

WOMEN POLICE IN INDIA IN INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT

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Abstract

Policing is one of the world's most masculinized occupations, dominated not only by men, but also by male values. However, from the late nineteenth century, women have started entering the traditional male domain of the police services. The struggle for opening this masculine domain to women has been long and hard. The factors responsible for such changes are better education, legal enactments and changing socio-cultural values. Women in police in India are now venturing into international law enforcement organizations. There are innumerable officers in India both male and female who have served the United Nations. In this paper, two case studies of women in international law enforcement are cited. The aim is not to singularly eulogize officers, but to present their work and create avenues for further research in this sphere. An in-depth research on Indian women police in international law enforcement is the need of the hour. It is necessary to document the work and activities of Indian police women who have served as well as are serving the U.N. It is also necessary to arrange sessions on dissemination of information regarding their experiences in U.N. A majority of women in subordinate ranks are not even aware of such opportunities that can be availed in police service. The state police academies should create awareness on UN and other international law enforcement bodies during the training period.

Keywords

International Law Enforcement, Europol, Interpol, United Nations, Civilian Police Division

Policing is one of the world's most masculinized occupations, dominated not only by men, but also by male values. However, from the late nineteenth century, women have started entering the traditional male domain of the police services. The struggle for opening this masculine domain to women has been long and hard. The factors responsible for such changes are better education, legal enactments and changing socio-cultural values. Women in police in India are now venturing into international law enforcement organizations. There are innumerable officers in India both male and female who have served the United Nations. Women in IPS such as Abhilasha Bisht, Garima Bhatnagar, Renuka Mishra, Neelo Sherpa Chabraborty, have had their successful stints at the U.N. In this paper, two case studies of women in international law

enforcement is cited. The aim is not to singularly eulogize officers, but to present their work and create avenues for further research in this sphere.

Globally around thirty-three per cent of female police officers worked in Europol in 2014. Data related to female police officers engaged in Europol are not available from 1999 to 2013.¹ According to Table 1.0, thirty-six per cent of female police personnel worked in Interpol staff in 2001. From 2005 there has been a steady increase in the percentage of women joining Interpol. Forty-four per cent of women officers are part of Interpol staff in 2014.

Table 1.0: Percentage of female officers and total number of Interpol staff

Year	Percentage of Female Officers	Total Staff
2014	44	819
2013	42	756
2012	42	703
2011	41	673
2010	No data	
2009	42	645
2008	42	588
2007	43	562
2006	42	541
2005	42	502
2004	No data	443
2003	No data	431
2002	No data	406
2001	36	391
2000	No data	443
1999		373

Source: Saskia Hufnagel, 'The Influence of Women on International Police Cooperation – Revolutionising the "Old Boys" Network', Paper presented at the International Women in Law Enforcement Conference – Leadership, Collaboration and Security, 6th -8th October, 2015, Hyderabad.

Indian Women Police in International Law Enforcement : Few Case Studies

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, appointed Kiran Bedi as the civilian police adviser in January 2003. The Civilian Police Division (henceforth CPD), to which she was assigned, comprised of senior civilian police officers from different parts of the world. They all work together in close coordination with other concerned departments and agencies of the United Nations in war-torn areas affected by interstate and intrastate conflicts, whenever and wherever the Security Council mandates them to do so. The CPD and its officers report, at regular intervals, to the member-states through various committees and organs of the United Nations. Kiran and her colleagues worked under the guidance of her senior, Jean Marie Guehenno, the under secretary-general, who hailed from France. Kiran visited the field mission where the United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) was deployed. She travelled to Timor Leste (former East Timor, in South East Asia), Sierra Leone (in Southwestern Africa) and Kosova (in Southern Europe). Other areas that came under the umbrella of responsibility included Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Cyprus and Liberia. The CPD was involved in a wide range of activities such as drawing up operational plans, carrying out recruitment and training and managing international peace-keeping operations. She had overseen sixteen peace-keeping operations in Europe, Asia and Africa in conjunction with the military and humanitarian agencies.² In this context Kiran remarked, 'in order to make our systems efficient, we have put in place very intensively considered operating procedures, guidance documents and policies which provide for extensive quality standardization. Proper induction plays a vital role. But finally it is the placement of right leadership, with demanding managerial capabilities of all appointed by the United Nations, be it the police commissioner, military adviser, humanitarian officials or the special representative of the secretary-general, which makes the final difference'.³

Kiran was asked in an interview as to what the contributing member-states such as India gained, once the officials returned to their home country after their stint at the United Nations. According to her, 'when Indian police officers work for international peace and security, they act as India's 'ambassador of peace and come back with a larger vision of policing through a global experience. They are able to experience internationally respected practices and evaluate what is relevant for their work back home. In some cases, it may make them more confident of their comparative strengths and professional calibre'.⁴

About the role of women in international peace-keeping operations and how the DPO planned to correct their low representation, Kiran commented, 'we get women police officers in peace keeping only if the member-states forward their names. And usually they do not, even where they have good numbers, the reason being their own country's need, women being low on priority compared with men and also due to general indifference. Many countries still have mere symbolic presence of women in police work. Hence, they themselves are in need of correction. But we from the UN are pursuing forcefully the compelling need to increase the presence of qualified women candidates. And the UN has shown the way. Wherever we played a role in recruitment, we made the difference. Timor Leste is an example. More than 25 per cent of its newly created (by the UN as a peace-keeping mission) and trained police personnel are women. All peace keeping directly benefits women, for they are found to be the most victimized by the internal civil wars, and need women in uniform to provide the necessary and visible role which comes so naturally to them- equally to inspire the younger generation to take up the responsibility of nation building'.⁵

Ms. Shakti Sharma won the International Female Peace Keeping Award -2014 at the 52nd International Association of Women Police Conference, Winnipeg, Canada, for her role in international policing. Her initial reaction after receiving the award was of surprise. As she said, 'that night, I was going to bed and checked my mail before it. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the mail in which my name was mentioned as peacekeeper awardee. I thought I am in deep sleep and it is a dream. I opened the mail box again and again to make myself believe that I really got the UN Peacekeeper award. I still don't believe it as I have not done anything extraordinary but a routine work. Being a girl from a remote hamlet in a border state with modest background, I had and have no dream. I didn't even dream of passing the 10th standard. It is something big for me, beyond my imagination. I still don't believe it'.

