CHAPTER III

WOMEN COUNCILLORS: THE NEW ROLE
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Political representation for women got a new momentum in India after the passage of 73rd and 74th Amendments, which ensured 33 per cent seats for women in rural and urban local bodies. Women’s increasing political participation in the urban governance has inevitably become a source of political change a step towards political empowerment of women.

Empirical evidences show that elected women representatives are not exposed to the formal official procedure and complex administrative system of urban local bodies. The elected women councillors of urban local bodies while discharging their duties have to overcome several difficulties to cope with the new roles assumed. It is in this context an attempt has been made in this chapter to analyse to what extent women councillors fit in their new role. Before peering into such analysis, it would be desirable to see the evolution of Chennai Municipal Corporation, which would through some light how and when women got representation in the council.

The Chennai Municipal Corporation, the then Madras Corporation was established in September 1688 under the Charter of 1687 and was modelled on the lines of the Portsmouth Corporation in England. It was called the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the town of Fort St George and the city of Madras Patnem. It had a Mayor, 12 Aldermen and 60 Burgesses. Nathaniel Higginson was nominated as the first Mayor. The Mayor’s office had a one year term, and
the Aldermen held office for life or for the period of residency in Madras. The Corporation when established in 1688, had no provision for co-opting women either as Aldermen or Burgesses.

Subsequently, for several times the corporation was reorganised first in 1726 and subsequently, in 1753, 1792, 1798, 1856 and 1867.

The Act of 1867 made provision for a popular element in the corporation. The city was divided into eight wards and four commissioners represented each ward. These 32 honorary commissioners and a paid president represented the taxpayers. All of them were selected and approval by the Governor-in-Council. In this Act of 1867 had not also contained provision for including women in the selection.

The Act of 1878 provided for the election of 16 commissioners with remaining 16 nominated by the government. Hence election was introduced in 1878. But women were not elected.

The Act of 1884 (the city of Madras: Municipal Act No. 1, of 1884) was in keeping with Ripon's Resolution. It democratised the constitution of the corporation as the number of elected commissioners was raised from 16 to 24. It also made it mandatory for the nominated commissioners to be representative of all the eight divisions of the city. Now also provisions for nominating women as commissioners was not incorporated.
THE CORPORATION UNDER THE ACT OF 1919

The act of 1919 brought in a dichotomy of executive and deliberative functions. The "Office of the Commissioner" was created and given full executive functions. The President who had enjoyed both executive and deliberative functions now served only as chairman of the council, the members of which were now called councillors and not commissioners. There were 50 councillors. The city was divided into 30 divisions, and one representative was elected to the council from each division. The Act of 1919 relaxed the properly qualification that was payable to the corporation by a voter, from Rs. 20 to 5. As a result voters increased from 1 per cent to 5.5 per cent of the total population. Each councillor had a term of three years with one-third elected every-year. The Act of 1919 is still in force though it had been amended more than 50 times. For the first time, the Amending Act of 1923 enabled women to stand for election.

The Madras City Municipal Act No. X of 1936 absorbed the provisions of the Act of 1935 and also brought further charges. The number of councillors was increased from 50 to 60 and the city was divided into 40 divisions. It provided for representation of minorities as also made provision for the election the deputy Mayor and seven Aldermen, one of whom had to be women.

The Madras City Municipal Act No. II of 1938 reserved seats for Scheduled Castes and the Labour classes. The Madras City Municipal 2nd Amendment Act of 1947 (Tamil Nadu Act of VI of 1947), the number of provisional division of the city was raised from 40 to 50. The elective strength of
the council was also raised from 65 to 85. There were five seats reserved for Scheduled Castes, four for Muslims, two for Indian Christian and four for Women.

The Madras City Municipal Amendment Act of 1958 (Tamil Nadu Act of XXIV of 1958) raised the territorial division of the city from 50 100. Each division was a single member constituency, electing a councillor.

