

# WiLAT India Webinar Series Report: BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING: Women in Aero logistics

*Prepared by Vinod K. Maurya*

**Date:** October 26, 2023  
**Time:** 03:00 PM IST

## Introduction

WiLAT India, which stands for Women in Logistics and Transport, organized the second groundbreaking online webinar in its series, titled "BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING: Women in Aero logistics."



This virtual event took place on October 26, 2023, at 03:00 PM IST and was dedicated to spotlighting the remarkable achievements of women in logistics and aviation, with a particular focus on dismantling barriers and dispelling stereotypes.

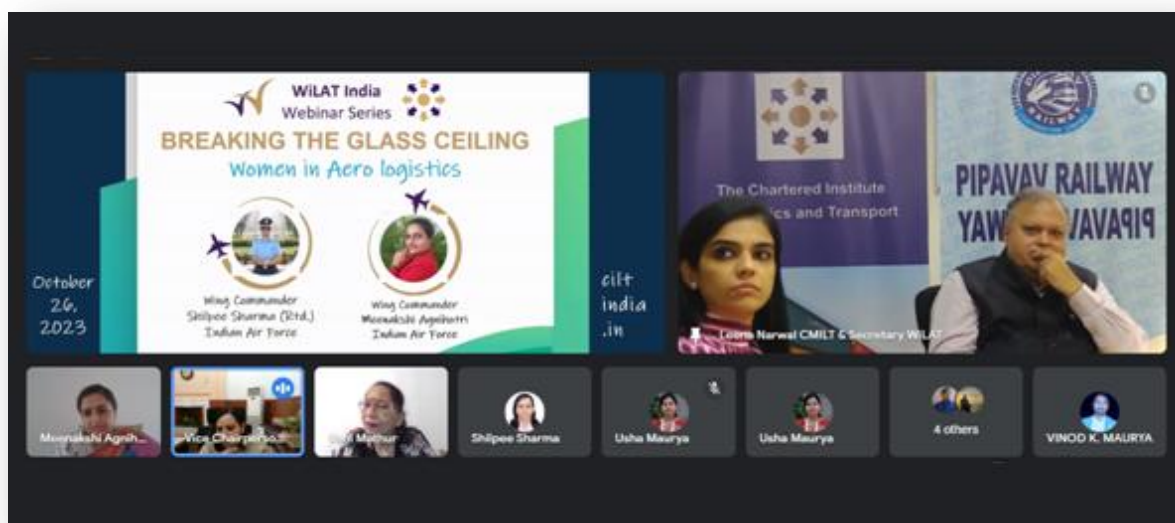
The event was designed to empower and inspire women in traditionally male-dominated sectors. The webinar featured a distinguished lineup of speakers, including Wing Commander Shilpee Sharma (Rtd.) and Wing Commander Meenakshi Agnihotri, both of whom have made significant contributions to the Indian Air Force. This event marked the second addition in the WiLAT webinar series on "BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING," further advancing the mission of promoting gender diversity and women's empowerment in the logistics and transport industries.

## Key Highlights

### Welcoming and Speaker Introductions

The event commenced with a warm welcome and speaker introductions by Ms. Leena Narwal, Secretary General of WiLAT, setting the stage for an engaging and enlightening discussion.

Ms. Narwal's opening remarks and introductions played a pivotal role in creating an inclusive and informative atmosphere for the event, underscoring the commitment of WiLAT to promoting gender diversity and empowerment in the logistics and transport sectors.



