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**PARLIAMENT OF INDIA
LOK SABHA**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2011-2012)**

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

FIFTEENTH REPORT

'WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES'

[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-2011) on 'Women in Armed Forces']



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
MAY, 2012/VAISAKHA, 1934 (Saka)**

FIFTEENTH REPORT

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2011-2012)

(FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA)

'WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES'

[Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2010-11) on 'Women in Armed Forces']

Presented to Lok Sabha on 18th May, 2012
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 18th May, 2012



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
MAY, 2012/VAISAKHA, 1934 (Saka)

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CONTENTS

Composition of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2011-2012)

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I	Report
CHAPTER II	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.....
CHAPTER III	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.....
CHAPTER IV	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee
CHAPTER V	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.....

ANNEXURES

I	Policy on induction and employment of Women in Armed Forces.....
II	Communication regarding grant of Permanent Commission to SSC Women Officers.....

APPENDICES

I	Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2011-2012) held on 16 th May, 2012
II	Analysis of the Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Tenth Report of the Committee (Fifteenth Lok Sabha)

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
(2011-2012)**

Shrimati Chandresh Kumari

- **Hon'ble Chairperson**

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Smt. Harsimrat Kaur Badal
3. Smt. Susmita Bauri
4. Dr. Kakali Ghosh Dastidar
5. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
6. Smt. Rama Devi
7. Smt. Jyoti Dhurve
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9. (Dr.) Smt. Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi
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11. Dr. Jyoti Mirdha
12. Smt. Raneer Narah
13. Kum. Meenakshi Natrajan
14. Smt. Jayshreeben Kanubhai Patel
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20. Smt. Usha Verma

RAJYA SABHA

21. Smt. Naznin Faruque
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24. Dr. T. N. Seema
25. Smt. Maya Singh
26. Smt. Vasanthi Stanley
27. Dr. C. P. Thakur
28. Dr. Prabha Thakur
29. *Vacant
30. **Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri C.S. Joon Joint Secretary
2. Smt. Reena Gopalakrishnan Deputy Secretary

*Smt. Shobhana Bhartia ceased to be the Member of the Committee w.e.f. 15th February, 2012 on her retirement from Rajya Sabha.

** Shri Jabir Husain ceased to be the Member of the Committee w.e.f. 2nd April, 2012 on his retirement from Rajya Sabha.
#nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 2nd May, 2012 vice Rajkumari Ratna Singh.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Empowerment of Women having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifteenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Women in Armed Forces'.

2. The Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women was presented to Lok Sabha/ laid in Rajya Sabha on 17th August, 2011. The Ministry of Defence has since furnished the action taken replies to all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report.

3. The Committee on Empowerment of Women (2011-2012) considered and adopted the Fifteenth Report at their sitting held on 16th May, 2012. Minutes of the sitting are given at Appendix I.

4. An Analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee is given in Appendix II.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters in the body of the Report.

NEW DELHI
16th May, 2012
26 Vaisakha, 1934 (Saka)

SMT. CHANDRESH KUMARI
CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Empowerment of Women on the subject 'Women in Armed Forces'. The Tenth Report of the Committee was presented to Lok Sabha on 17th August, 2011. The report was simultaneously laid in Rajya Sabha.

2. The Ministry of Defence were, thereafter, requested to furnish action taken replies on the recommendations contained in the Report. Replies of the Government in respect of all the 09 recommendations/observations have since been received and are categorized as under:-

- i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government.
Recommendation Para Nos:-66, 68, 70 and 71 (Total-4)
- ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government.
Nil.
- iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.
Recommendation Para Nos:- 63, 64, 65,67 and 69 (Total-5)
- iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies.
Nil

3. The Committee trust that utmost importance would be given by the Government to the implementation of their recommendations. In case where it is not possible for the Government to implement the recommendations in letter and spirit for any reason, the matter should be reported to the Committee with reasons for non-implementation. The Committee further desire that the Action Taken Notes on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter- I of this Report should be furnished by the Government expeditiously.