The Madras City Municipal Corporation (Amendment) Act 1967 (Tamil Nadu Act of 1967) raised the number of seats in the corporation from 100 to 120 with 12 seats reserved for the Scheduled Castes. In 1971, the term of office of the councillors was raised from 3 years to 5 years. Subsequently, The Tamil Nadu Act No. 7 of 1973 increased the territorial division of the city from 120 to 150. Now the Chennai Municipal Corporation council has 155 councillors.

Madras Corporation Council consists of 155 councillors elected for a term of 5 years. Among them 52 councillors are women. The municipal governance of the city is the responsibility of the council, but the council is not entitled to carryout those functions expressly assigned by the Madras City Municipal Corporation Act 1919 (amended in May 1997) or any other law. The council has to consider periodic statements of receipts and disbursements and progress report and pass those resolutions, which it thinks fit. The Standing Committee and the commissioner have to put into effect every resolution or order of the council unless it is cancelled in whole or part by the State government.
Any councillor can bring to the attention of the house any neglect in the execution of municipal work, any waste or damage to municipal property or the needs of any legality and can suggest any improvements, which is considered desirable. Every councillor has the right to interpolate the Mayor on matters related municipal administration within the framework of the rules and regulations. The councillor can access any records of the corporation after giving notice to the commissioner. If the commissioner denies access, he has to give reasons in writing. An appeal against such an order can be made to the Mayor whose decision is final.

The councillors thus have the right to ask the commissioner to produce any record, correspondence, plan or other document, which is in his possession or under his control and to furnish any return, plan, estimate, statements, accounts or statistics concerned with municipal administration, either by himself or after obtaining it from the head of any department.

The councillors elect one among them as Deputy Mayor for the term of five years. In the absence of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the councillors choose the presiding officer of the council. The Councillors also elect the President of various committees in the corporation.

Thus the Council, consisting of the 155 Councillors is considered as supreme as far as city administration is concerned. The Council has a considerable influence and voice in matters of appointment, contracts, and
approval of budget for several development plans. Councillors also represent the grievances of the people in the Council. 

Now it would be suitable to look into the qualifications and disqualifications prescribed for a councillor Chennai Municipal Corporation, which also applicable to the women councillor.

According to the Tamil Nadu Urban Local Bodies Act, 1997 (Amended in 1999), “Councillor” means the councillor elected a municipal corporation, municipality or town panchayat, as the case may be. This Act also prescribes qualification and disqualification for the councillor.

(1) No person shall be qualified for being elected as a councillor

(a) Unless his/her name is included in the electoral roll in any one of the wards in the municipality.

(b) Unless he/she has completed twenty-one years of age on the date of notification of election notice.

(c) If he/she is an officer or employee either whole time or part-time of the Central or State Governments or any local authority or body corporate owned or controlled by the Central or State Governments, remunerated by either salary or fees or honoraria.

(2) A person standing for election as a councillor shall have no share or interest, in any contract or employment with, by or on behalf of the municipality.
(3) A person standing for election, as a councillor must have paid all amount due to the municipality.

(4) A person who has been sentenced by a criminal court to imprisonment for life or to imprisonment for a period of six months for any offence other than an offence of a political character or an offence not involving moral delinquency shall be disqualified for being elected as a councillor, while the sentence is in force and for a further period of six years from the date of the expiring of the sentence.

(5) A person convicted of an offence punishable with the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 shall be disqualified for being elected as councillor for a period of six years from the date of such convictions.

(6) A person shall be disqualified for being elected as a councillor, if such person is on the date of filling the nomination

(a) of unsound mind and is declared so by the competent court having jurisdiction;

(b) an undischarged insolvent or an applicant to be adjudicated as insolvent;

(c) directly or indirectly, by himself or through his partner or through his family member interested in a subsisting contract made with or any work being done for the municipality except as a shareholder (other than a director) in a company;
Explanation: For this purpose of the clause, the expression "family" in relation to a person means a person, the wife or husband, as the case may be, of such person and the sons, daughters in law, unmarried daughters, brothers, unmarried sisters, father and mother:

Provided that a person shall not be deemed to have any interest in such contract or work by reason only of his having a share or interest in

i) any lease, sale or purchase of immovable property or any agreement for the same;

ii) any agreement for the loan of money or any security for the payment of money only;

iii) any newspaper in which any advertisement relating to the affairs of the municipality is interested;

iv) any company or association, whether incorporated or not, which contracts with the municipality for lighting or supplying water to any part of the municipality or insuring against fire or any property of the municipality;

Provided further that where any contract has been fully performed by the person by whom it has been entered into with the municipality then such contract shall be deemed not to subsist by reason or the fact that the municipality has not performed its part of the contract either wholly or in part.
(d) employed as paid legal practitioner on behalf of the municipality or legal practitioner against the municipality;

(e) a representative or office bearer of any association or union representing or purporting to represent, any section of the municipal establishment or any class of employees of the municipality;

(f) already a councillor whose term of office as such will not expire before the conduct of fresh election or has already been elected as a councillor whose term of office has not yet commenced;

Women councillors elected for Chennai Municipal Corporation come from varied socio-economic background. They represent almost all-social structure. Now it would be much desirable to see their socio-economic background. Some women councillors come from the families, which have a considerable length of political association with a particular political party. In this category either the father or husband have well-knit political influence. Another group of women councillors come from the families, which have interest in social welfare activities. Since the families are known in the locality, easily women from such families are able to win the support of the people. Such women councillors have support of the social service organisations found in the neighbourhood. Now it would be better to discuss the socio-economic background of the women councillors.
TABLE SHOWING AGE WISE DISTRIBUTION
OF WOMEN COUNCILLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. NO.</th>
<th>AGE GROUP</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 - 30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>31 - 45</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>51.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>46 - above</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Age is one of the crucial factor and determinants of political participation. The facts regarding women councillors’ age distribution show that the middle age group i.e. 31-45 seems to favourable age for women councillors to contest in elections, as such 51.92 per cent women councillors are from this middle age group. One fourth i.e. 25 per cent women councillors are from the young age group i.e. 20-30. The remaining 23.08 per cent women councillors are above the age of 46. Thus it is obvious that political parties give priority for the middle age group women when they nominate as their candidates.

It may also be true that the middle-aged women have relatively experienced in political activities than the young age group. Further, women councillors from the middle age group have more freedom from their family responsibilities than the younger and older age group.
TABLE SHOWING COMMUNITY WISE DISTRIBUTION
OF WOMEN COUNCILLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. NO.</th>
<th>COMMUNITY</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Backward Community</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most Backward Community</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other Community</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>9.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is a fact that community plays an important role in politics, particularly in India, and especially in Tamil Nadu. However, the provisions of reservation appear to have altered the communal equation in local body elections. For instance, among the women councillors elected 34.61 per cent belongs to Scheduled Castes, 28.85 per cent women councillors are from backward communities and 26.92 per cent are from most backward community. Only 9.62 per cent women councillors are from other community. Thus, the above table clearly establish the fact that the weaker section of the society is well represented in local elections.

The change introduced by 74th Amendment, i.e., reservation of seats for women and other weaker sections of society has induced change in the communal structure of the elected representatives.
TABLE SHOWING EDUCATIONAL STATUS
OF THE WOMEN COUNCILLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. NO.</th>
<th>EDUCATIONAL STATUS</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Up to Primary</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>13.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Up to Middle School</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Secondary Level</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Degree and above</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Generally it is believed that educated persons are active in political participations, as literacy level increases, the level of participation will also increase.

But the educational status of the women councillors reveals much interesting facts. 25 per cent women councillors are possessing higher educational qualification. Among these groups there are lawyers, teachers and entrepreneurs. Secondary level educated women councillors are 32.69 per cent. There are 28.85 per cent women councillors who got only middle school level education. Among the women councillors 13.46 are almost illiterate and primary educated.
TABLE SHOWING OCCUPATIONAL STATUS
OF WOMEN COUNCILLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. NO.</th>
<th>OCCUPATION</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Full-Time in Politics</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>55.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Retired from Govt. Service</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>07.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Other Occupation</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>05.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N-52

It is interesting to note that among the women councillors, more than half, i.e. 55.76 per cent are engaged in full time political activities. They are not employed in any other occupations. Another 30.76 per cent women councillors are undertaking small business activities, such as hotels, grocery shops, STD booths, contract works and so on. Yet another 7.69 per cent women councillors are retired government servants such as Teachers etc. The remaining 5.76 per cent women councillors are self-employed such as advocates and small entrepreneurs.

