

## Women in Police Force

### Why in news?

States in India need to act as data show that the available women force is insufficient even in dealing with cases of law and order that are related to women.

#### Status of Women in Police Force

• **Women in police force** - According to the 'Data on Police Organizations', a publication by the Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D), the representation of women in the State police force increased from 7.28% in 2017 to 10.47% of the total available force in 2021.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the representation of women in the police force (as of Jan 2022) remained at **11.7%** of the total State police force.

- **Reservation** - Most States have a policy to fill up **30% or 33%** of the vacant posts (of direct recruitment) with women in their police forces through horizontal reservation.
- **Horizontal Reservation** - If the minimum reserved vacant posts are not filled up in each category of the SC, ST, OBCs and un-reserved with women on merit, women candidates are pushed up in the list to make up for the gap.
- **Restriction** - The reservation for women in the State armed police forces is restricted to 10% in some States.

States	% of women in police force
Ladakh	It has the maximum percentage of women with 28.3% women out of total force. (in both States & UTs)
Jammu and Kashmir	It has the minimum percentage of women with 3.3% in the police force.
Kerala, Mizoram & Goa	No policy for women reservation in the police force but women representation in these states varies between 6% and 11%.
Bihar	It provides 35% reservation for women, 3% for BC women, but the actual number of women in the force is about 17.4%
Himachal Pradesh	It has not notified reservation for women, but 20% vacancies of the constables are filled by the women.

### Why there is a need for women police?

- **Mandatory functions** - The Union government has made many amendments in the laws concerning 'criminal law' and 'criminal procedure' and increased the role of women police officers.
- For example,
  - There are certain reports and statements which needs to be mandatorily recorded by a woman police officer.
  - Arrest and search of a woman accused must be done by a woman police officer.

*Ministry of Home Affairs in 2013 stated that the equal representation of women in the police as a necessary ingredient for good governance.*

- **Cases related to women** - As per NCRB data, about 10% of the total crime defined under the Indian Penal Code was committed against women and about 5.3% of total arrested persons in 2021 were women.
- Therefore, the available women force is insufficient even in dealing with cases that are related to women.
- **POCSO, 2012**- [The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act](#) has further enlarged the scope of women recruitment in the police force.
- **Other benefits** -
  - Less likely to use excessive force
  - Trust building and improve police-community relations.
  - Improves citizens' access to justice, especially in cases of sexual violence.

### **What are the steps taken and challenges in it?**

*Police being a State subject in the 7<sup>th</sup> Schedule to the Constitution, the implementation of police reforms remains primarily a concern of the States.*

- **Financial incentives** - Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) began providing financial incentives from 2018-19 to States that implement police reforms to a satisfactory level.
- **Merger** - Merging women police with the regular police is one such step to improve women police force.
- **Police Recruitment Board** - Establishment of police recruitment board in every state to ensure recruitment on a regular basis.
- But many States do not have a permanent police recruitment board and do not have a free hand to undertake recruitment at regular intervals.
- **Women desk** - The MHA provided a special grant to encourage States to establish a 'women desk' in every police station.
- But there are not enough women personnel to handle them in the districts.
- **Modernisation plan** - The MHA also has a special provision in the modernisation plan to build separate toilets for women staff, and ensure crèche facilities for children in every police station.

### **What is the way forward?**

- **Encourage women**- Efforts should be made to encourage more women to join the police force, a conducive environment and basic infrastructure are a minimum necessity.
- **Uniform Police Act** - A uniform Police Act for the entire country may help the Centre frame uniform standards for women police.
- **Recruitment Board** - Every State should have a recruitment board to ensure recruitment on a regular basis.
- **Special drive**- A special drive by all States and Union Territories to recruit more women and increase their representation in the police force.

## Reference

[The Hindu | Push for more women in politics](#)

