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**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2010-2011)**

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

TENTH REPORT

'WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES'



सत्यमेव जयते

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT,
NEW DELHI**

AUGUST, 2011/SRAVANA, 1933 (Saka)

TENTH REPORT

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2010-2011)**

**(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)
'WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES'**

**Presented to Lok Sabha on 17th August, 2011
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 17th August, 2011**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

AUGUST, 2011/SRAVANA, 1933 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2010-2011)**

Hon'ble Chairperson - Shrimati Chandresh Kumari

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LOK SABHA

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3. Shrimati Ashwamedh Devi
4. Shrimati Rama Devi
5. Shrimati Jyoti Dhurve
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30. Dr. Prabha Thakur

SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Ms. Vijaya Moorthy, | Joint Secretary |
| 2. Shri C.S. Joon | Director |
| 3. Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | Under Secretary |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-2011) having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on the subject 'Women in Armed Forces'.

2. The Report is based on the inputs received from the Ministry of Defence and impressions gained by the Committee during their study visits. The Committee on Empowerment of Women took oral evidences of the representatives of the Ministry of Defence on 17th May, 2010 and 9th June, 2011.

3. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 11th August, 2011. The Minutes of the sittings form Part II of the Report.

4. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Ministry of Defence for placing before them the material and information in connection with the examination of the subject and giving evidences before them.

5. For facility of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI
11th August, 2011
20 Sravana, 1933 (Saka)

SMT.CHANDRESH KUMARI,
CHAIRPERSON,
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.

WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES

I. Introductory

Women officers have been serving the Armed Forces for over the last 80 years. They were first inducted in the Military Nursing Service in 1927 and then in the Medical Officers cadre since 1943 as Permanent Commissioned Officers. However, induction of women officers in other Arms/Services of the Armed Forces as Short Service Commissioned Officers commenced only in 1992 following the Cabinet approval of 1991 and within a relatively short span of over 15 years, their employment profile widened from the administrative role to combat support roles.

2. The total number of women officers working in the armed forces as on June 2011 is as follows:-

Army	Air Force	Navy	Armed Forces Medical Corps		
			Army Medical Corps	Army Dental Corps	Military Nursing Service
1072	913	228	876	92	3678

3. However, compared to the total strength of officers in the Armed Forces the strength of women officers (excluding those in Medical and Nursing Services) is only 3.01% in Army, 2.84% in Navy and 8.55% in Air Force. The data as furnished by the Ministry of Defence is as under:

"Strength of officers/ percentage

	Army		Navy		Air Force	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Number of Officers	34448	1072	7958	228	9758	913
Percentage (%)	96.99	3.01	97.17	2.84	91.45	8.55"

Rank – wise breakup of officers is as below:

"Army			Navy			Air Force		
Rank	Number		Rank	Number		Rank	Number	
	Men	Women		Men	Women		Men	Women
General	01	-	Admiral	1	-	Air Chief Marshal	1	-
Lieutenant General	78	-	Vice Admiral	21	-	Air Marshal	28	-
Major General	237	-	Rear Admiral	53	-	Air Vice Marshal	61	-
Brigadier	991	-	Commodore	164	-	Air Commodore	188	-
Colonel	4646	-	Captain/ Captain (TS)	531	-	Group Captain	1063	-
Lieutenant Colonel	10058	11	Commander / Commander (TS)	2720	1	Wing Commander	3785	51
Major	9611	398	Lieutenant Commander	2230	106	Squadron Leader	2427	291
Captain	6063	413	Lieutenant	1386	75	Flight Lieutenant	1324	320
Lieutenant	2763	250	Sub Lieutenant	852	46	Flying Officer	881	251
Total	34448	1072		7958	228		9758	913"

4. In the Armed Forces Medical service (AFMS) Lady Medical/Nursing officers are recruited from Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) as well as from the open market. They are taken on both Permanent Commission and Short Service Commission. The number and percentage of Women officers in the Medical, Dental and Nursing services in the three wings of the Armed Forces are as under:

Army Medical Corps

Service	Total Women Officers	Percentage of Women officers
Army	644	13.72
Navy	92	17.83
Air Force	140	21.18
Total	876	14.90

Army Dental Corps

Service	Total Women Officers	Percentage of Women officers
Army	85	16.44
Navy	01	4
Air Force	06	19.35
Total	92	16.05

Military Nursing Service

Service	Total Women Officers	Percentage of Women officers
Army	3093	100
Navy	277	100
Air Force	308	100
Total	3678	100

a) WOMEN IN INDIAN ARMY

5. In the Indian Army, induction of women officers began through Women Special Entry Scheme (Officers) {(WSES (O))} in 1992. The tenure of women officers was initially five years which was made extendable by five more years in 1997, making a total tenure of 10 years. This was subsequently increased to 10 years extendable to 14 years. They were initially inducted in services like Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps, Army Education Corps and Judge Advocate General Department. Subsequently in 1996, their induction profile was expanded to include Corps of Engineers, Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Army Air Defence, Corps of Signals and Intelligence Corps. Thus there has been a progressive expansion of profile of women in the Indian Army. They are, however, not being commissioned into arms involving physical contact with the enemy like Armoured Corps, Infantry, Mechanized Infantry and Artillery.

6. The details of arms/service wise and rank-wise breakup of women officers in the Army as on June, 2011 is as under:

S.No.	Arm/ Service	Rank				Total
		Lt. Colonel	Major	Captain	Lieutenant	
(i)	Aviation	-	-	-	05	05
(ii)	Intelligence Corp	-	17	21	13	51
(iii)	Engineers	05	100	33	-	138
(iv)	Signals	03	83	51	05	142
(v)	AEC	-	41	48	07	96
(vi)	ASC	-	37	71	85	193
(vii)	JAG	-	01	10	27	38
(viii)	AOC	-	62	83	80	225
(ix)	EME	03	53	62	17	135
(x)	AAD	-	04	34	11	49
	Total	11	398	413	250	1072

7. In 2006, the Women Special Entry Scheme (Officers) {(WSES (O))} was replaced by Short Service Commission Officers (Women) Scheme bringing them at par with Short Service Commission (Men) Officers. Thereafter, the Women Officers in Indian Army are being inducted as Short service Commissioned (SSC) Officers. According to a written reply furnished by the Ministry of Defence, there are four types of entry for women officers:

- "(i) Short Service Commission Women (Technical) Entry: Candidates having BE/B Tech. Degree in notified streams are eligible for Short Service Commission Women (Technical) Entry. It comprises of a direct Service Selection Board(SSB) interview and a medical test. Notification is published in Employment News twice a year for the courses conducted in April and October. Merit list is published by the Recruiting Directorate Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Army) based on the SSB marks. Candidates are inducted to the academy for pre-commission training based on the merit list, medical fitness and availability of vacancies.
- (ii) Short Service Commission Women (Non-Tech) Entry: In this entry, a candidate has to undergo written examination under the scheme of Combined Defence Service Exam conducted by Union Public Service Commission(UPSC), twice a year. Written qualified candidates are detailed for Service Selection Boards for interview and medical test. Thereafter, UPSC publishes notification and also final merit list. Candidates are inducted to the academy for pre-commission

training based on the merit list, medical fitness and availability of vacancies.

- (iii) Short Service Commission Women (Judge Advocate General) Entry: This is a Non-UPSC entry. Law Graduates with minimum 55% marks and eligible to be enrolled as an advocate with Bar Council of India or States can apply for this course. For this entry, there is a direct SSB interview and medical test. Notification is published in Employment News twice a year for the courses commencing in April and October. Merit list is published by the Recruiting Directorate Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Army) based on the SSB marks. Candidates are inducted to the academy for pre-commission training based on the merit list, medical fitness and availability of vacancies.
- (iv) Short Service Commission Women (NCC Special Entry): NCC Special Entry Scheme is meant for graduate candidates in possession of NCC 'C' certificate. Candidates are directly sent for SSB interview and medical test. Notification is published in Employment News twice a year for the courses conducted in April and October. Merit list is published by the Recruiting Directorate Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Army) based on the SSB marks. Candidates are inducted to the academy for pre-commission training based on the merit list, medical fitness and availability of vacancies".

8. Out of the above, SSCW (NT) is a UPSC entry and the others are non-UPSC entries. The procedure of Service Selection Board for Women officers, in brief, is as follows:-

- "(a) The procedure of Service Selection Board Interview for women officers, is same as it is for men officers. Women officers are, however, required to undergo 8 obstacles only instead of 10 obstacles as required for the men officers;
- (b) Duration of SSB interviews is five days excluding day of arrival. During their stay at SSB, candidates are put through Psychological Test, Group Test and interviews;
- (c) Successful candidates at the SSB are required to undergo medical tests at Military Hospital/Command Hospital".

9. The terms and conditions of Service of women inducted in Indian Army through Short Service Commission (SSC) are as under:-

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| "(a) Tenure | : 14 years (10 years extendable by 4 years) |
| (b) Pre Commission Training | : 49 Weeks |
| (c) Promotional Prospects | : Time based promotions upto the rank of Lt. Col based on their reckonable commission service. |

Permanent Commission(PC): Women Officers inducted in Judge Adjutant General (JAG) and Army Education Corps(AEC) are eligible for consideration for PC in 10th year of service. Further, permanent commission is also offered to Women officers of Armed Forces Medical Service."