4. The Committee will now deal with those action taken replies of the Government which need reiteration or merit comments.

Strength of Women in Armed Forces

(Recommendation Para No.63)

5. The Committee in their original Report had recommended as under:

"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 explore the feasibility of enhancing their numbers in other service branches where they could be inducted without any limitations."

6. In this regard, the Ministry of Defence have submitted the following reply:

"In Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), equal opportunities exist for women in both medical and dental services. The actual number inducted depends upon number of women applying and getting selected. With regard to induction of women officers in other Branches, a Government letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces based on consideration of a policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC), keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country. In terms of the policy letter, administrative instructions, inter alia, relating to extent of induction of women officers will be issued by the respective Service Headquarters so as to ensure that fighting efficiency, combat effectiveness and functionality of the Armed Forces are maintained"

Comments of the Committee

7. The Committee in their 10th Report had observed that though there had been a progressive expansion of the induction profile of women in the Armed Forces over the years, 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 more women officers could have been inducted, their presence is not that promising. The Committee, therefore had desired 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 and also explore the feasibility of enhancing their numbers in other service branches where they could be inducted without any limitations. The Government in their reply has submitted that equal opportunities exist for women along with men in both medical and dental services and the actual number inducted depends upon the number of women applying and getting selected. As a response to the specific recommendation of the Committee to explore the possibility of inducting more women officers in other Branches, the policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC) which allows only limited options for women in the Army and Navy is placed before the Committee. The tone and tenor of the reply of the Government clearly communicates a nonchalant attitude towards the concerns of the Committee. The Committee take strong objection to the way their recommendation is brushed aside without attaching the importance it needs to be given. The Committee fail to understand the negativism when it comes to employing more women in our country's armed forces and hence reiterate their earlier recommendation to enhance the total intake of women in various Branches of the Armed Forces and especially in the medical branches.

Grant of Permanent Commission to women in Armed Forces

(Recommendation Para No.64)

8. With regard to grant of permanent Commission to women in Armed Forces, the Committee had recommended as below:

"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 alongwith 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 has 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 judgement 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 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 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 officers, viz. Corps of Military Police, General Service, Army Postal Service. etc."

9. Replying to this recommendation, the Ministry of Defence responded as below:

"As mentioned in the reply to the Committee's Recommendation No.1, a Government letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces based on consideration of a policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC), keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country. In terms of the policy letter, the following provisions for grant of Permanent Commission to Women Officers have been laid down:

- (i) Grant of Permanent Commission: women Short Service Commissioned Officers will be eligible for consideration for grant of Permanent Commission along with men in specific branches in the three Services as specified in the Ministry of Defence letter number 12(1)2004-D(AG) Pt-II dated 26/09/2008 (**Annexure II**) viz. Judge

Advocate General and Army Education Corps of the Army and their corresponding branches in Navy and Air Force; Naval Constructor in the Navy and Accounts branch in Air Force. Grant of Permanent Commission will be solely based on Service-specific requirements.

- (ii) In addition to the above, in the Air Force, women Short Service Commissioned Officers(SSCOs) will be eligible along with men SSCOs, for consideration for grant of Permanent Commission in technical, administration, logistics and meteorology branches.
- (iii) Uniform Qualitative Requirements (QRs)will be applicable to men and women Short Service Commissioned Officers and consideration for grant of Permanent Commission (to both men and women SSCOs) in the three Services, will be subject to service requirements, vacancies, suitability, merit and willingness as decided by each Service.

In the policy paper of High Level Tri Service Committee submitted with the approval of Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) referred to above, it had also been suggested that Short Service Commissioned Officers including women could be considered for absorption in certain defence organisations only such as Defence Research and Development Organisation, Directorate General of Quality Assurance, Directorate General of Air Quality Assurance and Army Postal Service. This proposal of COSC has been examined in consultation with the concerned organisations. It has emerged that any possible absorption of Short Service Commissioned Officers in these organisations will depend upon the requirement of these organisations, their qualitative parameters, individual merit, number of vacancies etc. As such, it is not feasible to lay down a policy mandating permanent absorption of Short Service Commissioned Officers in such organisations also.

