
THE ORIGIN ROLE OF WOMEN POLICE IN INDIA

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The Origin of Women Police in India

Workers in the industries in Kanpur were involved in the strike. Women and children of the workers blocked the entrance of the industries by lying down at the entrance and obstructed the entry of willing workers into the industries. The management of the industries sought the assistance of the Police to remove the women and children who obstructed the willing workers to enter into the industries because there was a delicate question of physically removing them. In order to avoid such an eventuality in similar circumstances in the future, the Uttar Pradesh Government appointed Women Police in Kanpur. Soon after the strike, such an eventuality did not arise. Therefore, the Women Police unit was disbanded and they were absorbed in the other Government Departments. The old Travancore State recruited Women Police in the Police Department as an experiment to deal with women offenders in the year 1939. In the beginning one Woman Head Constable and twelve Women Constables were appointed as Special Constables. Since the services of the women police continued to be required to deal with women offenders, the women police unit was retained in the Police Department. By 1942, all the Special Women Police Constables were absorbed as Women Constables in the regular Police force. Before partition, a lone lady Inspector was attached to Lahore Railway Police Station to deal with women suspects.

Young girls from rural areas used to come out from their houses to become popular by joining in cinema industry as artists. If such girls were roaming around in the Railway Station premises in suspicious condition, the lady Inspector used to take the girls to the Railway Police Station for enquiry. In the interrogation if the girls were found coming out of the houses without proper company, the parents of the girls were contacted and they were restored to them.

Tamil Nadu

The need for a Women's Police wing came to be realised with the increasing difficulties experienced in dealing with women offenders. The first batch of Women Police comprising one Sub-Inspector, and twenty Constables was recruited in 1973 and they were attached to Chennai City Police. These Women Police in Tamil Nadu performed traffic and bandobust duties. Sometimes they assisted the Policemen in searching, interrogation and escorting women offenders. Some Women Police were also utilized in frisking duty at Air Port. In 1976, Women Police wings were formed each in Madurai, Coimbatore and Tiruchirapalli, with strength of one Sub-Inspector, sixty Head Constables and six hundred Constables for augmenting the strength of Women Police in Tamil Nadu. It was proposed to form sixty Women Police units each consisting of one Sub-Inspector, one Head Constable and ten Constables and to station these Women Police in sixty Police Stations. In the meantime the Government of Tamil Nadu decided to create an All Women Police Station in Chennai city to ventilate the grievances of Women. The first All Women Police Station in Tamil Nadu was inaugurated by the Honourable Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. J. Jayalalitha on 13.4.1992. At present All Women Police Stations have been created in almost all District Headquarters and in large cities. As on May 2001 there were fifty seven All Women Police Stations with a sanctioned strength of twenty five to thirty six Women Police each consisting of one Woman Inspector, three Women Sub-Inspectors, two Women Head Constables, the rest being Grade I Women Constables and Grade II women Constables.

Women in Indian Police Service

The first Indian Police Service woman was recruited in the year 1973. It does not mean that women were not interested to join in the Indian Police Service. The Union Public Service Commission discouraged women entering in the Indian Police Service as the Commission thought that Police service was not a suitable service for women. When Mrs. Kiran Bedi insisted that she should be allowed to join the Indian Police Service, the Commission could not do anything. She was the first Indian Police Service Woman Police Officer to be recruited. She underwent the same training and hardships as any other male Police. She is asked to perform the different types of Police duties, which are performed by male Police in her rank. At present more number women are interested to join the Indian Police Service. They are treated in the same way as Police men are treated and perform all types of Police duties in the Police department. At

present there are more than thirty women Indian Police Service Officers serving at different places in India.

Conclusion

An analysis of the origin and role of women police in India reveals that women police have been mainly made use of to perform certain duties. They include women police assist the Policemen when women and juvenile offenders are dealt with by Policemen; they are made use of in bandobust duty where women in large numbers gather during fairs, festivals, VIP visits and functions; they are made use of for escorting women suspects and offenders from Prisons to Courts; they are employed in lockup duty when women suspects and offenders are kept in Police lockups; they are employed in frisking duty at Airports; women police in Calcutta are made use of in public relations work; women police in Andhra Pradesh are made use of in traffic control and regulation work; women police in Karnataka are made use of as Receptionists in the Police Officers' Offices; women police in Delhi are made use of to perform a number of duties such as duty Officers work, investigation of cases against women, Prime Minister's darshan duty, president's darshan duty and frisking duty at Airport.

In short, Women police have been mainly made use of to deal with women and juvenile offenders. National Police Commission has recommended that Women police should be made use of for a number of duties in the years to come. They are road traffic regulation and road traffic control duties in large towns involving guarding of pedestrian crossings and approaches to school; dealing with women including search, arrest, questioning women suspects who have or are suspected of having committed an offence; crime investigation in general; handling and investigating cases involving vices or sexual offences, such as rape, trafficking in women and sexual offences against children; general foot and / or vehicular patrol duty; social work and child welfare such as handling cases involving missing or badly treated children, liaison works with social welfare organizations, and agencies, and assisting women and children in distress; juvenile delinquency case work; clerical work; telecommunications Equipment Operators, Switchboard Operators and related work; prosecution duties in cases involving minor offences committed by young persons brought before Magistrates or Juvenile Courts; immigration duties and checks on travelers, especially female travelers, at Airports and other points of entry into the country; guarding female prisoners; fingerprinting work in Criminal Investigation Department; public relations work in order to help create better image of Police; instructions in Police Training Institutes; crime prevention work such as giving talks in Secondary Schools on Police work and in particular on road safety regulations; crowd control duties at special events; special Branch and security work; protection of female Very Important Persons; drug related

case work; administration and guard duties at prisons for women; technical and document examination work; police drivers; and police social welfare activities.

A critical evaluation of the functions carried out by the women police and the functions that have been recommended for the Woman Police makes it clear that Women police can be allowed to perform different types of work that are being carried out in the Police Department. Woman Police recruited in Indian Police Service are allowed to carryout all the functions of the Police Department as any other Policemen of their rank. Therefore, it is desirable to make use of the Women police of different cadres to carryout the different duties of the Police Department. The Constitution of India has not only granted equality to women but also empowered the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women for neutralizing to cumulative socio-economic, educational rights, among other things, ensure equality before law, equal protection of law, prohibits discrimination against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth and guarantees equality of opportunity to all citizens in matters relating to employment. Articles 14, 15, 15(3), 16, 39(a), 39(c), and 42 of the constitution are of specific importance in this regard. The Constitution provides equal rights to women. They are allowed to take up any job they like. Discrimination of women in any one Government Service is not permitted. Women Police at I.P.S. cadre are not discriminated. They are treated in the same way as Policemen are treated and perform all types of Police duties. But women Police in the cadre of Inspector and below in most of the States of India are not treated equally in case of recruitment, training and promotion. They are not allowed to perform all types of Police duties. An analysis of the role assigned to the women police in the different States reveal that they could be employed and made use of in the different types of police duties. If the women police are found suitable in carrying out the different duties of the Police Department, there is no harm in utilizing their services. No doubt, they are more suitable to deal with women and juvenile offenders. But their services should not be limited to these functions alone. They should be integrated with the total Police force as I.P.S. women, to ensure utilization of more women in the Police department as the policy of the Central Government and State Governments is to provide 33% reservation for women in all services including the police service.

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