10. The Committee have been informed that uniform standards are applied to both men and women during the selection process. However, in case of women candidates different standards are applicable in respect of certain physical parameters such as height, weight, etc.

11. When SSC was offered to women, their training period was also raised from 24 weeks to 49 weeks to make it at par with male officers. Earlier the women were imparted a condensed capsule training. The first course with a revised training period of 49 weeks commenced in April, 2008.

12. While elaborating on the training modules meant for Women Officers, the representatives of the Ministry of Defence stated as under:

"Training modules for Lady Cadets (LCs) undergoing training at Officers Training Academy, Chennai are at par with their male counterparts involving military training, indoor, outdoor training and exercises. However, certain relaxation in terms of standards to be achieved during physical training tests are available".

13. As far as career prospects/promotions are concerned, the Committee have been informed that time based substantive promotions as per reckonable

commissioned service at par with Permanent Commissioned Officers up to the rank of Lt. Col is available to Women Officers. Common seniority is also being maintained for men and women within the blocks ,viz. Short Service Commission Officers (Non Tech-Women & Men) and Short Service Commission Officers (Tech-Women & Men).

b) WOMEN IN INDIAN AIR FORCE

14. Women Officers were first inducted in the Air Force in June 1993 as Short Service Commissioned Officers in the non- technical ground duty branches on an experimental basis for a period of 5 years. Consequently women officers were inducted into the Aeronautical Engineering and Flying Branch. Currently, women are inducted as Short Service Commissioned Officers in all branches of Indian Air Force except Fighters. The streams where Women Officers are inducted include Flying branch (Transport and Helicopter streams), Technical branch (aircraft systems, ground weapons) and non-Technical branches (Administration, Logistics, Accounts, Air Traffic Control, Fighter Control, Education, Meteorology, Medical and Dental).

15. Regarding the employment profile of Women Officers in the Indian Air Force, the Ministry in a written note submitted as under:

" (a) Flying Branch

- (i) Transport Pilots: Women are mainly employed as pilots in the An-32, Avro and Donier fleets. A woman pilot is employed on the IL-76 aircraft as well. They are being planned for employment in IL-76, Embraer and Boeing fleets in the near future. Employment profile for women is similar to that of their male counterparts. There are no posting restrictions for women pilots and many of them operate on air maintenance missions in the proximity of the international borders (all sectors).
- (ii) Helicopter Pilots: At present, helicopter pilots are employed in the Chetak/Cheetah fleets.
- (iii) Navigators: Women are employed as navigators in the An-32 and Avro platforms. There is no difference in the employment of men and women navigators.

(b) Technical Branches. Women are employed in all technical competencies in the IAF including aircraft systems, Surface-to-Air weapon systems and other aerial and ground based systems.

(c) Non-Technical Branches. Employment pattern for women is similar to their male counterparts. "

16. Regarding the selection, the Ministry, during the study visit of the Committee submitted, inter-alia, as under:

".....Selection of women officers(other than Medical) is carried out at 1,2 & 4 AFSBs located at Dehradun, Mysore and Varanasi, respectively. AFSBs have been located to cater for the geographic distribution of candidates. All the advertisements for the vacancies are released by Air HQs. For Technical branch, the applications are received by Command HQs. Engineering Knowledge Test (EKT) is used as a screening test which is carried out at designated AF Stations. Successful candidates are called for AFSB testing.

For Flying Branch, Pilot aptitude Battery Test (PABT) is used as a screening tool. The PABT measures verbal reasoning, discrimination ability, multi limb and sensory psychomotor coordination, speed of reaction and visualization from two dimensions to three dimensions. It is a once in a life time test. It includes a 75 minutes paper pencil test and a 30 minutes performance test on a PC based control of velocity test and Sensory Motor Apparatus Test. Those who fail in PABT are tested for other branches on consent, subject to fulfilling eligibility criteria.

For Non-Technical Ground Duty branch, Combined Entrance Test (CET) is used as a screening tool. This test is conducted by the Command HQs at designated Air Force Stations. Successful candidates who have cleared CET are called for AFSB testing. All those candidates, who are recommended by Service selection Boards, are sent for medical examination to IAM/CME. After medical examination, branch wise merit lists are drawn. Joining letters are issued in consonance with merit and number of vacancies. The selection and training pattern along with promotional policies and utilization for branch duties is at par for both male and women Short Service Commissioned Officers, except that women SSC officers are not inducted into the Fighter stream. The terms and conditions of service of SSC women officers is same as for SSC male officers.

Lady Medical Officers are inducted through AFMC or directly from Civil through O/o DGAFMS."

17. The branch-wise and rank-wise break up of Women officers in IAF as on June, 2011 (excluding Medical and Dental Branches) are as follows:-

	WG CDR	SQN LDR	FLT Lt	FG Officer
F(P)	1	17	36	17
F(N)	--	--	3	
AE(M)	--	8	2	7
AE(L)	8	58	85	98
ADM	29	110	75	54
LGS	7	47	40	29
ACCTS	4	39	27	19
EDN	7	20	19	10
MET	--	10	9	16
Total	56	309	296	252

18. The ab-initio training for officers of all branches of Air Force is imparted at Air Force Academy, Hyderabad. Basic Flying training is also imparted there. The Committee have been informed that various types of trainings are imparted at Air Force Academy Dundigal. The details are as below:

"Air Force Academy is the alma mater of all officers of IAF. The aim of Air Force Academy is "To train Air Warriors of the highest professional, intellectual, physical and moral caliber for a lifetime of service to the Indian Air Force and the Nation". Officers of all branches of IAF except Medical are inducted at AFA for ab-initio training. Officer development is the primary objective of the Academy. The aim is to ensure that when the Fight Cadets graduate as officers, they are not only true professionals in their own fields but they are team players and have a good understanding of the other branches of the IAF. Combined training helps them to function in harmony, understanding and co-operation that come from personal knowledge of each other's job. The unique feature of the Air Force Academy is that the trainees of all branches of IAF undergo the training together under one roof. The training curriculum is so designed that it ensures no concession/discrimination is given to any branch or gender. The training for different branches at AFA is as follows:-

- (i) Flying Training: The direct entry trainees of flying branch undergo Pre-Flying training for 22 weeks and join State-I Pilots Course along with the passed out graduates of national Defence academy (NDA) for next 24 weeks on Kiran Mk 1 aircraft. After successful completion of Stage-I,

the women trainees are bifurcated into Helicopter and Transport streams and sent to HTS and AF Stn Yelahanka respectively for Stage-II training for next 24 weeks before they are commissioned into Flying branch of IAF.

- (ii) Technical Officers Training: All Aeronautical Engineering branch officers are inducted at AFA for initial 22 weeks of ab-initio training and then sent to AFTC, Bangalore for their advanced training for one year.
- (iii) Ground Duty Officers Training: The job-oriented specialist training for all non-technical branches of the IAF, viz. Administration, Logistics, Accounts, and Education is conducted at AFA for 48 weeks. The Stage-I training of Meteorology branch also conducted for initial 24 weeks and then the trainees are sent to Air Force Administrative College, Coimbatore for Stage-II training for 24 weeks.
- (iv) ATC Training: The training for ATC officers is conducted at ATCOTE. In addition to the training of ATC officers of the IAF, this establishment also trains controllers from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and officers from friendly foreign countries. The courses conducted at Air Traffic Control Officers Training Establishment include Air Traffic management and Air Laws Course ATMAL (Basic and Advanced) and the Ground Controlled Approach (GCA) Controllers' Course. The duration of the courses varies from 08 to 24 weeks.
- (v) Medical Officers Basic Course (MOBC): MOBC is conducted at No. 2 Aero Medical Training Centre (AMTC), which is located at AFA for a period of 3 weeks. The Medical Officers are imparted general service training during this period".

19. On being asked about the details of the special training modules, if any, for women officers, the Ministry of Defence submitted as under:

"At Air Force Academy, the lady Flight Cadets undergo sessions of rigorous training shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts with an aim to transform them from fledging flight cadets into a worthy Air Warrior and an officer. The training curriculum is common for both male and lady cadets and includes all facet of training, needed for them to become a combatant soldier. During the day time, they together with their male counterparts undergo training on physical fitness and parade followed by classes at various faculties of professional excellence. In the evening various sports activities are conducted for them. During the course of their training, they are imbued with various Officer Like

Qualities (OLQ), importantly including the ones on morality and ethics. Active participation in all competitions polishes their professional acumen and physical toughening. The lady cadets alongwith their male counterparts also undergo 'Camp Harvard' where they are introduced and trained on how to survive in the odd situations during hostile and war like situations. No specific training moduels for women personnel are devised because of commonality in job contents with that of their male counterparts"

20. On being asked about the opportunities available to women personnel for career progression in the organization, it was replied as under:

"Women are inducted into all branches and streams of the IAF except the Fighter stream. The procedure for Selection, Training, Placement and career progression are as per the laid down terms and conditions of service, which are at par with the male officers of the same branch/stream. The present terms and conditions ensure parity and do not need any modification"

c) WOMEN IN INDIAN NAVY

21. In the Indian Navy, women got inducted as Short Service Commissioned (SSC) officers in the Education Branch and Logistics & Law cadres of the Executive Branch from 1992 onwards. In 1993, approval was accorded for induction of women in the Air Traffic Control (ATC) cadre. Now, women officers are being inducted as Short Service Commissioned officers in the Executive (ATC, Law & Logistic Cadres), Education Branch and the Naval Architecture Cadre of the Engineering Branch along with their male counterparts. However, women officers are not being employed on afloat appointments.