In light of the above, the employment and grant of Permanent Commission to women Short Service Commissioned Officers in the Armed Forces is required to be within the parameters of the government policy laid down in Government letters dated 26.9.2008 and dated 11.11.2011. "

Comments of the Committee

10. In view of the commendable performance of the women officers in the three wings of the Armed Forces as well as their long struggle to become Permanent Commissioned officials in these forces, the Committee in their original Report had recommended 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. However, the Defence Ministry has turned a blind eye to this recommendation of the Committee by sticking to their earlier stand that women officers would be considered for grant of Permanent Commission only in specific branches in the three Services, viz Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps of the Army and their corresponding branches in Navy and Air Force; Naval Constructor in the Navy and Accounts branch in Air Force. Even the suggestion of the Committee to explore the possibility of accommodating women officers on Permanent Commission in Corps of Military Police, General Service, Army Postal Service, etc. has been dismissed with a grim reply by the Ministry. It is extremely disturbing to note that the Ministry has not even bothered to try exploring a single other option for women officers and instead relied heavily on the existing discriminative policies. Since the Committee strongly believe in the inner strength of women in upholding the pride of the nation and protecting its territorial integrity, they reiterate their earlier recommendation and urge upon the Ministry to reconsider the recommendation for positive action.

Need to ensure all terminal benefits to SSC officers

(Recommendation Para.No.65)

11. Highlighting the need to ensure terminal benefits to SSC Officers, it was recommended by the Committee as below:

"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 terms 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 the ECHS benefits should also be given to all SSC officers who opt for release after 14 years of service".

12. The Ministry of Defence replied as under:

"The Short Service Commissioned Officers(SSCOs) are presently not entitled to retiring pension at the time of their release as a minimum qualifying service of 20 years is stipulated to earn retiring pension as per extant provisions of Pension Regulations. However, an SSC officer is entitled to disability/war injury pension in the event of acquiring disability of 20% or above held attributable to or aggravated by military service. The Next of Kin of fatal casualties in harness are entitled to terminal benefits at par with Permanent Commissioned Officers.

The Ministry is presently considering various measures for making Short Service Commission more attractive based on recommendations of AV Singh Committee as also the feasibility of extending ECHS facilities to Short Service Commissioned Officers"

Comments of the Committee

13. The Committee are more than surprised to see that their recommendation to offer pension benefits to the officers who are released after 14 years of short service commission too has been rejected by the Ministry without even showing the slightest concern for the affected officials. As the Government itself had limited the service tenure of these officials to 14 years without giving them an option to continue up to the pensionable period of 20 years, the Committee had strongly felt that it was the duty of the Government to ensure pension to them when released. However, the reply exudes mixed shades of indifference and arrogance when it puts plainly that an SSC officer is entitled to disability/war injury pension only, that too in the event of acquiring disability of 20% or above. The Committee take serious objections to the overall approach of the Ministry which seems to be totally biased and self righteous leaving no scope for anyone else's suggestions. They, therefore, desire that the

Ministry should consider the original recommendation of the Committee favourably and accord pension and ECHS benefits to the SSC officers.

Need to end adhoc policies relating to women

(Recommendation Para No.67)

14. The Committee in their original Report had desired to see an end to adhoc policies with regard to women in Armed Forces and has recommended as under:-

"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 not 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.

15. Replying to this recommendation, the Ministry of Defence stated :

"Based on consideration of the policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC) a Government Letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country".

