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## Thamizhachi lauds Mayor Priya, calls her role model in urban governance

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South Chennai MP, Dr. Thamizhachi Thangapandian, praised Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) on Monday amid criticism it was facing from the DMK allies on various issues, including privatisation of solid waste management, restoration of water bodies and poor implementation of health schemes.

She was speaking at a lecture series organised by the Centre for Women's Studies, Department of History in Stella Maris College, here on Monday.

Sharing her experience as a woman MP and political leader with the students, she said the election of R. Priya as Mayor of GCC three years ago was a significant milestone in Tamil Nadu's political

landscape.

As Mayor, Priya has demonstrated remarkable success in addressing urban governance issues, with a focus on improving basic amenities, waste management and the overall quality of life in the city.

Under her leadership, the city has seen improvements in sanitation, infrastructure development and environmental sustainability. Mayor Priya's emphasis on transparency and citizen engagement has earned her widespread appreciation, and success has made her a role model for aspiring female politicians in the state.

Priya's tenure is evident in how women in leadership positions can bring fresh perspectives and innovative solutions to long-standing governance challenges, she said.

Adding that women were still facing significant challenges in Indian politics, despite all advancements, she said women have made significant strides in local governance though representation at the national level has historically been low.

A major development occurred with the recent passage of the Women's Reservation Bill seeking 33 per cent of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The passage of this long-awaited bill represents a potential turning point in the struggle for gender parity in Indian politics, offering what many see as a light at the end of the tunnel for women's political empowerment in India.

This legislative breakthrough comes after decades of advocacy, and its implementation is expected to significantly

increase the number of women in national and state-level governance, she said.

Today, Tamil Nadu has 4,600 women serving as councillors in various municipalities and town panchayats, a testament to the success of policies aimed at increasing women's representation at the local level. The rise in female representation in local governance is not an isolated phenomenon but part of a broader strategy to ensure that women's voices are heard in the decision-making processes that affect their communities, she said.

The lecture was one of a series of events being organised as part of the project 'The Empowerment of Young Women for Political Participation', in association with the University of Maribor, Slovenia.