22. Cadre-wise and Rank-wise break up of women officers in Indian Navy including the medical and Dental Branches as on June, 2011 is as under:

(a) Cadre-wise break up of Women Officers

S. No.	Branch Cadre	Numbers
(a)	Education Branch	81
(b)	X/Logistics	83
(c)	X/Air Traffic Controller	35
(d)	X/Law	2
(e)	X/Observer	17
(f)	E/Naval Constructor	14
(g)	Medical Branch	94
(h)	Dental Branch	1
	Total	327

(b) Rank-wise break up of Women Officers

S. No.	Rank	No. of women officers
(a)	Rear Admiral	2
(b)	Commodore	1
(c)	Captain	4
(d)	Commander/Captain (TS)	23
(e)	Lt. Cdr	144
(f)	Lieutenant	101
(g)	Sub Lieutenant	52
	Total	327

23. The Committee have been told that during the selection process, women compete with their male counterparts under a common merit. Applications are invited from eligible candidates (both men and women) and the short listed candidates are screened by the Services Selection Board (SSB). Qualified candidates are appointed in the Navy as per their merit position vis-à-vis available vacancies. The number of women candidates being inducted in the Navy is only dependent upon their position in the merit, which is prepared taking into consideration their performance in the SSB interviews. Women officers in the Navy are not inducted under any "Special Women Entry Scheme"

and therefore, there is no quota of vacancies for women candidates. Equity and equality in all aspects of recruitment is accorded. There are no separate standards except in physical standards wherein the minimum height requirement of male candidate is 157 cm and for women candidate it is 152 cms.

24. Short Service Commissioned Officers including women inducted into the Navy are commissioned for an initial period of 10 years with a provision of granting extension up to 14 years provided that the period of extension does not exceed two years at a time.

25. It has further been submitted that the duties, job specifications, training, working conditions, promotion prospects, pay and allowances and service conditions of these SSC women officers are exactly the same as that of male officers. The appointment of these officers is planned with the aim of best utilizing their qualification, talent, expertise, aptitude and experience gained during various tenures.

26. On being asked about the opportunities available to women officers for career progression in the organization, the Ministry of Defence in a written reply stated as below:

"Adequate avenues are provided for women to excel in their fields of expertise and to pursue their interests. All facilities available in the navy are extended to men and women officers in equal measure and no discrimination is made. Women officers are encouraged to participate in all activities including extra-curricular activities, adventure activities. The Navy maintains a common yard stick to measure the performance of each individual and each are provided with adequate scope and opportunities".

II. Grant of Permanent Commission to Women in Armed Forces

27. Induction of women, a relatively recent phenomenon in the Armed Forces, has been a radical change to which the services have tried to adjust. Over the last 16 years or so, the women officers have been working in the forces in various capacities in the various branches of the three wings of the Armed Forces. Though initially they were recruited on short commission and Permanent Commission (PC) was denied to them except in the medical

branches, their short commission was being extended from time to time up to as much as 14 years. At present, in all the three wings, their tenure is for 14 (10+4) years after which they are released with benefits like terminal gratuity, leave encashment, terminal leave benefit, disability pension, family pension, and death gratuity.

28. The Committee, however, find that their short tenure has deprived them of certain benefits and privileges like pension, full ex-serviceman status, medical facilities, etc., which would have accrued to them in case of grant of Permanent Commission. Feeling aggrieved about the same, some women Short Service Commissioned Officers of the Indian Army and Air Force approached the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi between 2003 and 2009.

29. During the course of examination of the subject the Committee observed that in the initial Writ Petition (C) no. 1597/2003, 3357/07,16010/06 and 3686/07, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi gave the following initial direction on 05.05.2008:-

"The grievance of the Women Officer both in the Army and Air Force is that initially they were recruited on short commission and the permanent commission has been denied to them even though the period of short commission has been extended from time to time even up to as much as 14 years. The result of the not being granted permanent Commission is that they are deprived of certain benefits which would ensure to their benefit in case of grant of Permanent Commission like pension etc. Learned counsel appearing for the Air Force further submits that in 2004 a policy decision was taken not to extend the Short Commission uniformly across the board both for men and women. The question however remains for the period prior to the said policy being brought into force. The women officers claim parity with the men officers limited to this aspect.

Counsel for the respondent seeks to emphasize that the Officers accepted commission on the specified terms and conditions and the Short Commission was granted to them.

However, we are of the considered view that it cannot be thus lost sight of that much water has flowed on the question of gender equality since the grant of Short Commission. We do think it is appropriate that the respondent themselves should examine the matter and come up with solution to remove the stigma of gender discrimination.

Learned counsel for the respondent seek some time to obtain necessary instruction and place on record the decision which should be examined at the highest level. Both the service chiefs to personally look into the matter before the decision is placed before us.

We expect the authorities to ensure that the relevant decision is available by the next date.

List this matter for direction on 12.9.2008

Dasti to learned counsel for the respondent.

SANJAY KISHAN KAUL, J

MOOL CHAND GARG, J

MAY 05, 2008"

30. The legal battle continued thereafter and culminated in a major judgment by the Hon'ble Delhi High Court on 12.03.2010. Furnishing the details about this, the Ministry of Defence, stated as under:

"The main plea in the petition was discrimination in Terms & Conditions of Service of Women SSC officers vis-a-vis their male counterparts and for grant of Permanent Commission (PC). Delhi High Court in their judgement dated 12th March, 2010 have passed the following directions relating to grant of Permanent Commission to women officers:

- (i) *The claim of absorption in areas of operation not open for recruitment of women officers cannot be sustained being a policy decision.*
- (ii) *The policy decision not to offer PC to Short Service Commissioned officers across the board for men and women being on parity and as part of manpower management exercises is a policy decision which is not required to be interfered with.*
- (iii) *The Short Service Commissioned women officers of the Air Force who had opted for PC and were not granted PC but granted extension of SSCs and of the Army are entitled to PC at par with male Short Service Commissioned officers with all consequential benefits. The benefit would be conferred to women officers recruited prior to change of policy as (ii) aforesaid. The Permanent Commission shall be offered to them after completion of five years. They would also be entitled to all consequential benefits such as promotion and other financial benefits. However, the aforesaid benefits are to be made available to women officers in service or who have approached this Court by filing these petitions and have retired during the course of pendency of the petitions.*
- (iv) *It is made clear that those women officers who have not attained the age of retirement available for the Permanent Commissioned*

officers shall, however, be reinstated in service and shall be granted all consequential benefits including promotion, etc. except for the pay and allowance for the period they have not been in service.

- (v) *The necessary steps including release of financial benefits shall be done by the authorities within two (2) months of passing of this order.*

Government decision

The order of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi was carefully considered in consultation with the Ld. Solicitor General of India. It was decided to:

- (i) Implement the order of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi in full in respect of Indian Air Force.
- (ii) File an appeal in the Hon'ble Supreme Court by way of Special Leave Petition in case of Army".

31. The Committee have further been apprised that the above decision was taken keeping in view the significant differences between the Army and Air Force in respect of their size, geographical spread, operational requirements etc.

32. The Committee was apprised by the Ministry of Defence about the status of implementation of the Delhi High Court order of 12th March, 2010 as below:

"Pursuant to the order of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi dated 12th March 2010, 41 women SSC officers in the Air Force have been granted Permanent Commission.

In the case of Army, a Special Leave Petition (SLP) has been filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court on 6.7.2010 (SLP (c) No. 10437 to 10439) against the Delhi High Court order dated 12th March 2010. The Hon'ble Supreme Court passed an interim order dated 02.08.2010 on grant of permanent commission to in service women officers in Judge Advocate General (JAG) Branch and Army Education Corps (AEC). Pursuant thereto, necessary orders were issued on 04.10.2010 for implementation of the interim orders of the Apex Court. So far 21 women SSC officers have been granted PC. The matter is presently sub-judice before the Hon'ble Supreme Court".

33. When asked about the number of women SSC officers who have asked for Permanent Commission from the three wings and the number of women who have actually been granted the same, it has been replied as under:

"In Army, 27 Women SSC officers have opted for Permanent Commission (PC) out of which 21 have been granted PC, 01 case is pending while 01 is sub-judice. 04 officers have not been granted PC.

In Navy, no women SSC officers have asked for PC till date.

In Air Force, 41 SSC Women officers (21 serving officers and 20 retired officers) have been granted PC on implementation of the Hon'ble Delhi High Court judgement dated 12.03.2010".

34. On being asked about the actual number of serving women officers in the Army coming under the ambit of the High Court order from the branches other than JAG and Education, it has been submitted in a post evidence reply that a total of 321 such women officers are there. In Air Force, a total of 375 Women SSC officers fall under the ambit of the Delhi High Court judgement of 23rd May, 2011.