Comments of the Committee

16. While taking objections to the way the women officers were being used as a time gap arrangement to compensate for the shortage of male officers in the Armed Forces without showing an iota of concern for their future, the Committee had desired to see long term policies pertaining to women. The Committee had also desired that the policy making bodies should inevitably have a representative of the women officers. However, the Ministry has chosen not to give any direct reply addressing the various aspects of this recommendation and instead has heavily resorted to the

policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee. Viewing this conspicuous silence on the part of the Ministry as a signal of its insolence, the Committee prefer to record their dissatisfaction. Since the Committee believe that ad-hocism does more harm than anything to the confidence and morale of women officers, they reiterate their earlier recommendation to formulate long term policies for women under intimation to this Committee.

Mechanism to deal with harassment of women at workplace

(Recommendation Para No.69)

17. Taking a serious view on the issue of harassment of women at workplace, the Committee recommended as below:

"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 Force 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 Committee on sexual harassment. The Supreme Court guidelines also state that a representative outside the organisation 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 organisation/NGO in their committees. As far as sexual harassment at the workplace is concerned, the Committee are of the opinion that the Supreme Court judgement is overriding in nature and no organisation 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 organisations/NGOs in the committees on sexual harassment. This will bring in greater integrity to the panel, ensure compliance with the Judgement 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 with a period of one year.

Linked to this issue is the harassment of women at workplace. 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".

18. In this regard, the Ministry replied as under:

"Suitable mechanisms exist in the Armed Forces for dealing with complaints relating to sexual harassment of women. Comprehensive instructions have been issued giving out detailed procedure on the subject. There is zero tolerance for any misconduct of sexual harassment/exploitation/crime against women and such complaints are disposed of expeditiously".

Comments of the Committee

19. To bring in greater integrity to the mechanism currently available with the Forces to deal with complaints pertaining to sexual harassment and ensure compliance with the judgement of the Supreme Court in this regard, the Committee had desired the Ministry to include representatives of an outside organisation/NGO in such enquiry committees. They had also desired that the enquiry should invariably be completed within a year. But the Committee are startled to see the reply which reveals zero tolerance towards any different view than its own even if from a Parliamentary Committee or the Supreme Court of India. The level of conviction about the stated position is obvious from their stern reply that a suitable mechanism is already in place in the Armed Forces for dealing with complaints relating to sexual harassment of women. The Committee, however, would like to further urge upon the Ministry to be bit more accommodative and explore the possibilities of implementing their recommendation, so that the issue of harassment of women at workplace as well as the protection of whistleblowers are taken care of.

CHAPTER II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

As stated in the reply to the Committee's Recommendation No.3, the Ministry is actively considering measures to make SSC more attractive including provisions relating to Professional Enhancement Training based on AV Singh Committee Recommendations. With regard to opportunities for re-employment,

the Central and State Governments provide a number of concessions to ex-servicemen for their re-employment in Central/State Government Department. These include reservation of posts/relaxation in age and educational qualifications, exemption from payment of application/examination fees etc.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

(Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

There is a well established grievance redressal mechanism for all officers in the Services including women officers. Further, women officers are free to approach their Commanding Officers/Supervisors at any time to discuss their personal/official problems and seek immediate assistance and redressal of grievances. All complaints are promptly attended to and disciplinary action is taken as per rules. The Services have been sensitized to look into the issues of women officers with due consideration.

As a continuous process, 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. There is zero tolerance for any misconduct of sexual harassment/exploitation/crime against women.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

(Recommendation No. 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.

Reply of the Government

In the Army, Stress Management is accorded top priority. Army has an established internal grievance redressal mechanism. 90 Army Medical Corps Junior Commissioned Officers, trained as psychological counselors, have been deployed in both peace and field areas. Besides this, 46 selected officers have been trained as Psychological Counselors by Defence Institute of Psychological

Research (DIPR). 50 officers will now on be trained as psychological counselors every year. With the induction of adequate number of officers and Junior Commissioned Officers trained as psychological counselors, all units within the Army will be able to utilize their services to address their psychological/emotional difficulties.