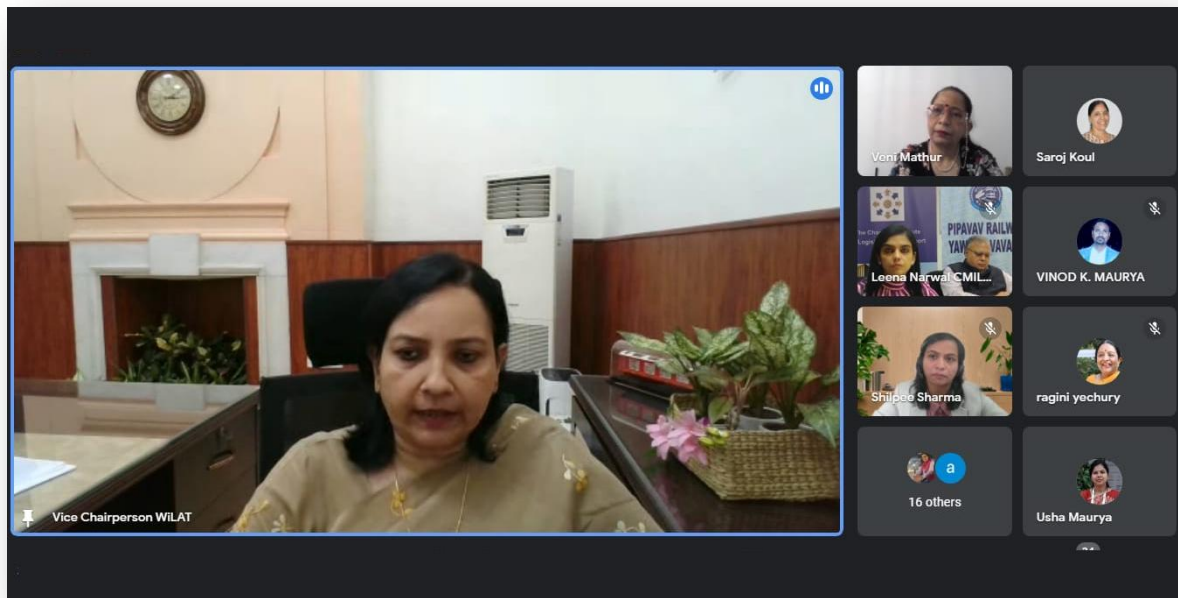
### Addresses by Dr. Monica Agnihotri

Dr. Monica Agnihotri, Vice Chairperson of WiLAT, made a significant contribution to the event by introducing WiLAT and providing insights into the organization's mission and activities within the field of Transport and Logistics.

During her address, Dr. Agnihotri elaborated on the challenges and opportunities that women face in the logistics and aviation sectors, adding depth to the discussion and emphasizing the pivotal role women can play in these industries.

Dr. Agnihotri took the opportunity to introduce the Chairperson of WiLAT India, Ms. Ragini Yechury.

Ms. Yechury's leadership and dedication to advancing the role of women in logistics and transport were acknowledged as an integral part of WiLAT's mission. Dr. Agnihotri's introduction of Ms. Yechury underscored the commitment and leadership that drive WiLAT India in its efforts to empower women and promote gender diversity in the industry.



Additionally, Dr. Agnihotri introduced Shri Sanjiv Garg, Secretary General of CILT India while introducing she shared his role as Secretary General in CILT India and his commitment to advancing the logistics and transport sectors were recognized as a crucial part of the event.

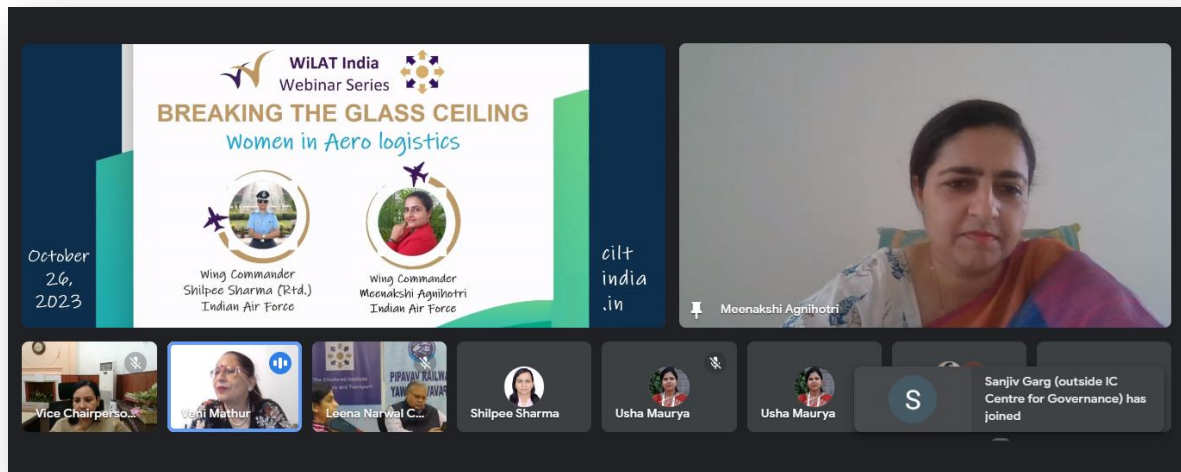
She highlighted that WiLAT is part of CILT India (Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport), and she emphasized that any woman who becomes a member of CILT India automatically becomes a member of WiLAT India.