35. At the same time, the Committee find that in Army, 668 SSC male officers have been granted PC during the last three years and in the current year. In Navy, 130 SSC officers have been granted PC w.e.f. 01.01.2008 to 31.05.2011 in the Technical wings where women are not inducted at all. However, in Air Force, due to a policy change taken on 25 May, 2006 to discontinue the offer of PC to SSC officers, both male and female, none of the SSC male officers have been granted PC during the last three years.

36. The Committee, during the course of examination of the subject learnt that the Ministry of Defence, vide letter dated 26th September, 2008 had granted Permanent Commission prospectively to Short Service Commission (SSC) (Women) officers to be inducted in Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Education Corps (AEC) of Army and their corresponding Branch/Cadre in Navy and Air Force, Accounts Branch of the Air Force and Naval Constructor of the Navy. This policy decision was taken as a follow up of the initial direction by the Delhi High Court on 05-05-2008. The Government letter regarding grant of Permanent Commission to women is as under:

"No.12(I)/2004-D(AG).Pt.II

Government of India
Ministry of Defence

New Delhi, the 26th September, 2008

To
The Chief of Army Staff,
The Chief of Naval Staff,
The Chief of Air Staff,

Subject: Permanent Commission to SSC Women Officers

I am directed to convey the sanction of the President to offer Permanent Commission prospectively to Short Service Commission (Women) Officers to be inducted in Judge Advocate General (JAG) Department and Army Education Corps (AEC) of Army and their corresponding Branch/Cadre in Navy and Air force, Accounts Branch of the Air Force and Naval Constructor of the Navy in addition to current provisions for grant of PC to SSC (Men) Officers.

2. *Suitable administrative instructions in this regard will be issued by respective Service HQs.*

3. *This issues with the concurrence of MoD (Fin) vide their UO No. 552/AG/PA dated 26.9.2008.*

(S.C. Barmma)
Director (AG)

Copy to: As per Standard Distribution."

37. Explaining the rationale behind the above decision, the Ministry, in a post evidence written reply stated as below:

"Grant of Permanent Commission to Women officers only in Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Education Corps (AEC) and not in other Arms and Services is essentially based on two grounds viz leading troops and combat nature of duties, which are also interrelated. Even those male officers who do not become commanding officers have to perform duties of Platoon and Company Commanders and have to face the risks involved in operations/combat."

38. On being asked about the reasons for not offering Permanent Commission in other non-combat/support arms where women are at present serving as SSC officers, the Ministry in a written reply, submitted as under:

"In Army, no other branch apart from Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps is considered as non-combat branch/service. Combat Arms like Infantry, Mechanised Infantry and Armored Corps are involved in direct combat with enemy. Support Arms like Engineers, Signals, Military Intelligence, in a war scenario, will be involved in actual battle conditions facing the same hazards as being faced by personnel of combat arms. Services like Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps and Electrical and Mechanical Engineers have to provide logistic support to forward troops in combat zone and therefore, suffer the same hazards as faced by troops from combat arms and combat support arms. Women officers, who are inducted as SSC officers in these Support Arms/Service, are tenanted sheltered appointments and are not exposed to the rigors of hard field conditions. Male SSC officers have to undergo one year Infantry attachment. They are also involved in search and cordon operations including ambushes/skirmishes, fighting, insurgency and militants. Thus, they are in harms way/in close proximity with the enemy and have to face the brunt of prolonged battle conditions. Women officers are on the other hand not at all exposed to such service conditions and continue to tenant administrative/sheltered appointments, even when posted in field. Therefore, Women officers have not been considered for PC in Support Arms and Services."

39. The number and percentage of Women SSC officers commissioned in combat support Arms / Services in the Army where Permanent Commission to women officers is not available, is as under:

S.No.	Arms/Services	Strength of women officers	Total cadre strength	Percentage (%)
1.	Aviation (Air Traffic Control only)	05	197	2.53
2.	Intelligence Corps	51	589	8.65
3.	Engineers	138	3671	3.75
4.	Signals	142	2396	5.92
5.	Army Service Corps (ASC)	193	2058	9.37
6.	Army Ordnance Corps (AOC)	225	1794	12.54
7.	Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (EME)	135	3005	4.49
8.	Army Air Defence(AAD)	49	1400	3.50

40. In Navy, PC is now granted to Women SSC officers in Education Branch, Law and Naval Constructor Cadres which are primarily non-combat branches. In Air Traffic Controller (ATC) cadre, despite being a non-combat cadre, PC is not being granted to both men and women SSC officers, because of limited utility of ATC officers in higher ranks.

41. As far as induction of women officers in Engineering and Electrical Branches in Indian Navy are concerned, the Committee have been informed that these branches are predominantly sea going branches and require officers to spend extended periods at sea. The training pattern for these branches includes prolonged sea training wherein all officers are expected to serve onboard ships/submarines for a certain period of time and require the officers to qualify Watch-keeping at sea. Further, there is a requirement for all officers from the Engineering and Electrical Branches to serve onboard ships/submarines for atleast one year prior promotion to the rank of Lt. Cdr/Cdr/Capt."

42. With respect to Air Force, the Ministry has submitted that PC is admissible in Legal, Accounts and Education branches. After implementation of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi judgment dated 12.03.2010 regarding PC to SSC women officers, PC has been granted in Aeronautical Engineers (Electronics), Administration, Logistics, Accounts and Education branches. PC is not admissible in Flying Branch.

43. Explaining the difference between the nature of combat service support and combat services, the Adjutant General stated before the Committee during oral evidence:

".....The combat service support and the combat support these are different than the combat arms. We agree with that absolutely. Now combat arms are the ones who actually do the immediate fighting, close and hand to hand and whatever it is. The combat support arms are the next arms that is the engineers, signals, the intelligence and the Army Air Defence. They are the ones which do the immediate support so that the war can be prosecuted. The third element is the combat service support

which is our Army Service Corps, our EME and Ordnance Corps and such like service support. The fact is that when we go in for war, everything is in an integrated whole. When the infantry and the armed corps actually do the fighting they need a support, that is the combat engineering support for which our trawl, our bridging, our mining and everything is done by the combat engineers. So, they are very much along with them in battle. When it comes to the signals, to the lowest level of unit, that is the infantry battalion and equivalent the Signal Regimen representatives are there with the battalions and these go down to the battalions and brigades. As far as the third element whether it is the Int Corps or Army Air Defence each one of these are really speaking along with the forward forces, they are doing the battle duties... ..the combat service support which I mentioned were the Army's ACS ordnance and the other, now even for feeding the troops for ensuring that our logistic lines are open, like in a defence battle we are on our own territory but in an offensive, we have to go across into the enemy territory. Then the responsibility of ensuring that the supply lines are open and also to ensure that our things which might have got destroyed like radio sets and guns, etc. is the responsibility of the Ordnance Corps to do. So, they have to go along. Even our Medical Corps goes along with them to the front. So, when we are looking at it, actually it is an integrated whole and each one of these Services also get embroiled in battle".

44. When the Committee expressed their apprehension about the view of the Armed Forces that the women officers are tenanted sheltered appointments and desired to know how combat effectiveness would be impacted if women are engaged in the battle field, the Secretary, Ministry of Defence, submitted as below:

"We are positive in including women and we have taken a number of steps to see that they get permanent commission, their numbers increase etc. But at the same time, globally you would find that women are not exposed to handheld combat. If there are cases of women casualties and others, it has a demoralising effect. So, we are submitting this point to you and when we use this word, though the usage may not have been very good, I accept that, but the idea was that they are not being sent to the front line but they are being given assignments which expose them to areas which are less risky, in the sense that the possibility of having a handheld combat is less."

45. When the Committee further desired to know whether the women officers are just kept in the background in their 14 years of career even though the

charter of duties for men and women are the same, the Adjutant General continued:

"When I talked about sending them to the front, I made a distinction that when we send them to the front we send them to such appointments where they are not exposed to that combat difficulties which the other troops are. So, I am making that distinction. Even within the front we try and find such appointments where they are placed and the responsibilities, when we say the charter is the same, it means when she is doing the job of an adjutant or a quarter master in a unit, whether she does it or a male officer does it, there is no difference in the charter. She does exactly the same job. We give them those kinds of appointments in field areas, in peace station where the other officers do and then they do the same kind of job".

46. Regarding the shortage of officers in the Indian Army in the combat support areas, the Ministry furnished the following data:

"Corps wise deficiency of officers in the combat support arms/services are given below : -

Arms/Services	Authorised Strength	Held Strength	Deficiency
Army Air Defence(AAD)	1863	1400	463
Army Aviation	768	197	571
Engineers	5423	3671	1752
Signals	3410	2396	1014
Infantry	725	589	136
Army Service Corps (ASC)	2197	2058	139
Army Ordnance Corps (AOC)	1911	1794	117
Electrical & Mechanical Engineers (EME)	4175	3005	1170
Army Education Corps (AEC)	500	381	119
Judge Advocate General (JAG)	144	115	29
Total	21116	15606	5510"

47. It has further been submitted in this regard as under:

"The shortage of officers in Indian Army are primarily in the Non-select ranks (i.e. Lieutenant/Captain/Major/Lt. Colonel). Retaining SSC Officers beyond 14 years will not help in meeting the shortage. On the contrary, it will lead to stagnation and structural imbalance in the Officers' Cadre in the Army. In this regard, the Ajay Vikram Singh Committee (AVSC) in 2003 had recommended a multi-pronged approach for achieving optimal combat effectiveness by bringing down the age profile and to make the organisation more effective in fulfilling the career aspirations of officers. The Committee inter alia recommended restructuring of the cadre by increasing the support cadre comprising of SSC officers and decreasing the regular cadre viz PC officers which has been accepted by the Government. Accordingly, in future, the intake of SSC officers will increase progressively while Permanent Commission Officers will get reduced. Simultaneously, measures to make SSC more attractive are being looked into.

