

The party has promised to **recognise housework as a salaried profession** by paying homemakers 'hitherto unrecognized and unmonetized' for their work at home.

A report published by **the International Labour Organization in 2018** shows that, globally, **women perform 76.2% of total hours of unpaid care work, more than three times as much as men.** In Asia and the Pacific, this figure rises to 80%.

A recent political entrant in the electoral fray, the contesting party's promise to **directly pay women a monthly amount** may be viewed as a strategy to grab attention in an over-crowded, highly competitive electoral landscape.

We go a step ahead and glorify our women as **goddesses** but deny them equal rights, and under the latest **Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh Ordinances**, even the right to choose their spouses.

### **The dignity of domestic labour:**

1. Housework is still unpaid, but the influx of women into the workforce, in large part enabled by the invention of domestic appliances, has partially freed women from economic dependence on their husbands.
2. And it has been a boon for a particular category of person: the intelligent and ambitious woman who longed to be free of domestic servitude, and was newly able to hire professionals to step into her fluffy slippers while she went out to work.
3. After all, the **work still needs to be done by someone.** Despite vacuum cleaners and washing machines, the average household still requires many hours of cooking and cleaning per week to keep the show on the road, even aside from the far more time-consuming task of childcare.
4. The work required to keep house may have plummeted within the last hundred years, but it is still substantial.
5. Now, as ever, the people doing that work are **disproportionately female**, and they are **as essential to society as they ever were.**
6. With no one to do all this domestic work, we would very soon become a smelly, sick and hungry nation.
7. **And housework has more emotional significance than a cold economic analysis would suggest.**

### **The burden on women:**

1. As in the **2011 Census**, while 159.85 million women stated household work as their main occupation, a mere 5.79 men referred to it as their main occupation.
2. Justice N.V. Ramana in his crisp and authoritative concurring judgment of January 5, 2021 in **Kirti and Another v. Oriental Insurance Company** has referred to the **Time Use in India-2019 Report**