



**THE INSTITUTE OF  
Company Secretaries of India**  
IN PURSUIT OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE  
Statutory body under an Act of Parliament

**The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI)  
& Institute of Directors (IOD) organize seminar on  
'Board Room Diversity- Driving a Sustainable  
Organization'**



On the Dias- From L to R -Dr. M. B. Athreya, Independent Management Advisor and Former Prof. IIM, Kolkata and London Business School, CS Mamta Binani, President, ICSI, Mrs.MeenakshiLekhi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament, Lt. Gen. J S Ahluwalia, PVSM (Retd), President, Institute of Directors Ms.Manasi Kirloskar, Executive Director, Kirloskar Systems and CS V. Ahalada Rao, Council Member, ICSI

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India [ICSI] and The Institute of Directors [IOD] organized a seminar on Driving a Sustainable Organization through Board

Diversity. Insightful and information packed, the speakers agreed upon the benefits of gender diversity in the boardroom. The vitality of the gender diverse boards and their impact on corporate performance caught attention of the delegates, even as the top women leaders from business, government & civil society put emphasis on how boards can be more inclusive and future ready.

Mrs. Meenakshi Lekhi, Hon'ble Member of Parliament was the Guest of Honour and inaugurated the seminar.

Mrs. Lekhi, while addressing the august gathering reiterated the importance of Board Diversity and said, "I believe one's gender shouldn't decide the position but competence should. Boardrooms should be gender neutral. Biases exist both in the boardrooms and politics. Women should be judged in terms of their intellect and strategy building skills. Firm decision making in the board rooms must be complemented with listening capacity. Individuals at leadership roles arrive there by facing challenges, overcoming obstacles and competition irrespective of gender."

Speaking at the seminar, CS Mamta Binani, President, ICSI said, "The Corporate boards have been at the centre of many reforms, especially the game changing Companies Act 2013. The boards need to realize that there are gaps between governance ideals and governance realities, which need to be closed to ensure effective corporate functioning. One such gap, which has caught recent attention, is the Board Diversity gap. Any well functioning board requires a heterogeneous composition of skills, nationality, culture, gender and most importantly thoughts. This Seminar on Board Diversity is an attempt to deliberate on the perspective and prospects of a diverse board and its effectiveness."

Ms Binani stressed on the role and vitality of gender diverse boards and their impact on corporate performance.

Addressing the seminar, Lt. Gen. J S Ahluwalia, PVSM (Retd), President, Institute of Directors, said that, Women have great empathy, better communication and consensus building skills which they bring to the Board room. Such diversity in the boardroom will help enforce trust not only in the board but in the organisation as well. There has been enough validated research in the US, that shows that Board with more number of women have greater return on equity. Nearly 1000 women are required in the boardrooms across India. Indian boards still suffer from trust deficit against women. Such bias and roadblocks should be cleared and women should be treated as capable, skilled, talented and qualified individuals."

Other eminent and distinguished speakers present at the occasion were Mr. Gopal Krishna Agarwal, Council Member, The ICSI and Managing Director, Vantage Stock, Vasudha Mishra IAS, Managing Director, National Cooperative Development Cooperation, Justice (Dr.) Arijit Pasayat, Co-Chairman, Institute of Directors & Former Judge, Supreme Court of India, Dr. M. B. Athreya, Independent Management Advisor and Former Prof. IIM, Kolkata and London Business School, Mr. Nesar Ahmad, Past President, ICSI, CS N.K Jain Corporate Advisor & Former Secretary & CEO, ICSI & Ms. Manasi Kirloskar, Executive Director, Kirloskar Systems.

### **About The Institute of Company Secretaries of India, (The ICSI)**

The Institute of Company Secretaries of India, (ICSI) is premier professional body set up under an Act of Parliament, i.e., Company Secretaries Act, 1980, for the

regulation and development of the profession of Company Secretaries in India. It functions under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Government of India. The Institute, being a pro-active body, focuses on best and top-quality education to students of Company Secretaries Course and best quality set standards for CS members. For further details, please visit: [www.icsi.edu](http://www.icsi.edu)

### **About Institute of Directors(IOD)**

The Institute of Directors (India) was established on 13 July 1990 as an apex association of directors to improve their professional competence. In 1991, the Institute of Directors established the Golden Peacock Awards for the recognition of "corporate excellence". IOD has over the years grown to associate with around 35,000 senior executives, representing prominent organizations from the private, public and government sectors India-wide, and now, increasingly, world-wide. One of the prime initiatives of IOD has been the institution of Golden Peacock Awards for corporate leadership and institutional excellence which, over time, have become a hallmark of excellence, both locally and globally. Based on Internationally recognized criteria, the credibility of these awards lies in the transparency depth and impartiality of the assessment process.

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