

D.O. No. 15011/21/2013 – SC/ST – W

22nd April, 2013

The need for increasing the number of women in the police forces in the States has been engaging the attention of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This has been deliberated upon in all the Conferences of the Chief Secretaries & DGPs of States / UTs. The All India average representation of women in the police forces is only 5.33% or 84,479 police women reckoned against the actual strength of 15.85 lakh police force in the country. It averages a low of 4% when compared to the sanctioned strength of 21.24 lakh of the police force. The international average percentage of women in the police forces is around 15%, in the middle income and high income countries in the world.

2. You will agree that more and more women are participating in the development initiatives both in the public and private sectors of the economy, and the ratio of women in the work force is increasing correspondingly in both the urban and rural areas of the country. The presence of women in all leadership positions from the Panchayats to the Parliament is increasing in visible numbers. It is imperative that equal opportunities for women in the police force becomes a consistent reality. It is a necessary ingredient for good governance.

3. It has been pointed out in many a public fora that, based on empirical evidence and research that low representation of women in police forces create both a psychological and impregnable barrier to women to approach police stations when a crime is committed against them. It is also stated that sensitization programmes for police forces do not compensate for poor representation of women in the police forces. In the urban areas, the increase in representation of women in the police forces. In the urban areas, the increase in representation of women in police will ensure a sense of safety in the public spaces which are frequently used by women on account of their varied activities outside their homes. Recruitment of women in the police forces will inevitably lead to the improvement of the image of the police forces and make the police station a gender sensitive place for grievance redressal and a catalyst for an improved community.

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4. In a vibrant democracy, participation of women in public protests, demonstrations, political activities etc., are becoming common. It is essential that women are visible at the cutting edge level of public interface. There is a tendency to engage women police only in situations like security checks and other specialized duties, relating to women, but unless they are assigned frontline duties in the police stations, there would not be an impact on the community as a whole.

5. The Second Administrative Reforms Commission have made recommendations for recruitment of women in gazetted and non-gazetted posts. Affirmative actions should be taken by all the States / UTs to ensure availability of women to 33% of the police force. An advisory in this regard has been issued by the MHA dated 04.09.2009.

6. The 5th National Conference of Women held in Trichur in 2012 at its meeting recommended that there should be at least 4 women per police station in all rural areas and even higher in urban areas. Action taken to increase the representation of women in the police forces in all categories is required to be taken on a priority by amending the service rules accordingly.

7. A beginning can be made by the creation of additional posts of women constable / SIs, and by converting the vacant posts of male constables into the post of women constables. Each police station should have at least 3 women sub-inspectors and 10 women police constables, so that a women help desk is manned round the clock. The objective should be to reach a level of thirty percent of strength of civil police being comprised of women (excluding the armed battalions). This objective can not be achieved at once – because the recruitments can only be possible against vacancies, as they arise, or against new sanctions. This approach can be followed by the States – of setting intermediate goals, towards reaching the overall objective of presence of thirty percent women in the police force.

8. It is requested that action be taken on the above, and this Ministry be kept apprised of the action being taken.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(R. K. Singh)

To all Chief Secretaries