48. The Committee during the course of examination of the subject have been told that a Tri- Services Study Report-'Women in Armed Forces ' was prepared by the Head Quarters Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS) in 2006. The major observations/recommendations of this study are as under:

"Permanent Commission PC must be based on military needs and not social considerations. There is a need for a graduated approach by the Services in this regard. Recommendations for grant of PC to women officers are as follows: -

- (a) At present PC should NOT be granted to women officers.
- (b) The grant of PC to male SSCOs to continue in view of large shortages in officer cadre in the Army and to meet operational commitments.
- (c) Pre and Post Commission Training and their employability be restructured based on revised Terms and Conditions to bring women officers at par with male officers.
- (d) A gestation period of 10 to 14 Years be considered to obtain feedback on performance of women officers with revise Terms and Conditions of service and the training imparted to them. PC for women officers be reviewed thereafter.

Employment in Combat Roles: Close Combat roles where chances of physical contact with the enemy are high be excluded for the present.

Gender Bias: Wherever male and female officers are employed, gender equality should be ensured. Induction and appointments be made based on military consideration and tenure requirement for achieving organizational effectiveness and a level playing field.

Terms and Conditions of Service (SSCOs): Review Terms and Conditions of Service for SSCOs for commonality within the Armed Forces and these be made attractive to ensure a motivated cadre. "

49. The Committee were further informed that as per the same Tri-Services Study Report, 47% of the women officers agreed for employment in close combat.

III. Benefits available to Short Service Commissioned Officers.

50. Elaborating on the terminal benefits available to SSC officers, both men and women on completion of their 14 years tenure, the ministry stated as under:

- (i) Terminal Gratuity: SSC Officers are entitled to Terminal Gratuity at the rate of 1/2 a month's reckonable emolument for each completed six monthly period of service;
- (ii) Leave Encashment: Encashment of accumulated leave upto 300 days is admissible;
- (iii) Terminal Leave Benefit: Terminal Leave Benefit upto 28 days is admissible;
- (iv) Disability Pension: SSC Officers are eligible for grant of Disability Pension, if they are released with a disability which is either attributable to or aggravated by military service. The rate of disability element is 30% or reckonable emoluments last drawn subject to minimum of Rs. 3100/- per month for 100% disability. For disability less than 100%, it is reduced proportionately. Disability Pension is in lieu of Terminal Gratuity;
- (v) Family Pension: The families of SSC Officers, who die while in Service for reasons attributable to Military duty or after retirement with Disability Pension, are entitled to Family Pension;
- (vi) Death Gratuity: The families of SSC Officers are entitled to Death Gratuity at par with the Regular Commissioned Officers, in the event of their death while in service;"

51. On being asked about the need to make SSC more attractive through concerted measures of the Government, the Secretary, Ministry of Defence submitted during oral evidence:

"This is a time when they are roughly around 37 or 38 years of age and they can take up job elsewhere. So, making Short Service Commission attractive means really is that when they are leaving after 14 years of service, we are giving them certain ability. If they want to do a particular course, they can do that and after that they can take up employment elsewhere....It is not that there is no future because they have been trained well and many of them get very good jobs. after 14 years in Defence Forces they are equipped well and they acquire certain skills which are valued by society. Some of them get good jobs and some of them may not get good jobs. But we cannot say that their future is blocked"

IV. Gender Sensitization and sexual harassment

52. With regard to the measures adopted to sensitize the three wings about gender aspects, the Ministry in a written reply stated as below:

Army: In the Army, the environment has been sensitized in order to maintain a healthy and respectful relationship with fellow/superior lady officers. On joining units, lady officers are being interviewed by the Commanding Officers and are being advised to report any incident of sexual harassment immediately. Safe accommodation is also being provided to lady officers.

Navy: Officers and personnel at all levels are sensitized with respect to the tasks assigned to lady officers with a greater focus on providing an honourable working environment. Personnel are sensitized to constraints faced by lady officers in performing specified tasks. Women officers are treated at par with similarly placed male counterparts in terms of recruitment, training, tenure of service, promotions, pay and perks, leave and welfare measures

Air Force: Necessary directives have been issued to all officers' training Institutes, in order to disseminate the issue. Training of counselors/mentors/instructors/supervisors is undertaken. Quarterly interaction with the lady officers, their counselors/mentors/instructors in the presence of the senior officers/supervisors is undertaken".

53. Explaining the system in Army, it was, inter-alia, submitted as below:

"Traditionally women in the Army have been held in high esteem since times immemorial. This age old tradition is still prevalent, and followed by the men in uniform. Women in the Army, be it lady officers, lady wives of officers or for that matter even wives of the JCOs and Other Ranks are given highest regard and treated with utmost respect and sensitivity. These traditions and customs are imbibed in the officers during their course of training (formal and informal) at the various academies and as part of their initial upbringing within the units as young officers.

Even the Other Ranks, during their course of recruit training are imparted training in moral values and ethics. Their training towards this end continues even after joining their units as part of training in military ethos and character. Chief of Army Staff Ten commandments have been formulated long back and are part of pocket contents of all troops deployed in field areas. The COAS Ten Commandments also highlights the importance Army attributes to women dignity.

As a daily routine, lady officers interact and work along with men in sports activities, social get togethers and various other regimental functions such as raising day celebrations etc. They also regularly interact with the lady wives of officers and men at various regimental functions.

The Army have an enviable record of protecting women in the forces against all kind of sexual harassment, be it at the work place or, otherwise. Maintenance and enforcement of discipline is foremost and an inherent duty cast on military commanders. Army personnel are governed by a special enactment, AO 1/2006, which is self contained and has extensive provisions not only for lodging complaints, but also for expeditious investigations of such complaints and for stringent action against the delinquent on the basis of the outcome of such investigations. Such an inbuilt mechanism has stood the test of time and irrespective of the position or rank held by the culprit, ensured quick dispensation of justice for women officers in the Armed Forces.

The speed of disposal of sexual harassment cases and the quantum of punishment awarded, bores testimony to the fact, that Army has 'zero tolerance' towards such heinous acts. The case in point being that in two cases the GOC-in-Cs enhanced the quantum of punishment awarded to the accused by the General Court Martial.

The gender sensitivity training imparted to officers and men has certainly been beneficial to create a conducive working environment and

attitudinal change in them. Presently only officers cadre has ladies and they are being treated with utmost dignity and respect".

54. In Navy, it was submitted that the gender sensitivity training imparted has been beneficial in creating a conducive working environment. In this regard, it was added as under:

"(a) Officers and personnel at all levels are being sensitized with respect to the tasks assigned to lady officers with a greater focus on providing honourable working environment. Personnel are sensitized to constraints faced by women officers in performing specified tasks. Women officers are treated at par with similarly placed male counterparts in terms of recruitment, training, tenure of service, promotions, pay and perks, leave and welfare measures.

(b) The Navy has a robust redressal mechanism which is considered adequate to address complaints/grievances of officers. All officers have the freedom to discuss their personal and professional problems with their Commanding Officer/Superior Officer as well as permission to seek recourse to their complaints from higher authorities for redressal.

(c) Further, during the training at Indian Naval Academy, a two day capsule on gender sensitization is conducted. As part of continuation training, the Centre for Leadership and Behavioral Studies at Kochi also conducts a session on the same topic during the Sub Lieutenant course.

(d) The contents of the session on Gender Sensitization include the following:-

- (i) Need for Gender Sensitization.
- (ii) Regularization as per Constitution, IPC on 'Rights of Women' and 'Sexual Harassment'.
- (iii) Capabilities of Women Officers in various fields including the armed forces.
- (iv) Guidelines for conduct i.e., various Do's and Dont's.
- (v) Case Studies.

(e) The capsules/sessions conducted are found to be beneficial in bringing about the desired awareness amongst the personnel".

55. On the system in place to deal with complaints regarding sexual harassment at work place in Armed Forces it has been replied as under:

"The Armed Forces have a robust and effective grievance redressal mechanism. Well established mechanisms are in place for firmly dealing with any case of sexual harassment. The three Services have laid down

strict and comprehensive instructions in this regard. A policy of zero tolerance in respect of cases relating to sexual harassment is followed.

56. Adding to the above, it has further been submitted regarding Army as under:

"The Army have an enviable record of protecting women in the forces against all kind of sexual harassment, be it at the work place or, otherwise. Maintenance and enforcement of discipline is foremost and an inherent duty cast on military commanders. Army personnel are governed by a special enactment, AO 1/2006, which is self contained and has extensive provisions not only for lodging complaints, but also for expeditious investigations of such complaints and for stringent action against the delinquent on the basis of the outcome of such investigations. Such an inbuilt mechanism has stood the test of time and irrespective of the position or rank held by the culprit, ensured quick dispensation of justice for women officers in the Armed Forces"

57. In Air Force, the provision is as below:

"As per the provisions of the Air Force order 10/5 (pertaining to the cases of sexual harassment at workplace), where the accused is subject to AF law, the matter is investigated through a Court of Inquiry. In cases where in the accused is a civilian employee, a complaint committee is constituted as and when required. However, at places like AFA, a full time women committee is employed by the Station authority to look into the grievances of Women flt Cdt's/women employees."