In addition to the above, following steps has also been taken for stress management in the Army:-

- (i) Conduct of Yoga and Pranayam, which are great stress busters, in units and formations are being strengthened and formalized. The classes/curriculum are conducted by renowned Yoga Gurus/Ashrams in the field.
- (ii) Marital discords are one of the major causes of stress amongst troops. Marriage counselors, where needed, are being hired at station level and paid from station welfare funds. Formations have been advised to seek the help of Non Governmental Organisation (NGO)/Trusts in this connection, subject to necessary clearances and verification of credentials.
- (iii) Free legal counseling and aid where required is being sought and provided by NGOs/voluntary trusts.

In Air Force, following steps have been taken for stress management:-

- (i) Over 70 civilian psychological counselors are employed and working all over Air Force Stations. They are providing their counseling services to both Armed Forces personnel and their families.
- (ii) Over 70 Air Force personnel have been trained at Command Hospital, Air Force Bangalore by psychiatrists, and are working as 'Lay Counselors' in their Stations/Units.
- (iii) All Indian Air Force e-helpline (No. 1800-1100-80) "Sampark" is established, providing 365 x 24x7 contact for any person in distress. This e-helpline is now being made toll-free.

- (iv) A film 'We are a family' on prevention of suicides in the Air Force has been made and is being screened at all Air Force Stations as a self help programme initiative.

Navy has a very strong stress management mechanism which is functioning very effectively. In addition, following steps have been taken:-

- (i) Navy has employed psychological counselors in all the commands on contract basis.
- (ii) A batch of 14 senior non-medical sailors are trained every year at Indian Navy Health Services Asvini to combat stress related problems by early detection of symptoms of stress amongst sailors. At command level, counselling courses are also conducted for ladies to tackle day to day stresses of family life.
- (iii) In all the commands, periodical counselling courses for Divisional Officers and Divisional sailors are undertaken by the psychiatrist to sensitize the junior leaders.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

(Recommendation Para No.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.

Reply of the Government

With regard to induction of widows of deceased defence personnel in officers' rank in the Armed Forces, age relaxation is available as per extant instructions. However, an officer is required to meet the laid down educational qualifications and selection criteria and any dilution in this regard is not desirable.

The Central and State Governments provide a number of concessions to ex-servicemen for their re-employment in Central/State Government Department. These include reservation of posts/relaxation in age and educational qualifications, exemption from payment of application/ examination fees and priority in employment to the disabled ESM and dependents of deceased service personnel on compassionate grounds.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT

-NIL-

CHAPTER IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

Recommendation Para No. 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 (O))}' 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.

Reply of the Government

In Armed Forces Medical Services (AFMS), equal opportunities exist for women in both medical and dental services. The actual number inducted depends upon number of women applying and getting selected. With regard to induction of women officers in other Branches, a Government letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces based on consideration of a policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC), keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country. In terms of the policy letter, administrative instructions, inter alia, relating to extent of induction of women officers will be issued by the respective Service Headquarters so as to ensure that fighting

efficiency, combat effectiveness and functionality of the Armed Forces are maintained.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 7 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

As mentioned in the reply to the Committee's Recommendation No.1, a Government letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces based on consideration of a policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee(COSC), keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country. In terms of the policy letter, the following provisions for grant of Permanent Commission to Women Officers have been laid down:

- (i) Grant of Permanent Commission: women Short Service Commissioned Officers will be eligible for consideration for grant of Permanent Commission along with men in specific branches in the three Services as specified in the Ministry of Defence letter number 12(1)2004-D(AG) Pt-II dated 26/09/2008 (**Annexure II**) viz. Judge Advocate General and Army Education Corps of the Army and their corresponding branches in Navy and Air Force; Naval Constructor in the Navy and Accounts branch in Air Force. Grant of Permanent Commission will be solely based on Service-specific requirements.
- (ii) In addition to the above, in the Air Force, women Short Service Commissioned Officers(SSCOs) will be eligible along with men SSCOs, for consideration for grant of Permanent Commission in technical, administration, logistics and meteorology branches.