Here an important point to be noted is that those who are involved in full-time political activities have considerable support and co-operation from their family members.
TABLE SHOWING THE INCOME GROUP OF

THE WOMEN COUNCILLORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL. NO.</th>
<th>INCOME GROUP</th>
<th>FREQUENCY</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Rs. 1000-2000</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>11.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Rs. 2001-3000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rs. 3001-5000</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>44.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rs. 5001- above</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N-52

It is income status of the women councillors reveals the fact that a majority of them come from higher-middle income group, i.e., Rs. 3001 – 5000. Only, 23.08 per cent women councillors are from higher income group. Another 11.54 per cent women councillors come from very poor background.

But it must be noted that when the researcher is investigating none of the women councillors have revealed the various sources of income. But the researcher is able to observe the fact that all most all the councillors have adequate income to survive in politics. All of them have own houses, telephone facilities; some councillors have, even posses their own vehicle like cars. Generally, women councillors come from middle class background with economic well-being.

As already discussed women councillors of the Chennai Municipal Corporation comes from varied socio-economic background. The following illustrative photographs show the different levels of socio-economic background of the women councillors.
RESEARCHER WITH WOMEN COUNCILLORS HAVING DIFFERENT SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND
WOMEN COUNCILLOR GIVING INTERVIEW TO HER HUSBAND AND INTERACTION WITH ANOTHER WOMEN COUNCILLOR.
It is true that 74th Amendment has ensured women representation in urban local bodies. But what extent they fit in their new role as councillor, i.e. decision-maker, deliberative leader, one who is expected to deliver goods and services to the people is yet to be assessed. Hence, an attempt has been made to discuss the activities and achievements of a women councillor with a few illustrative photographs.

ROLE OF WOMEN COUNCILLOR

A councillor is an elected representative of the people who represents people’s interest and grievances in the corporation council; his or her role is multiple in nature; the councillors act as a communicator between the administration and the people. He or she interacts with the various officials of the corporations to rectify the problems in their wards.

To understand the multiple role of women councillor in the urban governance, an attempt has been made to enumerate various activities of a women councillor who has been elected twice for the corporation council. She is awarded with the best councillor award for the period 1996-2001 for her best performance as councillor. Now it would be desirable to look into the profile of the said councillor.

Mrs. Selvi Soundararajan is elected from ward no. 146, Snathome, aged about 45 years. She was educated up to S.S.I.C. and also had teacher training. She has 3 grown up children. She belongs to Fishermen Community, which is one of the Most Backward Communities of Tamil Nadu. She has interest in social
service activities for a long time and she had been the General Secretary of Indian Fishermen Association (Women wing), in this capacity she has organised several awareness camps and formed self help groups for women belonging to fishermen community. Her husband is a photographer. Her father was in politics for a long time and held the post of Deputy Secretary of the DMK Party at ward level. She also held the position of Deputy Organiser, women wing of the DMK party in Mylapore. Thus, before her election as councillor, she had a good political background. Now it would be informative to enumerate the various achievements and activities undertaken by her to solve people’s grievances during 1996-2001.

1. After her nomination as candidate for councillorship during in 1996 she undertook a vigorous electoral campaign by promising the people of the ward – construction of houses for 2000 hut dwellers, provide better sanitation and health facilities in the ward, supply of drinking water and other such civic amenities. She was able to canvas door by door and meet all the voters.

2. She was elected as councillor and as a first step she opened public relation office in her ward on 13-02-1997. The office was opened by the then M.L.A, Rma Jayam.

3. She organised an awareness and youth training camp at Santhome School on 04-03-1997 to create awareness among the youth and students to undertake garbage-cleaning activities.