She was born in Bharnara village in Majalta area of Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir in 1973. It is a remote small time farming hamlet where people mostly grow wheat and corn for their own consumption. However since childhood she wanted to contribute for the society and always thought that joining the police force is the best way to do it. According to her, 'police has authority and as a police officer, I can get the things moving in right direction easily'. However in late 1990s there was no concept of job placement counseling in her college. She was unaware of the Kashmir Police Service and the Indian Police Service. She joined Jammu and Kashmir police on 4th June 2000 as a sub-inspector after completing her training at SKPA Academy, Udhampur. Initially she found the physical training very tough, but she accepted it as a challenge. She was awarded the best outdoor cadet with the Director's Trophy given by the then Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah. As a probationer she served police stations in Jammu district and in March 2003, she was made in-charge of all women police station at Residency Road, Jammu, which was totally manned by women.

She received prize postings as station house officer in police stations with few stints in between with the special operation group of Jammu and Kashmir police. During the period 2009-2012, she served as station house officer, women's cell, handling three thousand complaints of women ranging from matrimonial dispute, domestic violence to rape etc. She managed to settle eighty to ninety per cent cases by involving local elders, non-governmental organizations, community leaders and local representatives. The rest ten to twenty per cent cases were sent to courts. She served a decade in Jammu and Kashmir police in seven to eight police stations. After being promoted as station house officer, Jammu city, she performed all duties at par with her male colleagues. She did what was permitted under law and grilled criminals. She never cared for her life while performing her duties. She said, 'then I decided that there is option for UN so why not try that as the basic is to serve the needy'. She appeared for the examination for serving the U.N. mission and was shortlisted in 2010 and 2012.

An induction training in mission area related to job and briefing about the topography of the mission country was held for one week. Between February and November, 2012, she worked in East Timor on UN mission as a legislator advisor. Her role was mentoring of the East Timor Police. She also served in the criminal investigation department and dealt with cases related to crime against women. She helped them in investigations and registration of cases with special focus on how to handle women issues in police stations.

She was selected along with two women from Philippines on Afghan mission from the East Timor United Nations Mission. In her own words, 'Afghanistan is the most challenging place. Security is the biggest challenge. My life has always been hard, right from childhood. I am

always committed to work and don't take any challenges but just want to finish my work despite problems. Restriction of the movement in Afghanistan is a limitation in carrying out work. I want to go and finish my work and fulfill my objectives but I feel sad when security concerns restrict my movement. People with whom I interact or work, warmly welcome me and my work and supported me a lot to fulfill it'. She joined the UN mission in Afghanistan in the month of May, 2013, for a year. In Afghanistan she has done a commendable job. She says, 'in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) as Police Advisor, I assisted in enhancing the capabilities of Afghan Security Forces, in particular the Afghan National Police development, including training and professionalization; the Afghan National Police (ANP) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) in implementation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights provisions of Constitution, equal and effective participation of women at all stages of the peace process and their involvement in the development; contributed to increasing the functionality, professionalism and accountability of the Afghan security sector through appropriate vetting procedures, training, mentoring, equipping and empowering efforts, for both women and men for providing security and ensuring the rule of law is followed throughout the country. Furthermore, I managed the pilot project ADPP (Afghanistan Democratic Policing Project) in the western region and supported the prosecutor for the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW). I succeeded in building the morale of women police in Herat City and of giving these women hope where there was once despair. Although the UNAMA Police Advisory Unit's Afghan Democratic Policing Project (ADPP) did not have a Police Women's Council component in Herat, such as the ones in Mazar and Bamyán, I took it upon myself to champion for the strengthening of the women's police group which was weak, ineffectual and lacking leadership'.

Based on constant mentoring and advising, the police women's council became operational and in short order selected a head and deputy head to represent the council. More importantly the group soon began to advocate for themselves to address issues needed to improve the situation of women police in Herat. The work on the Herat Police Women's Council soon inspired the establishment of a second council in the volatile area of Farah Province in western region. According to her women in Afghanistan have started reporting crime to police as well as department of women affairs but conviction is still a big question mark. She says, 'as Afghanistan is facing war since more than three decades and the job of police and army is almost same. People here hardly know the difference and do not trust police much and are scared from police as retaliation. Our unit is trying to build the police as community friendly and understand their role towards society'.⁶ For her exemplary work she got one year extension and came back to join Jammu and Kashmir state police in 2015. Hopefully Shakti Sharma's commendable work will inspire more and more women to come out of the cocoons and tread the rough terrain.

The moot question remains does Indian women police have an agency in international law enforcement? How many Indian women police personnel are parts of the decision making in the U.N. job assignments. How do they negotiate? What problems / hurdles do they experience from selection, recruitment to their ground level work? An in-depth research on Indian women police in international law enforcement is the need of the hour. Future research scholars should make an endeavour to shed light on this perspective. It is necessary to document the work and activities of Indian police women who have served as well as are serving the U.N. It is also necessary to arrange sessions on dissemination of information regarding their experiences in U.N. A majority of women in subordinate ranks are not even aware of such opportunities that can be availed in

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