- (iii) Uniform Qualitative Requirements (QRs) will be applicable to men and women Short Service Commissioned Officers and consideration for grant of Permanent Commission (to both men and women SSCOs) in the three Services, will be subject to service requirements, vacancies, suitability, merit and willingness as decided by each Service.

In the policy paper of High Level Tri Service Committee submitted with the approval of Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) referred to above, it had also been suggested that Short Service Commissioned Officers including women could be considered for absorption in certain defence organisations only such as Defence Research and Development Organisation, Directorate General of Quality Assurance, Directorate General of Air Quality Assurance and Army Postal Service. This proposal of COSC has been examined in consultation with the concerned organisations. It has emerged that any possible absorption of Short Service Commissioned Officers in these organisations will depend upon the requirement of these organisations, their qualitative parameters, individual merit, number of vacancies etc. As such, it is not feasible to lay down a policy mandating permanent absorption of Short Service Commissioned Officers in such organisations also.

In light of the above, the employment and grant of Permanent Commission to women Short Service Commissioned Officers in the Armed Forces is required to be within the parameters of the government policy laid down in Government letters dated 26.9.2008 and dated 11.11.2011.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 10 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

(Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

The Short Service Commissioned Officers(SSCOs) are presently not entitled to retiring pension at the time of their release as a minimum qualifying service of 20 years is stipulated to earn retiring pension as per extant provisions of Pension Regulations. However, an SSC officer is entitled to disability/war injury pension in the event of acquiring disability of 20% or above held

attributable to or aggravated by military service. The Next of Kin of fatal casualties in harness are entitled to terminal benefits at par with Permanent Commissioned Officers.

The Ministry is presently considering various measures for making Short Service Commission more attractive based on recommendations of AV Singh Committee as also the feasibility of extending ECHS facilities to Short Service Commissioned Officers.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 13 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

Based on consideration of the policy paper prepared by a High Level Tri-Services Committee constituted by Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) a Government Letter has been issued on 11th November, 2011 (**Annexure I**) laying down the policy on induction and employment of women in Armed Forces keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial Integrity of the country.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 16 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

Recommendation Para No. 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.

Reply of the Government

Suitable mechanisms exist in the Armed Forces for dealing with complaints relating to sexual harassment of women. Comprehensive instructions have been issued giving out detailed procedure on the subject. There is zero tolerance for any misconduct of sexual harassment/exploitation/crime against women and such complaints are disposed of expeditiously.

(Ministry of Defence O.M. No. H-11013/22/2011/D (Parl), dated the 1st May, 2012)

Comments of the Committee

(Please see para 19 of Chapter-1 of the Report)

CHAPTER V

**OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH THE
GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES**

-Nil-

NEW DELHI

16th May, 2012

26 Vaisakha, 1934 (Saka)

SMT.CHANDRESH KUMARI

CHAIRPERSON

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

No. 671/2009-D(AG)
Government of India
Ministry of Defence
Deptt. of Defence

New Delhi, Dated the 11th November, 2011

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

Subject: Policy on induction and employment of Women in Armed Forces- reg.

Sir,

I am directed to say that the Government, in June, 2010 had requested the COSC to prepare a comprehensive policy paper on induction of women in the Armed Forces. Accordingly, a High Level Tri-Services Committee was constituted by the Chairman, COSC for the purpose. The policy paper prepared by the High Level Committee, duly approved by the COSC has been submitted to the Ministry in August, 2011. The policy paper has been considered keeping in view the role and responsibility of the Armed Forces in defending the nation and protecting the territorial integrity of the country. Based thereon, the President is pleased to sanction the future policy for induction of women officers in the Armed Forces as elaborated below:

- (i) **Induction of Women:** Women officers may continue to be inducted as SSC officers in Branches/Cadres where they are being inducted presently in the three Services (**Annexure**).
- (ii) **Grant of Permanent Commission:** Women SSCOs will be eligible for consideration for grant of permanent Commission along with Men SSCOs in specific Branches in the three Services as specified in Ministry of Defence letter No. 12(1)2004-D(AG)Pt. II dated 26th September, 2008, viz. Judge Advocate General (JAG) and Army Education Corps of Army and their corresponding branches in Navy and Air Force; Naval constructor in Navy and Accounts branch in Air Force. Grant of PC will be solely based on Service specific requirements.
- (iii) In addition to the above, in the Air Force, women SSCOs will be eligible along with men SSCOs, for consideration for grant of Permanent Commission in Technical, Administration, Logistics and Meteorology branches.
- (iv) Uniform Qualitative Requirements (QRs) will be applicable to men and women SSCOs and consideration for grant of permanent commission (to both men and women SSCOs) in the three services will be subject to service

requirements, vacancies, suitability, merit and willingness as decided by each Service.

2. Respective Service Headquarters will issue appropriate administrative instructions on induction of women officers including the extent of induction so as to ensure that fighting efficiency, combat effectiveness and functionality of the Armed Forces are maintained.

-sd-/
(Naveen Kumar)
Director (AG)

Copy to: as per standard distribution.

Annexure

Women officers may continue to be inducted as SSC officers in following Branches/Cadres of the three Services Army, Navy and Air Force:

Army

1. Signals;
2. Engineers;
3. Army Aviation;
4. Army Air Defence;
5. Electronics & Mechanical Engineers;
6. Army Service Corps;
7. Army Ordnance Corps;
8. Intelligence;
9. Army Education Corps;
10. Judge Advocate General

Navy

1. JAG;
2. Logistics;
3. Observer;
4. Air Traffic Controller;
5. Naval Constructor;
6. Education

Air Force

In all branches and Streams except Fighter Stream of flying branch.

No.12(1)/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 Services HQs.
3. This issues with the concurrence of MoD (Fin) vide their UO No. 552/AG/PA dated 26.9.2008.

-sd/-
(S.C. Barmma)
Director (AG)

Copy to:- As per Standard Distribution.

MINUTES
COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2011-2012)
Eighth Sitting
(16.05.2012)

The Committee sat on Monday the 16th May, 2012 from 1530 hrs. to 1630 hrs. in Room No. 130, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Smt. Chandresh Kumari - Hon'ble Chairperson

**LOK SABHA
MEMBERS**

2. Smt. Susmita Bauri
3. Smt. Ashwamedh Devi
4. Smt. Rama Devi
5. (Dr.) Smt. Botcha Jhansi Lakshmi
6. Smt. Sumitra Mahajan
7. Smt. Jayshreeben Kanubhai Patel
8. Smt. Rajesh Nandini Singh
9. Smt. Mausam Noor
10. Smt. Usha Verma

RAJYA SABHA

11. Smt. Kanimozhi
12. Dr. T.N. Seema
13. Smt. Vasanthi Stanley
14. Dr. C.P. Thakur
15. Dr. Prabha Thakur

SECRETARIAT

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

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

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

i)	X	X	X	X	X
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ii) Action Taken Report of the Committee on the action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in their Tenth Report (Fifteenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Women in Armed Forces'.

4. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Reports without any change and authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Reports and present the same to the Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

APPENDIX II

(Vide Para 4 of the Introduction)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE TENTH REPORT (FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2010-2011) ON 'WOMEN IN ARMED FORCES'.

(i)	Total No. of Recommendations	09
(ii)	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: Recommendation Para Nos. 66, 68, 70 and 71.	04
	Percentage to Total	44%
(iii)	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the replies of the Government: Nil	Nil
	Percentage to Total	Nil
(iv)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee: Recommendation Para Nos. 63, 64, 65, 67 and 69.	05
	Percentage to Total	56%
(v)	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which the Government have furnished interim replies: Nil	Nil
	Percentage to Total	Nil
