

A Case Study :

## The blot of sexual harassment in Indian armed forces

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Women have played significant role in every walk of life. They have unique power of energy, courage and leadership. Now they have entered in male dominated workforce. The Indian Armed Forces, which for long was considered a male dominated workplace, now has confident, bold women, moulding into every role and setting examples for everyone. Entry of women in armed forces resulted in two consequences. First, it enhanced the economic status of women which is necessary to empower them and secondly, among many hurdles and obstacles, sexual harassment came out as a burning problem, despite the fact of discipline, command, rules and regulations in this field. Sexual harassment of women in armed forces has been a recurrent issue now-a-days.

Women have played vital role in every field of life. They have unique power of energy, courage and leadership. In ancient times, they were economically independent. They used to participate in small industries and other works. Further, they had adequate right to work at field for agricultural purposes and they actively participated in medical field also. But in medieval period, they were deprived of economic rights *in toto*. Division of labour introduced which was based on sex and women were confined to house tasks only. Previously working of women outside their homes, for earning purposes was considered derogatory. But due to industrialization, urbanization, rising cost of living, the inadequate income of family and pressure of economic necessity, they became competitive man dominated occupations. Apart from being daughters, wives and mothers, they entered in every walk of life. Today they share equal space with men in almost all the fields whether it is politics, banking, schools,

games or security forces. When the time came for nation-building, they joined every fields of human activities. Working women are no longer secluded and now they are accepted as an integral part of the workforce. This articles points out the status and position relating to their dignity and respect of women in armed forces, their problems, specifically sexual harassment etc.

Entry of women in armed forces was not overnight revolution. It is the consequence of hard labour and long journey. In the first Indian freedom struggle of 1857 Rani Laxmibai actively took part against Britishers. For the first time, the women entered in Indian armed forces in 1942. Captain Laxmi Sehgal organized a woman brigade named 'Rani Laxmi Regiment', an integral part of INA founded by Subhash Chandra Bose in 1943, which was a unique brigade in concurrent Asia. Earlier, entry of women was limited to Medical Corps, and Nursing Services. In 1992 a decision was taken to induct them into non-combat wings of the armed forces as short-service commissioned officers. They are inducted into EME, Engineers, Signals, Army Service Corps, Ordnance, Legal branch and education.

Many male-dominated workplaces have crumbled under the power, spirit and energy of the woman. The Indian Armed Forces, which for long was considered a male dominated workplace, now has confident, bold women, moulding into every role and setting examples for everyone. On the land of Razia Sultana and Laxmibai, bright, young and energetic women entered in Indian Forces to contribute their energy, power, and leadership in nation building along with shouldering men. Entry of women in armed forces resulted in two consequences. First, it enhanced the economic status of women

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