D. College, Ambala Cantonment.

She was excellent in extracurricular activities. Some of her interests include classical music, poetry, fine arts and drama. She is also a keen reader of poetry and literature. Sushma Swaraj was declared the best cadet of N.C.C. of the S. D. College for three consecutive years. A state-level competition held by the Language Department of Haryana saw her winning the best Hindi Speaker award for three consecutive years. She also became the best speaker in Hindi of Punjab University in the A. C. Bali Memorial declamation contest and there she was awarded the university colour. She has won several awards of distinction in rhetoric contests, debates, recitations, dramas and other cultural activities. She was the President of Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of the State of Haryana for four years.

Considered as the leader of the next generation, the inception of Sushma Swaraj in Indian politics was as a student leader in the year 1970. Many protests against the government of Indira Gandhi were organized by Sushma Swaraj. She is an exceptional speaker and campaigner, who, after joining the Janata Party, got actively involved in campaigning against the Emergency. Her quest in Indian politics saw her as the first woman Chief Minister of Delhi

and later as the first woman Leader of Opposition. She became the State President of Janata Party in Haryana at an early age of 27 years.

She joined politics as a student leader and arranged numerous protests against the Indira Gandhi Government and later, she joined Janata Party and continued her journey from then. In 1977, she became minister at age of 25 years. At age of 27, she became State President of the Janta Party in Haryana. She twice became MLA from Haryana during 1977-1982 and 1987-1990, and once from Delhi in 1998. In October 1998 she held the position of the first woman chief minister of Delhi.

She was elected for the sixth term in 15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha. In the same term she was elected as first woman Leader of Opposition. In the 16<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha, she was elected from Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh and served as the Minister of External Affairs of India in the first Narendra Modi government (2014–2019). During her term, she received numerous appreciations for her proactive humanitarian support to Indians and any seeking for her help.

She was the second woman to hold the office, after Indira Gandhi. She was elected seven times as a Member of Parliament and three times as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. She held the record of becoming the first woman spokesperson of a national-level party, first woman Chief Minister, first Union Cabinet Minister, and she was given Best Speaker award by the Haryana State Assembly and received the Best Parliamentarian award twice in the years and 2010. She is the first-ever and the only woman MP to receive the Outstanding Parliamentarian award. She was also awarded Padma Vibhushan (posthumously), India's second-highest civilian award, in 2020.

The government of India renamed two prominent institutes after Sushma Swaraj— Foreign Service Institute of India is named as Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service and Pravasi Bharatiya Kendra is renamed as Sushma Swaraj Bhavan.

She married Swaraj Kaushal, a peer and fellow advocate at the Supreme Court of India. The Emergency movement brought together the couple, who then teamed up for the defence of the socialist leader George Fernandes. Swaraj Kaushal, a senior advocate of Supreme Court of India and a criminal lawyer, also served as Governor of Mizoram from 1990 to 1993. He was a member of parliament from 1998 to 2004.

The legendary leader underwent a Kidney transplant at AIIMS, Delhi in 2016. On 6 August 2019, Sushma Swaraj reportedly suffered a heart attack in the evening after which she was rushed to AIIMS New Delhi, where she later died of a cardiac arrest. Though she does not with us, her memories are vivid with mankind

A seven-time Member of Parliament, Sushma Swaraj was the youngest cabinet minister to serve in the Haryana government at the age of 25 in 1977. Sushma Swaraj was the first full-time woman foreign minister Swaraj who was the foreign minister from 26 May, 2014 to 30 May, 2019, was the second woman to hold the office, after Indira Gandhi. She had won from Vidisha constituency in Madhya Pradesh for a second term in 2014, retaining her seat by a margin of over 400,000 votes. A seven-time Member of Parliament, she also served as MLA for three terms. She also served as 5th Chief Minister of Delhi from 13 October, 1998 to 3 December, 1998.

she became the state president of the BJP in Haryana in 1979. She was also the first female speaker for some political party in India and won the Outstanding Parliamentarian Award. Swaraj, a law graduate who experienced in the Supreme Court, has been selected seven times as a Member of Parliament and three times as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. She began her political career with RSS student division ABVP in the 1970s. Member of the Haryana Assembly from 1977 to 1982 from Ambala Cantonment, she was under oath in as a Cabinet Minister in the Devi Lal government. She was Cabinet Minister for Information and Broadcasting during the 13-day Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government in 1996. She prepared to accept from the Cabinet in the next Vajpayee regime to take over as the first lady Chief Minister of Delhi in October 1998.

Sushma Swaraj and her husband Swaraj Kaushal have been credited as the 'Most Distinguished Couple' by Limca Book of Records for their achievements and distinction at a young age. They were adjudged as the youngest ever achievers till date in their respective fields in the country. Sushma Swaraj became member of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidarthi Parishad (ABVP) – the learner wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in the early 1970s while she was studying at Panjab University, Chandigarh. Sushma Swaraj's father Hardev Sharma was also an RSS member. In 1974, she had campaigned for Finance Minister Arun Jaitley when he had contested for the post of President of the Delhi University (DU) Students' Union.

In a rare accomplishment, Swaraj opened six AIIMS — Jodhpur, Bhopal, Raipur, Bhubaneswar, Patna and Rishikesh – when she was as Union Health Minister from 2003 to 2004 under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Swaraj is also identified as an 'all-rounder' because of her wellbeing in classical music, fine arts, drama and poetry. Swaraj was an outstanding control over Hindi and won the award for Speaker for three successive years, held by the Haryana Language Department.

- 1977–82 Elected as Member, Haryana Legislative Assembly.
- 1977–79 Cabinet Minister, Labour and Employment, Government of Haryana.
- 1987–90 Elected as Member, Haryana Legislative Assembly.
- 1987–90 Cabinet Minister, Education, Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Haryana.
- 1990–96 Elected to Rajya Sabha (1st term)
- 1996–97 [15 May 1996 – 4 December 1997] Member, Eleventh Lok Sabha (2nd term).
- 1996 [16 May – 1 June] – Union Cabinet Minister, Information and Broadcasting.
- 1998–99 [10 March 1998 – 26 April 1999] Member, Twelfth Lok Sabha (3rd term).
- 1998 [19 March – 12 October] Union Cabinet Minister, Information and Broadcasting and Telecommunications (Additional charge).
- 1998 [13 October – 3 December] Chief Minister of Delhi.
- 1998 [November] – Elected from Hauz Khas Assembly constituency of Delhi Assembly. Resigned from Delhi Assembly and retained Lok Sabha seat.
- 2000–06 Member, Rajya Sabha (4th term).
- 2000–03 [30 September 2000 – 29 January 2003] Minister of Information and Broadcasting.
- 2003–04 [29 January 2003 – 22 May 2004] Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Minister of Parliamentary Affairs.
- 2006–09 [April 2006 -] Member, Rajya Sabha (5th term).
- 2009–14 [16 May 2009 – 18 May 2014] Member, 15th Lok Sabha (6th term).
- 2009-09 [3 June 2009 – 21 December 2009] Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha.
- 2009–14 [21 December 2009 – 18 May 2014] Leader of the Opposition and replaced Lal Krishna Advani.
- 2014–present [26 May 2014–] Member, 16th Lok Sabha (7th term)
- 2014–2019 [26 May 2014 – 29 May 2019] Minister of External Affairs in the Union of India

On 6 August 2019, Sushma Swaraj had reportedly complained of restlessness and was rushed to AIIMS Delhi as her health condition was critical. She died following a massive heart attack.