

## WORLD BANK REPORT

# Manufacturing output to jump 9% if more women join workforce

India's manufacturing output would increase by 9 per cent if more women joined the workforce, the World Bank said in its South Asia Development Update on Thursday. The global financier also maintained its gross domestic product (GDP) growth projection for India at 7 per cent in FY25 and 6.7 per cent in FY26. It forecast growth in South Asia at 6.4 per cent in 2024 on the back of India's strong domestic demand and quicker recoveries in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

The Washington-based lender said that larger-than-expected agricultural output, and policies designed to raise employment growth were expected to contribute to strong private consumption growth, while growth in public consumption was projected to "moderate in line with budgeted

fiscal consolidation". Citing its findings on female labour force participation in the region, the report noted that on average in four South Asian countries including India, the share of women employed after marriage was 12 percentage points lower than before marriage. The

other three countries are Maldives, Nepal, and Bangladesh.

World Bank Vice-President for South Asia Martin Raiser said key policy reforms to integrate more women into the workforce and remove barriers to global investment and trade could accelerate growth. "Our research shows that raising female labour force participation rates in the region to those of men would increase regional GDP by up to 51 per cent,"

Raiser added.

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