### **Distinguished Speakers:**

### **Wing Commander Meenakshi Agnihotri - Illuminating Challenges and Opportunities**

Wing Commander Meenakshi Agnihotri, an esteemed veteran of the Indian Air Force, stood as a prominent speaker at the event. She shared her unique perspective and experiences, casting light on the challenges and opportunities inherent in her career.

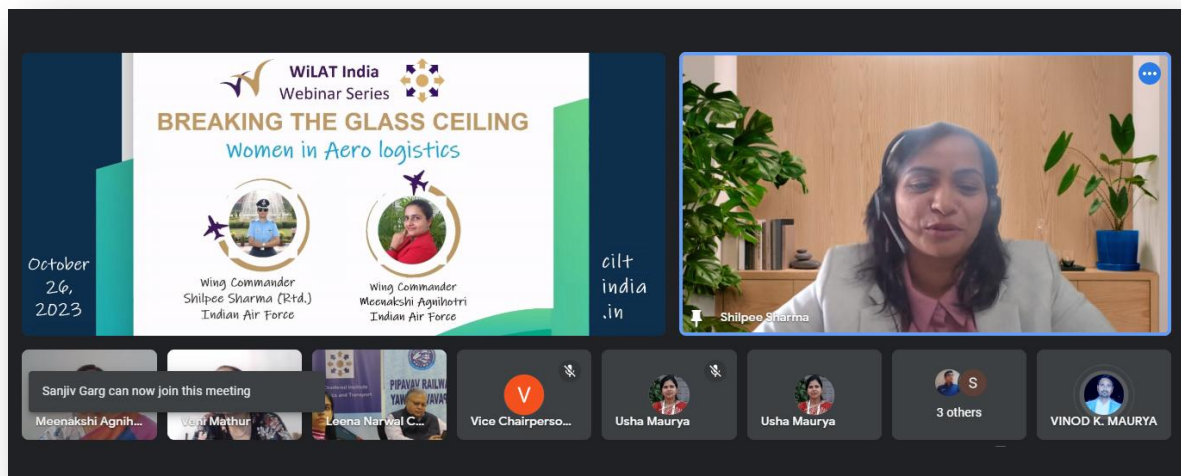
Wing Commander Agnihotri's insights provided a valuable glimpse into the intricacies of her journey, offering a comprehensive view of the aviation industry and its demands.



Her presentation served as a testament to her expertise and dedication, illuminating the path for aspiring professionals in the aviation and logistics sectors. Her participation enriched the event, highlighting the significance of shared experiences and the knowledge gained through perseverance in traditionally male-dominated fields.

### Wing Commander Shilpee Sharma (Rtd.) - A Remarkable Journey with Family Support

Wing Commander Shilpee Sharma (Rtd.), another illustrious figure from the Indian Air Force, was a standout speaker at the event. Her compelling journey and insights captivated the audience and provided invaluable guidance on navigating a career in a male-dominated field.



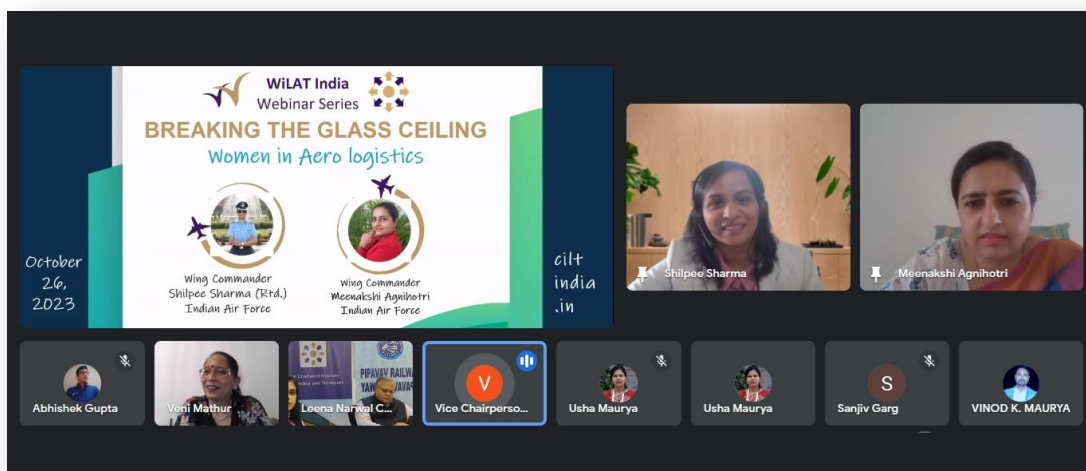
Wing Commander Sharma's experiences deeply resonated with the attendees, underlining the significance of resilience and unwavering determination in overcoming challenges and achieving success in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

