

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 146
TO BE ANSWERED ON 02nd February, 2024

STRENGTH OF WOMEN IN DEFENCE FORCES

146. SHRI V.K. SREEKANDAN:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to increase the strength of women in defence forces;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is working on it; and
- (d) if so, the details of the segments where the strength of women may be proposed to increased?

A N S W E R

MINISTER OF STATE
IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

(SHRI AJAY BHATT)

(a) to (d): Yes, Sir. A number of steps are being taken by the Government and the three Services to encourage women to join Armed Forces as mentioned below: -

- (1) Permanent Commission to Women Officers.
 - (i) Permanent Commission (PC) is being granted to Women Officers (WOs) in 12 Arms & Services (in addition to Army Medical Corps, Army Dental Corps and Military Nursing Service) where they are commissioned.
 - (ii) Women Officers are being appointed onboard warships in afloat billets and also as Special Naval Air Operation (NAO) officers in the Indian Navy.
 - (iii) The experimental scheme to induct Women Officers in all combat roles, initiated by the IAF in 2015 was regularized in the year 2022 into a permanent scheme.
- (2) Women Cadets in National Defence Academy (NDA).

Armed Forces have opened entry for women candidates in National Defence Academy (NDA). First, Second, Third and Fourth batch of women cadets started training in NDA with effect from July 2022, January 2023, July 2023 and January 2024, respectively. The organisation is ensuring inclusive measures to carry out all necessary administrative, training and policy changes to enable the same.
- (3) Command Appointments.

Women Officers are being considered for Colonel (Select Grade) ranks and are being given Command appointments. Certain waivers have also been given to rule out any impediment in career progression of those who could not undergo mandatory career courses during the transition period.
- (4) Entry of women as Agniveers has also commenced in all the three Services.