4. She participated in the Santhome Church Festival on 23-03-1997.
5. She gave a report in various News papers on 27-03-1997 highlighting the existing drinking water and garbage cleaning problem in Mylapore area, and attracted the attraction of the corporation officials to solve the problems.

6. She was able to solve the drinking water problem at Mongollai, one of the areas in which persisting drinking water shortage was felt. Her plea was accepted and 10 additional taps were installed by corporation officials on 01-04-1997.

7. She pleaded the corporation officials to allot alternative house sites for 129 families evacuated from public land and her plea was accepted and house sites were allotted on 05-06-1997.

8. She met the Mayor and T.R. Balu, Member of Parliament from South Chennai and Central Minister and requested to allot Rs. 20 lakhs for enhancing facilities in the urban health centre at Malliama Nagar, Mylapore on 10-07-1997. The plea was accepted.

9. A proposal for building a community hall at Kuil Thottam was sent to corporation on 07-09-1997.

10. She has participated in the Vellankanni Church Festival on 26-10-1997.

11. She has articulated several problems existing in the ward with the Assistant Engineers and Zonal Chairman in a ward committee meeting held on 16-04-1997 in the Zone 10.
12. She visited the site where 250 huts were burned at Dooming Kuppam with MLA and the Mayor and made arrangements for immediate relief activities on 24.09.97.

13. She voiced the grievances of the people on 7-05-1997 in a meeting organised in the Zone 10 – in which Mayor, Commissioner and MLA had participated.

14. Attended the function with the Mayor and MLA on 17-05-1997 to inaugurate desalination water station at Nochi Kuppam.

15. On 20-05-1997, She has inaugurated Metro Water Connections in two areas where acute drinking water problem existed, i.e., Kanagapuram and Santhome Azharlane.

16. On 25-05-1997, She has organised a meeting to explain the achievements made in one year in her ward in which, the Mayor also participated.

17. She has organised the meeting to mark the 74th Birth Day of Karunanidhi. the then Chief Minister and made arrangements for planting 1000 trees in her ward in collaboration with students from NSS.

18. On 08-06-1997 she participated in an environmental awareness camp and clean the seashore from Nochi Kuppam to Srinivasapuram in collaboration with NGOs.

19. On 15-08-1997 she organised several meetings and functions to mark Golden Jubilee Independence Day Celebrations at corporation schools –
and free medical camps had been organised in which the then Fishery Development Minister Jenifer Chandran participated in these functions.

20. Organised garbage-cleaning camp with Exnora and cleaned the surroundings of Santhome Church and Nochi Kuppam on 19-08-1997 with the help of volunteers from Youth Development Organisation.

21. On 15-09-1997 she voiced the various existing problems such as road development, water scarcity and stray cattle in the ward council meeting.

22. On 14-10-1997 she participated in a function to inaugurate various Peoples' Welfare Schemes in her ward. The Mayor participated in the function and a new building for the Divisional Office was opened.

23. On 20-10-1997 she released a report in a various newspapers, which explained her achievement in the ward such as 8 road works, installation of 14 garbage bins, 7 platform works, 100 sodium lamps, 20 drinking water taps, foundation stone for schools, hospital and public toilets.

24. On 18-11-1997 she undertook flood relief work; her ward was affected by heavy rain. She distributed 1000 food packets and rain cloths. She supervised the relief work with the corporation officials and visited several areas.

25. On 17-12-1997 she inaugurated temple tank cleaning for Thiruppu Thiruvizha at Kapaleeswarar Temple with the NGOs.

27. On 27-03-1998 she inaugurated 17 bore wells for solving the drinking water problem in her area.

28. On 09-05-1998 she inaugurated the works for constructing 1300 fireproof houses for the poor living near Santhome Beach with the MLA.

29. On 17-05-1998 she inaugurated the Green and Clean Youth Exnora at Mongollai to clean the area.

30. On 02-08-1998, the Mayor, MLA and the Councillor participated in the function to allot 1300 fireproof houses to the poor. In the same function two public toilets were opened and 15 bore wells were inaugurated to solve the drinking water problem.

