

Women In Military

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The position of women in the armed forces- the epitome of a male dominated establishment offers a striking and limiting case of the changing role of women in occupational and bureaucratic structures. In today's times, women are walking shoulder to shoulder with men in all occupations. However, gender equality is still a paramount challenge in the armed forces. Women can and do bring different skills and perspectives to the table and often approach problems differently. Some women have proven themselves able to demonstrate leadership and articulate new ideas better than some of their male counterparts.

Although women in the Indian Armed Forces have been accepted in auxiliary services since the early days of its existence, the issue of including them in combat roles or granting them permanent commissions has been ongoing for a long time.

Although the British Indian Army women were mainly in non-combatant roles, it was not the case with the Azad Hind Fauj founded by Subash Chandra Bose. There was a women's regiment named the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which saw active combat when it fought along the Imperial Japanese Army in Burma. Taking a step backwards from there women were banned in and only allowed to serve in Regiments Artillery (Non combatant roles), Army Ordnance Corps, Army Postal Service Corps, Army Education Corps, Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers, Judge Advocate General's Department, Army Dental Corps and Military Nursing Service

In 2020 alas, the Supreme Court of India passed a ruling that will enable women to serve as leaders of units. Though, they will still won't be permitted to serve in army combat units, like the infantry or artillery corps. Active combat also known as the fighting arms of the armed forces is predominantly defined as individuals or groups fighting in a war and the casualties suffered in combat. Employment of women in combat forces has become a paramount issue in the present day, there are two schools of thoughts emerging, the first professing that women officers are on a par with the male officers while performing the job on the other hand, some say that it is the exploitation of women to deploy them in combat areas since they are not physically and psychologically fit to perform the job.

Now before the Supreme Court reached its decision, India's central government opposed women being granted command positions in the army by drawing on presenting the old gender stereotypes about the physical limitations of women. It also made the argument that women should not be appointed to top roles such as colonels or brigadiers, because most soldiers are men from rural backgrounds who are not "mentally schooled to accept women officers in command".

Changing a culture is never without headache or heartache. IN Armed Forces, women have come a long way and have matched pace with the time. But there is so much still to be done. The armed forces have to be accommodative in assimilating the women. It is the responsibility of both the government and the society at large to recognize the women power and let them achieve their full potential.

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