In a touching moment during her presentation, Wing Commander Sharma shared insights into her family background. She highlighted the valuable support and association of her family members with her career. This personal touch shed light on the role of family support in her remarkable journey, emphasizing the importance of a strong support system in achieving one's goals.

Wing Commander Sharma's presence and contributions added a profound dimension to the event, serving as a beacon of inspiration for all aspiring professionals, particularly women, seeking to excel in such demanding and pioneering careers.

## Inspirational Insights

The personal anecdotes and insights provided by Wing Commander Shilpee Sharma and Wing Commander Meenakshi Agnihotri left an indelible mark on the audience. Their stories served as potent sources of inspiration for women aspiring to succeed in male-dominated sectors.



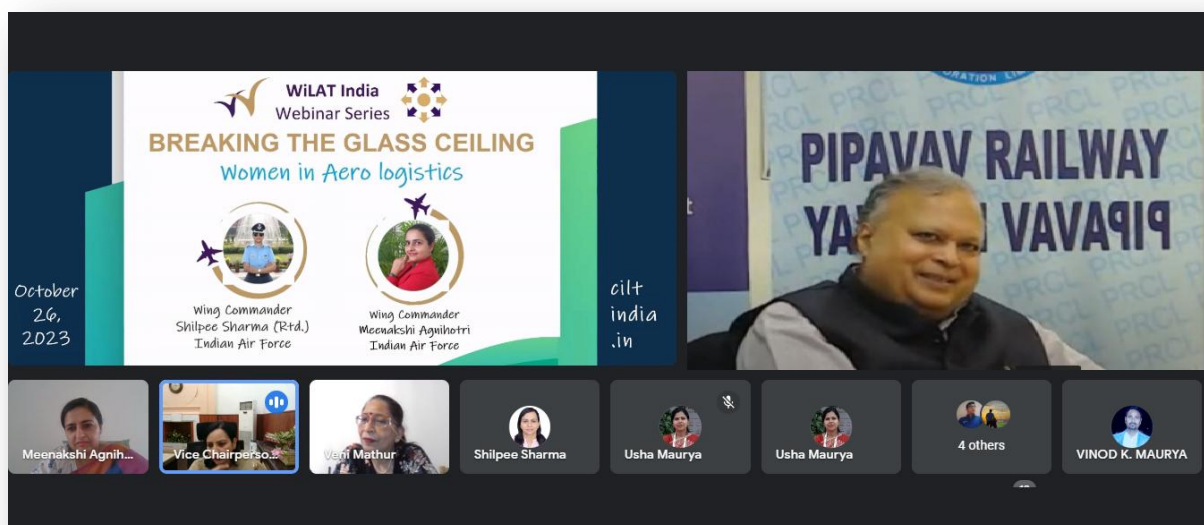
Both Wing Commander Shilpee Sharma (Rtd.) and Wing Commander Meenakshi Agnihotri, in their respective presentations, emphasized a common theme: the mantra for success is continuous learning. They underlined the critical role of ongoing education and skill development in achieving excellence in the aviation and logistics fields. Learning, they highlighted, is not only a pathway to personal and professional growth but also a key to breaking through the barriers that often exist in male-dominated sectors. Their message of the value of continuous learning left a lasting impact on the audience, reinforcing the idea that knowledge and adaptability are indispensable tools for success in these industries.