31. On 10-09-1998 a function was organised to distribute old age pension and other assistance to the needy people.

32. On 13-11-1998 Free Medical Camp was organised at Corporation School, Nochi Kuppan.

33. On 15-02-1999 Public Grievances Day was observed.

34. On 18-03-1999, Free Drinking Water facilities in 10 places were provided in her ward.

35. On 22-04-1999, The Urban Health Centre was opened at Malligai Nagar, which was built at the cost of 25 lakhs – the councillor was able to mobilize the funds from the MLA, MP constituency development funds. In this function T.R. Balu, MP and Central Minister, the Mayor, the MLA and Commissioner of the Corporation participated.
36. On 07-05-1999 a meeting to inaugurate Public Welfare Schemes was organised and financial assistance to self-employed youth and women were distributed.

37. Tree Plantation Scheme was undertaken, 1200 trees were planted with the help of NGOs to celebrate the then Chief Minister’s birthday.

38. On 10-07-1999 “Face to Face” with councillor an interaction programme with people was held and citizens’ grievances were collected and submitted as a memorandum to the corporation.

39. On 22-07-1999 Preventive Health Care Camp was organised in Mylapore in which Central Minister T.R. Balu, Mayor and MLA were participated – 3000 patients were treated for various ailments.

40. On 25-08-1999 National Front Election Office was opened and election campaign started.

41. On 30-12-1999 Selvi Soundararajan, the councillor was selected to receive one of the ten best councillor award of Chennai Municipal Corporation.

42. On 06-01-2000 Free Medical Camp was inaugurated in Mylapore by the Central Minister T.R. Balu and more than 4000 patients were screened and treated.

43. On 13-02-2001 a Community Hall built in Kuli Thottam under the ward development fund, was opened by Mayor. In this function Zonal Chairman and MLA had participated.
44. A public meeting was organised to explain the 5 years achievements of the councillor on 14-02-2001.

45. On 22-03-2001 the councillor had been appointed as South Chennai DMK Women Wing Joint Secretary.

46. On 02-04-2001 the councillor had been appointed as a member with the commissioner of the corporation in a committee to enquire the allegation of sexual harassment in the corporation.

47. She has organised several meeting for State Assembly Election during April 2001 in her ward.

48. On 05-10-2001 she has been again nominated as candidate for ward no. 146, Santhome by DMK.

49. Between 12-10-2001 – 19-10-2001 she has organised several meeting for election campaigning – undertook door to door canvassing explaining her service to the people and her achievement for the last 5 years.

50. On 20-10-2001 election results were announced and she has been re-elected as councillor of Chennai Municipal Corporation.

A neighbourhood newspaper, Mylapore Times. (July 26 – August 1, 1997) has conducted a survey in which the public observed the following points regarding their councillor. They are:

a) She is accessible to the public

b) She made sincere attempts to solve public problem

c) She is helpless in tackling cattle menace and garbage problem
d) She needs to do a lot to solve the problem of basic needs, particularly drinking water and water pollution.

Thus, it seems that a women councillor with a middle class background, moderately educated, who is capable of establishing linkages with the party leaders, people and NGOs can become a successful councillor and fit in their new role as envisaged by the 74th Amendment.

The following illustrative photographs explain various activities undertaken by the women councillor from ward no. 14b.
COUNCILLOR IN A FREE MEDICAL CAMP

COUNCILLOR WITH A MAYOR IN THE INAUGURATION OF DIVISIONAL OFFICE
COUNCILLOR IN GRIEVANCES DAY MEETING

COUNCILLOR RECEIVING MEMORANDUM FROM THE PUBLIC
COUNCILLOR VISITING THE FIRE AFFECTED AREA WITH MAYOR AND MLA

WOMEN COUNCILLORS IN A PANIC SITUATION IN THE COUNCIL
AN INJURED COUNCILLOR

To conclude, it must be said that it is not exclusively, to some extent, women councillors have learnt the art of politics from the men councillors. Because the above photographs could reveal the fact that women councillors have developed to the extent of creating panic in the council and indulge in pandemonium. Further another picture showing the injured councillor could reveal the fact that the violent behaviour from the men councillors. Thus women are in the process of learning the art of politics.
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