58. With respect to Navy, the status is as stated under:

"IHQ of MoD (navy) has promulgated Navy Order 18/06 which elaborately deals with "Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place". As per the Supreme Court judgment, co-opting NGO as a member is optional and as such, the Compliant Committee should involve a third party, which has already been incorporated in the Navy Order 18/06.

A suitable mechanism has been established vide Para 4 of Navy Order ibid according to which, when any incident of sexual harassment is reported, a Board of Inquiry (BOI) is to be mandatorily constituted. Such BOI is to have a lady officer as the President or a lady officer as a member. If no lady officer is present then one from any other Service/Government department is considered. There are adequate women officers in the Navy of requisite seniority to be appointed as members and President, as well as civilian women officers at IHQ of MoD (Navy) and Command Headquarters, to investigate such cases".

V. Stress management

59. As far as stress management in the Armed Forces is concerned, a written note gives the following information:

"Stress management is accorded priority in the Armed Forces. Army has established an internal grievance redressal mechanism. 90 AMC JCOs, trained as psychological counselors, have been deployed in both peace and field areas. Dedicated communication facilities have been provided to 46 of these counselors who are deployed in Counter Insurgency/Counter terrorist Areas of Northern and Eastern Commands, so as to provide necessary guidance and succor to all ranks, which is equally applicable to lady officers as well.

17 selected officers, including one lady officer, have been trained as Psychological Counselors by Defence Institute of Psychological Research (DIPR) in Jan-Feb 10. Another batch of 29 officers, including one lady officer, is under training at DIPR, New Delhi from 28 Mar to 22 Apr 2011. Thereafter, 50 officers will be trained as psychological counselors every year. Proposal for recruitment of 33 Psychologists including 15 non combatants has been received from DIPR and is under consideration at Army Headquarters.

In addition, 'Operation Milap' and 'Operation Sahyog' have been launched in Northern and Eastern Commands, respectively. These projects contain comprehensive action plan for the management of stress within the command zone. The action plan will be implemented in three phases as under:-

Phase I A composite team of experts, including psychologist/psychiatrist, target audience will be officers.

Phase II The target audience for this phase will be JCOs and OR. The officers who have attended the seminars by the composite team will in turn impart training to JCOs and OR under their command.

Phase III Training capsules for JCOs and OR to identify susceptible cases and impart counseling skills will be conducted in this phase."

60. While replying to a question, the measures taken to reduce stress among Air Force personnel has been delineated as under:

"(a) Due to rising trends of incident of suicide/fratricide a standing Committee named "Psychological Evaluation and Remedial Action Committee (PERAC)" has been formed on 15 Jan 07. Air Officer-in-charge personnel (AOP), Air Officer-in-Charge Administration (AOA) &

Director General of Medical Services (Air) (DGMS (Air)) are the members of this committee.

(b) The CAS has issued a directive to all Command HQ on 18 July 08 where he has laid emphasis on the following aspects:-

- (i) Leaders, at all levels are to understand their role and the requirement to commit themselves towards stress management. This commitment needs to percolate downward to all levels by means of dedicated awareness campaigns at unit level.
- (ii) Training Institutions are to equip the trainees with stress management tools for life.
- (iii) Group bonding activities involving all personnel and their families are to be encouraged.
- (iv) Life skills education is to be incorporated in school programmes.
- (v) Regulation of leave is to be handled carefully. Counseling before and after leave is vital to garner vital clues about the mental state of the individual. All the supervisory staff should be sensitized about the high risk group personnel.
- (vi) Officers are to be sensitized in handling of DSC personnel. Peculiarities of this group and their vulnerabilities should be adequately brought out in the sensitization process.
- (vii) Regular counseling of personnel in the units and improvement in the feedback system is to be ensured.
- (viii) Psychiatric counseling to be made more easily available to the air warriors and their families.

(c) In addition, the following remedial measures have been instituted by the IAF for reduction of stress among air warriors and to prevent incidents of suicide/fratricide:-

- (i) Command HQs have been asked to appoint professional counselors at Station out of non public funds. The counselors are to work in close tandem with the SMOs for a more holistic approach to the problems.
- (ii) Administration Help cells 'Samvendana' have been created at all Air Force Stations. These provide a single point contact for welfare of all Air Force personnel and their families/Next of Kin.
- (iii) Supervisors/Section Commanders and Commanding Officers carry out periodic counseling of all personnel. Any unusual behavioural pattern in the subordinate is analysed and necessary remedial measures undertaken.

- (iv) Facility of open interview by Air Officer commanding/Station Commander/COs exists in all Stations/Units on any issue to instill confidence in the personnel and redress their grievances.
- (v) All service personnel can post any suggestion/query/complaint at the CAS Website on the IAF intranet. These are considered at appropriate level and feed back given expeditiously.
- (vi) Well established system of redressal of grievances under Air Force Law is strictly adhered to.
- (vii) Adm help Cell called 'Sadhbavna' is available at all Stations/Units for providing necessary admin support to air warriors arriving on posting/TD.
- (viii) Training on man management skills with stress on humane dealings with subordinates is being carried out during the initial training of officers.
- (ix) Improvement to living and working conditions of all air warriors is being ensured through provision of better infrastructure and facilities.
- (x) Assistance is provided by the Station administration and provost units to family members of service personnel in addressing their personal problems, if the need arises.
- (xi) Officers and airmen are encouraged to participate regularly to in sports, games and recreational activities.

(d) With regard to measures taken at AFA, a three tier distress management setup for women trainees is in place keeping rigorous curriculum of training and varied backgrounds of women trainees in view.

- (i) At the first level a senior woman trainee is appointed as Woman Cadet Captain (WCC), who is responsible for well being of the woman trainees and guides them to adjust to the environment at AFA. She is the immediate point of contact for all woman trainees at flight Cadets Mess. She teaches the new trainees how to overcome the initial stress in a trainee's point of view. The WCC will report to the appropriate higher authorities on the issues which require the attention of higher authorities.
- (ii) At second level, a senior lady officer is given the responsibility of Counselor for Women Cadets (CWC). CWC is a specified lady officer in whom women cadets confide their gender-related/personal problems. She restricts herself for discreet consultation on personal, physical and psychological issues involving women cadets. She is available as a confidential listening post. She counsels individual women cadets who raise gender

specific issues with her. She consults the wife of CI/Dy Comdt/Comdt in case advice of a lady with more experience is needed. She periodically visits the Flight Cadets' mess and the women cadets' living block, as well as be present at various other training activities in order to be familiar with the women cadets.

- (iii) Apart from the CWC a civil professional qualified lady psychologist is employed at AFA to look after the women trainees who require professional assistance. She also undertakes the counseling of other women residing at AFA."

61. Describing the mechanism in place for distress management in Navy, it has been stated as under:

- " (a) A time-tested divisional organization is followed in the Indian Naval Academy and during ab-initio training period, wherein the trainees are grouped into divisions for better inter-personal interaction and communication to iron out emergent issues. In addition, qualified counselors are employed at each naval station for timely advice and counseling and if required, are referred to clinical psychologists.
- (b) The Navy Wives Welfare Organisation plays an active role and takes keen interest and aids the needy in distress management in the organization. The elder ladies lend a helping hand to guide the younger generation in their well being and render necessary accessibility and provide succor.
- (c) The unit head supported by the naval wives of the unit and station extend a helping hand and patient hearing to provide a homely environment to the women officers.

VI. Compassionate appointment

62. When asked about the policy in the three wings of the armed forces with respect to compassionate appointment, it was submitted as under:

"Women are inducted in Armed Forces in officers' rank where compassionate appointment is not applicable. However, widows of Defence personnel who died in harness are eligible to apply for Short Service Commission (Non-Tech) with a relaxation of four years in upper age limit provided they possess the laid down educational qualification and meet the selection criteria. In Army, during the period 2001 to 2011, 26 women have been appointed as officers out of 44 such applicants."