## Insights from Shri Sanjiv Garg, Secretary General of CILT India

Mr. Sanjiv Garg offered valuable insights during the Q & A session, touching upon the concept of the "glass ceiling." He noted that, at times, the so-called "glass ceiling" can be perceived as imaginary, and in certain cases, it might even be inadvertently constructed by women themselves.

Mr. Garg emphasized that while there are certainly male-dominated industries, there are also professions and sectors where women have made substantial inroads, such as the medical and teaching fields. He pointed out that the percentage of women in civil service roles is on the rise, showcasing progress in gender diversity.



Mr. Garg further discussed the idea that external factors like family responsibilities, the environment, and societal expectations can act as barriers to women's job performance. These factors can sometimes create an illusion of a glass ceiling, obstructing women's career advancement.

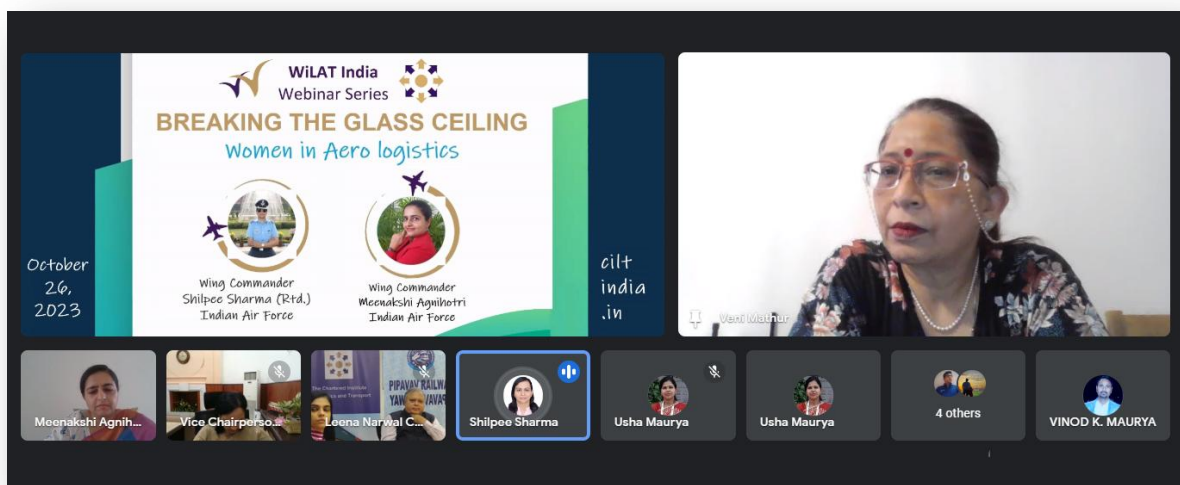
His insights shed light on the complex interplay of various elements that impact women's professional journeys, highlighting the importance of addressing and dismantling not just external barriers but also those that may be self-imposed or societal in nature. This nuanced perspective provided valuable context to the discussion on gender diversity and the challenges women face in the workforce.

## Vote of Thanks

Dr. Veni Mathur, Vice Chairman of CILT India, graciously delivered the vote of thanks, expressing heartfelt gratitude to the speakers and participants.

Her closing remarks underscored the importance of unity and support in achieving gender equality and breaking the glass ceiling in these fields. She highlighted the need for continued collaboration and the exchange of ideas to drive meaningful change, emphasizing that such events are pivotal in fostering a more inclusive and diverse logistics and aviation industry.

Dr. Mathur's inspiring words left a lasting impression on all those in attendance, motivating them to actively contribute to these crucial efforts for gender equity.



## The webinar, hosted by Ms. Usha Maurya, Manager Administration of CILT India on behalf of WiLAT India

It was a historic milestone in promoting gender diversity and empowering women in male-dominated industries. This event showcased the achievements and experiences of women excelling in logistics and aviation, highlighting their pivotal roles.

The webinar served as a wellspring of inspiration for women pursuing careers in these fields. Such initiatives are crucial in challenging stereotypes and fostering an inclusive and equitable workforce, ultimately breaking the glass ceiling that has persisted for far too long.

The webinar was attended by a diverse and enthusiastic group of participants who actively engaged in the event. Below are some photos capturing moments from the webinar, including foreign participants who joined the discussion.

## Photographs

