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Home > Mumbai > Maharashtra News: First-Time NCP MLA Sana Malik Shaikh Advocates For Women's Right To Choose Names In Official Records

Maharashtra News: First-Time NCP MLA Sana Malik Shaikh Advocates For Women's Right To Choose Names In Official Records

A quiet debate among Maharashtra's women has now reached the state assembly. First-time NCP MLA Sana Malik Shaikh has called for greater flexibility in how women's names appear in official records, advocating for the right to retain their maiden and married surnames or to use their mother's name alongside their father's.

Kalpesh Mhamunkar | Updated: Thursday, March 13, 2025, 10:44 AM IST



NCP MLA Sana Malik Shaikh | X @sanamalikshaikh



Mumbai: A quiet debate among Maharashtra's women has now reached the state assembly. First-time NCP MLA Sana Malik Shaikh has called for greater flexibility in how women's names appear in official records, advocating for the right to retain their maiden and married surnames or to use their mother's name alongside their father's.

Speaking in the assembly on Wednesday, the Anushaktinagar MLA—daughter of former minister Nawab Malik—emphasised that women should have the freedom to decide how their names are recorded. Currently, a state government order mandates the inclusion of a mother's name in official and academic documents. However, Shaikh pointed out that this has led to discomfort among many women, especially those who prefer to retain their married names.

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Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar Shows His Support

Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar supported her stance, urging the government to allow women the choice. Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar swiftly endorsed the proposal, paving the way for a revised policy. The new directive will offer married women multiple options: they can use their maiden name with their father's surname, their married name, or a combination of both.

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While men in Maharashtra routinely use their mother's name before their father's surname, this rule has complicated matters for women, who traditionally adopt their husband's surname after marriage. Many female government employees have reportedly refrained from adding their mother's name due to bureaucratic complexities.



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Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Bhaskar Jadhav highlighted this inconsistency, noting that while ministers and politicians have embraced the change, many bureaucrats still adhere to the old format. "We need clarity on whether this rule is mandatory for government officers as well," he said.

MLA Sana Malik Shaikh Shares Her Personal Experience

Sharing her personal experience, Sana Malik Shaikh recounted: "After earning my LLB degree post-marriage, my certificate included both my mother's and husband's names, creating confusion. Even in assembly records, I was asked to include my husband's name. I urge the government to establish clear guidelines, offering two distinct options—one for married women and another for unmarried women—so that official records reflect a woman's choice."