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

(Recommendation No. 1)

63. Strength of Women in Armed Forces

The Committee find that women were first inducted in the Armed Forces in the Military Nursing Service and in the Medical Officers cadre way back in 1927 and 1943 respectively as Permanent Commissioned Officers. However, induction of women in other arms/services of the Armed Forces commenced only in 1992. In the Indian Army, this induction was done through 'Women Special Entry Scheme (Officers) {(WSES (0))}' whereas in Air Force and Navy they were inducted as Short Service Commissioned (SSC) Officers. Though the tenure of women officers was initially five years it was subsequently increased to 10 years, extendable to 14 years. In the Army, they were initially inducted in services like Army Service Corps, Army Ordnance Corps, Army Education Corps and Judge Advocate General Department and in 1996 their induction profile was expanded to include Corps of Engineers, Corps of Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Army Air Defence, Corps of Signals and Intelligence Corps. In Air Force, women officers were first inducted in the non-technical ground duty branches like Administration, Logistics, Accounts, Air Traffic Control, Fighter Control, Education, Meteorology, Medical/Dental and later into the Aeronautical Engineering and Flying Branches. Currently, women are inducted as Short Service Commissioned Officers in all branches of Indian Air Force except Fighters. In the Indian Navy, women are inducted as Short Service Commissioned officers in the Education Branch and Logistics & Law cadres of the Executive Branch from 1992 onwards. In 1993, approval was also accorded for induction of women in the Air Traffic Control (ATC) cadre. Now, women officers are being inducted as Short Service Commissioned officers in the Executive (ATC, Law & Logistic Cadres), Education Branch and the Naval Architecture Cadre of the Engineering Branch along with their male

counterparts. The Committee further find from the data furnished by the Government that in comparison to the total strength of officers in the Armed Forces the strength of women officers (excluding those in Medical and Nursing Services) is only 3.01% in Army, 2.84% in Navy and 8.55% in Air Force. However, in the Medical Corps of Army, Navy and Air Force, the percentage of women officers is 13.72%, 17.83% and 21.18% respectively and in the Dental Corps it is 16.44%, 4% and 19.35% respectively. In the Nursing service 100% are women officers. Though there has been a progressive expansion of the induction profile of women in the Armed Forces over the years, the Committee find that the overall presence of women in the Forces, especially in the Army and Navy is not that significant. Even in the Medical and Dental services where there could be more women, their presence is not that promising. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should take proactive measures to increase the presence of women officers in the Medical and Dental services of the three wings of the Armed Forces. The Government should also explore the feasibility of enhancing their numbers in other service branches where they could be inducted without any limitations.

(Recommendation No. 2)

64. Grant of Permanent Commission to women in Armed Forces

The Committee note that within a relatively short span of over 15 years, the employment profile of women in the Armed Forces widened from administrative role to combat support roles. Though their initial tenure was only for five years, that period got extended from time to time to as much as 14 years. However, women continued to be recruited as Short Service Commissioned Officers (SSC) and Permanent Commission (PC) was denied to them. This was clearly discriminatory since the male officers recruited along with women officers under SSC were offered Permanent Commission in Army and Air Force. However, the SSC officers in Navy, both men and women were not given any option for PC.

The Committee also note that the denial of Permanent Commission has also deprived these officers of certain benefits and privileges like pension, full ex-serviceman status, medical facilities, etc. Feeling aggrieved in these respects some women officers from the Army and Air Force had approached the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi way back in 2003 itself. In pursuance to the initial direction of the High Court of Delhi on 05.05.2008, a policy decision dated 26.09.2008 was taken by the Government to grant Permanent Commission prospectively to women officers in the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Department and the Army Education Corps of the Army and their corresponding Branch/Cadre in Navy and Air Force, Accounts Branch of Air Force and Naval Constructor of the Navy. Since this redressal was partial and did not benefit the women officers in service or those who had approached the Court, the Delhi High Court in their judgment dated 12th March, 2010 directed that the Short Service Commissioned women officers of the Air Force who had opted for PC and were not granted PC but granted extension of SSCs and of the Army are entitled to PC at par with male Short Service Commissioned officers with all consequential benefits. The Court through its directions has accorded these benefits to all women officers in service in addition to those who have approached the Court and have retired during the course of pendency of the petitions. However, the Committee find that the order of the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi was implemented in full only in respect of Indian Air Force. In respect of Army, an appeal was filed in the Hon'ble Supreme Court by way of Special Leave Petition (SLP). Justifying the decision of the Government to file an SLP against the Court verdict on PC in the Army, the Committee have been informed during the Course of examination of the subject that the Women officers who are inducted as SSC officers in the Support Arms/Service are tenanted sheltered appointments and are not exposed to the rigors of hard field conditions. Moreover, the support arms like Engineers, Signals, Military Intelligence, etc. in a war scenario will be involved in actual battle

conditions facing the same hazards as being faced by the personnel of combat arms and hence induction of women in these arms on PC would impact combat effectiveness. The Committee have further been told that in Army, no other branches apart from Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps are considered as non-combat branches/services. The Committee, however, find that the charter of duties of women officers and Short Service Commissioned male officers/Permanent Commissioned male officers are just the same and during the 14 years of their service, women officers commissioned in various corps are assigned duties similar to gentlemen officers commissioned into the same corps without any gender discrimination. However, in regard to the grant of Permanent Commission to women, the Army failed to adhere to its policy of non-discrimination. Further, most of these support services are far behind the front lines. The Army also failed to explain why if the same women as SSC officers are able to do the job successfully there would be any change when they are made PCs in the same job profile. Any approach which treads into a mind set/ attitude that views women on the basis of certain perceived stereotypes should be eschewed. The Committee also feel that there are more areas in addition to the Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps where women officers could be granted Permanent Commission. They, therefore, recommend that the Government should come up with a dispassionate road map for induction of women on Permanent Commission in more branches/corps where their expertise, talent and dedication could be utilized fully. The Committee strongly feel that in addition to many of the branches where women officers are currently inducted, there are still more avenues that could be explored for grant of Permanent Commission to women, viz. Corps of Military Police, General Service, Army Postal Service, etc.

(Recommendation No. 3)

65. Need to ensure all terminal benefits to SSC officers

The Committee note with dismay that the officers who serve the three wings of the Armed Forces as Short Service Commissioned Officers for 14 years are 'boarded off' or 'released' after their tenure without any pension. On account of being a non-pensioner, the Ex-servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) facility meant for medical treatment is also denied to them after retirement. At the same time a Jawan of the Army is pensionable after 15 years of service. Gratuity and leave encashment are dues available to all government employees unmindful of the duration of their service and could not be listed as a benefit given to SSC officers only. The Committee feel that if the Government has limited their service period to 14 years without giving them an option to continue, it is the duty of the Government to ensure pension to them when released. In the opinion of the Committee these officers have served the Armed Forces for their full possible term and the maximum period of service not being under their control should not be a limiting factor when it comes to benefits like pension. They, therefore, recommend that the Government should come out with a proposal to grant pension to SSC officers who opt for release after 14 years using appropriate mechanism. The nature and quantum of pension will have to be worked out in consultation with the pension regulatory authorities. The Committee also feel that after taking the best years in the life of these SSC officers, the government cannot turn a blind eye towards the health needs of these officers in the second leg of their life and hence recommend that ECHS benefits should also be given to all SSC officers who opt for release after 14 years of service.

(Recommendation No. 4)

66. Need to make SSC more attractive

The Committee observe that the Short Service Commission in the Armed Forces is not generally viewed as a potent career option because

of the uncertainty looming large over their future after 14 years. Moreover, being non-pensionable makes the job less attractive. Especially for women officers, a dead end is reached in their career in their mid /late thirties as they are not offered PC except in some select branches unlike male SSC officers who by and large are given the option for PC and boarded out only if found ineligible. It is almost impossible for women officers to find an alternative career at that age. This is patently unfair. It could also be the case that these women are the main bread winners of the family. Moreover, this is a great wastage of a trained and honest human resource for the nation. The Committee also find that the efforts of the forces to recruit more number of SSC officers are not that successful as the current prospects /provisions of SSC do not attract many. Even the Forces share the view that it is high time to make SSC more attractive. The Committee have been told that a number of proposals are under the consideration of the Government for the last so many years to make Short Service Commission more attractive but unfortunately none of these proposals have taken a concrete shape till date. The Committee therefore recommend that in addition to pension and ECHS benefits the SSC officers should be given professional enhancement in-service training and in addition, opportunities for re-employment should be ensured through a special quota in Central and State Government jobs.

(Recommendation No. 5)

67. Need to end adhoc policies relating to women

The Committee find that ever since women were commissioned to the Armed Forces, policy decisions have been amended twice to enhance their tenure from 5 years to 10 years and then to 14 years. This has been done basically to take care of the shortage of officers at the lower levels. The Committee note with dismay that the women officers were being taken in as a time gap arrangement to compensate the shortage and never ever any planning was done about their future nor any

concrete policies formulated for them. All the policies relating to women were adhoc in nature and no woman was a part of the policy making body. The Committee, therefore, feel that there should be an end to adhocism and long term policies pertaining to women should be taken in consultation with the representatives of the women officers concerned.

(Recommendation No. 6)

68. Gender sensitization in the Armed Forces

Men in uniform play a crucial role in national security in the most difficult circumstances. The entire country respects and admires their sacrifices. However, it is a matter of concern that an increasing number of cases are being reported of anti-social behaviour against women by armed forces personnel. The Committee strongly feel about this as it is highly unacceptable that a few delinquents should be allowed to besmirch the reputation of the armed forces. Moreover, within the forces also highest standards of behavior and conduct are to be maintained with lady officers. The Committee, therefore, desire that the armed forces should design gender sensitization programmes as a continuous process at all levels and especially for the jawans. The Committee also desire that steps be taken for swift punishment of those found guilty of any crime against women.

(Recommendation No. 7)

69. Harassment of women at workplace

The Committee note that the Armed Forces have a well established mechanism in place for dealing with the cases of sexual harassment. The three Services have laid down strict and comprehensive instructions in this regard and a policy of zero tolerance towards cases relating to sexual harassment is followed. The Committee find from the copies of instructions/orders of the Army, Navy and Air Forces that they have their own system to deal with such issues. The procedure in place is guided by the Army order AO1/2006, by AFO 10, dtd.25 November, 2005 in Air force

and by order No.18/2006 in Navy. The Committee find that as per the Supreme Court guidelines, the Forces have made provisions to include a woman officer in the Committees on sexual harassment. The Supreme Court guidelines also state that a representative outside the organization must be there in the Committee. However, it was submitted before the Committee that the Armed Forces are following the Army Act Regulations and Administrative Order where there is no provision for any outside organization/NGO in their committees. As far as sexual harassment at the workplace is concerned, the Committee are of the opinion that the Supreme Court judgment is over-riding in nature and no organization including the Armed Forces is outside the ambit of the Supreme Court verdict. Moreover, in case of sexual harassment, justice is perceived to be done only if an outside agency is also represented in the enquiry committee. Though the Committee do not doubt the integrity of the mechanism in place in the Armed Forces to inquire into the complaints pertaining to sexual harassment, they desire that the Government review the system so as to include representatives of outside organizations/NGOs in the committees on sexual harassment. This will bring in greater integrity to the panel, ensure compliance with the Judgment of the Supreme Court and alleviate even the slightest doubt about an impassionate verdict. Moreover, the Committee also desire that the enquiry on any complaint on sexual harassment at workplace be invariably completed within a period of one year.

Linked to this issue is the harassment of women at work place. The Committee, therefore, express their specific concern over the harassment of women whistleblowers and recommend that appropriate mechanism be positioned with a view to protecting them.

(Recommendation No. 8)

70. Stress management in the Forces

The Committee find that stress management is accorded priority in the Armed Forces. In the Army, trained psychological counselors have

been deployed in both peace and field areas to provide necessary guidance and succor to all ranks including lady officers. These Psychological Counselors are being trained at the Defence Institute of Psychological Research (DIPR). In addition, 'Operation Milap' and 'Operation Sahyog' have been launched in Northern and Eastern Commands, respectively for the management of stress within the command zone. In the Air Force, in view of the rising trend of suicides/fratricides a standing Committee named "Psychological Evaluation and Remedial Action Committee (PERAC)" has been formed. Moreover regular counseling of personnel in the units and improvement in the feedback system are also ensured. Air Force also has help cells called 'Samvedana' at all Air Force Stations. These provide a single point contact for welfare of all Air Force personnel and their families/next of kin. In the Navy, the committee find that a time-tested mechanism for distress management is in place. Qualified counselors are employed at each naval station for timely advice and even Navy Wives Welfare Organisation plays an active role in this area. Though the Committee note that all the three wings of the Armed Forces have coherent and efficient distress management mechanism, they desire that all units should invariably get the services of professional counselors and no stone be left unturned in attending to the emotional difficulties of its officials.

(Recommendation No. 9)

71. Compassionate appointments

The Committee observe that women are inducted in Armed Forces in officers' rank where compassionate appointment is not applicable. As per provisions, widows of Defence personnel who died in harness are eligible to apply for Short Service Commission (Non-Tech) with a relaxation of four years in upper age limit provided they possess the laid down educational qualification and meet the selection criteria. Though a lenient view is taken during compassionate appointments, the Committee find that not even 50% of the applicants could be accommodated on

account of non-fulfillment of requisite educational qualifications and selection criteria. The Committee are of the view that the dependents of those who have sacrificed their lives for the country are eligible for being considered for compassionate appointments and it is the duty of the Government to find ways and means to employ them. The Committee, therefore, feel that there is a need to review the compassionate appointment procedure and recommend that the Government should identify more areas where widows/dependents of Armed Forces Personnel killed in action/died in harness could be appropriately employed. Other departments may also be asked to employ such widows/dependents.

NEW DELHI
11th August, 2011
20 Sravana, 1933 (Saka)

SMT.CHANDRESH KUMARI,
CHAIRPERSON,
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2009-2010)**

**Fifteenth Sitting
(17.05.2010)**

The Committee sat on Monday, the 17th May, 2010 from 1215 hrs. to 1330 hrs. in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - **Hon'ble Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
3. Smt. Rama Devi
4. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
5. Shri Sidhant Mohapatra
6. Smt. Sushila Saroj
7. Smt. Yashodhara Raje Scindia
8. Smt. Rajesh Nandini Singh
9. Shri Umashankar Singh

RAJYA SABHA

10. Smt. Shobhana Bhartia
11. Shri Jabir Husain
12. Smt. Brinda Karat
13. Shri Ambeth Rajan
14. Smt. Maya Singh

WITNESSES

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. | Shri R.K. Mathur | Addl. Secretary |
| 2. | Lt. Gen. V.K. Chaturvedi | DG (MP&PS) |
| 3. | Air Mshl. K.J. Mathews | AOP |
| 4. | V.Adm M.P. Muralidharan | COP |

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Shri C.S. Joon | Director |
| 2. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Deputy Secretary |
| 3. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | Under Secretary |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Defence to the sitting of the Committee.

3. Thereafter, the representatives of the Ministry tendered oral evidence on the subject 'Women in Paramilitary and Armed Forces' before the Committee. The main

issues which came up for discussion during the course of evidence included permanent commission of women SSC officers; grievance redressal mechanism; committee against sexual harassment; deployment of women personnel in close-combat areas etc.

4. Members sought clarifications on different points. However, the replies given by the representatives to the queries raised by the Members were not satisfactory. The Committee decided to again hear the views of the Ministry of Defence alongwith some women personnel from the Armed Forces. Therefore, the oral evidence on the subject remained inconclusive.

5. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2010-2011)**

**Ninth Sitting
(09.06.2011)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 9th June, 2011 from 1100 hrs. to 1300 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - **Hon'ble Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
3. Smt. Rama Devi
4. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
5. Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
6. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
7. Dr. Jyoti Mirdha
8. Smt. Sushila Saroj
9. Smt. Rajesh Nandini Singh
10. Shri Uma Shankar Singh
11. Smt. Annu Tandon
12. Smt. Seema Upadhyay

RAJYA SABHA

13. Smt. Shobhana Bhartia
14. Shri Jabir Husain
15. Shri Ambeth Rajan
16. Smt. Maya Singh
17. Smt. Vasanthi Stanley
18. Dr. Prabha Thakur

WITNESSES

Representatives of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

1. Shri Pradeep Kumar, Defence Secretary
2. Shri R.K. Mathur, SS(M)
3. Shri Upamanyu Chatterjee, JS(Trg)&CAO
4. Smt. Preeti Sudan, JS&AM(MS)
5. Shri Arun Kumar Bal, JS(E)

ARMED FORCES

1. Air Mshl NAK Browne, VCAS
2. V Adm DK Dewan, VCNS
3. Lt. Gen Mukesh Sabharwal, AG
4. Lt. Gen HL Kakaria, DGAFMS & Sr Col Comdt

5. V Adm MP Muralidharan, COP
6. Maj Gen SC Nair, ADG MP
7. Maj Gen AT Parnaik, ADG PS
8. Maj Gen CS Nair, JAG
9. Maj Gen Krishan Chauhan, ADG MS (Army)
10. AVM S. Sukumar, F(P), ACAS(PO)
11. Brig Yash Pande, DDG (HR)
12. Cmde SN Ghormade, PDOP

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri C.S. Joon Director
2. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the officers of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces to the sitting of the Committee and drew the attention to Direction 58 of the Directions issued by the Speaker, Lok Sabha relating to evidence before the Parliamentary Committees.

3. Thereafter, the Secretary, Ministry of Defence made a brief statement on the subject 'Women in Armed Forces'. The Chairperson and Members of the Committee on Empowerment of Women then raised queries on various points, including the issue of granting Permanent Commission (PC) to women officers in the Armed Forces, rationale of putting a cap on the length of service of Short Service Commissioned officers to 14 years, denial of pensionary and other benefits to SSC officers due to their short service tenure, need for identifying areas/services suitable for accommodating more women officers as Permanent Commissioned officers, existing mechanism in the Armed Forces to address sexual harassment at work place, etc. Explanations/clarifications on some of the points were given by the Secretary, Ministry of Defence and the representatives of the Armed Forces. However, information on some of them was not readily available with the representatives of the Ministry. They were, therefore, asked to furnish the same to the Committee Secretariat at the earliest.

4. A verbatim record of the proceedings of the sitting has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

**MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2010-2011)**

**Twelfth Sitting
(11.08.2011)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 11th August, 2011 from 1530 hrs. to 1630 hrs. in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson
MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Shruti Choudhry
3. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
4. Smt. Jyothi Dhurve
5. Shri Sidhant Mohapatra
6. Smt. Jayshreeben Patel
7. Smt. Yashodhara Raje Scindia
8. Smt. Rajesh Nandini Singh
9. Shri Uma Shankar Singh
10. Smt. Annu Tandon

RAJYA SABHA

11. Smt. Naznin Faruque
12. Shri Jabir Husain
13. Smt. Brinda Karat
14. Shri Ambeth Rajan
15. Dr. Prabha Thakur

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Vijaya Moorthy | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Shri C.S. Joon | Director |
| 3. | Smt. Mamta Kemwal | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan | Under Secretary |

2. At the outset, Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee.

3. The Committee then took up the following draft Reports for consideration:

X	X	X	X	X	X
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ii) Draft Report on the subject 'Women in Armed Forces'.

4. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Reports with some changes and authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Reports and present the same to the Parliament.

5. The Committee then adjourned.