

Mumbai: Vacancies cripple Kalina lab, 44 percent pendency in probes

Annual report by Praja Foundation sheds light on policing, law and order, reveals key vacancies in technical departments of Mumbai police

Updated on: 24 November,2023 05:13 AM IST | Mumbai

Anurag Kamble | anurag.kamble@mid-day.com



Class one and class two posts are all connected to direct forensic analyses. Representation Pic

The [Kalina Forensic Science Laboratory](#), handling crime cases from across the state, saw a 44 per cent case pendency in 2022. Though the rate is lower than 2021, the arrears of 2021 are the highest in the past seven years, taking the total pendency of 2022 to an all-time high. The pendency is attributed to the high level of vacancy in the department across class one, two, and three posts. The statistics were revealed

in Praja Foundation's annual report, 'State of policing and law and order in Mumbai 2023'. It delves into statistics for crime, cyber crime, forensics, and vacancies.

The pendency at the Kalina Forensic Laboratory, which is a central lab helping commissionerates across the state, is worrying considering its major contribution to securing convictions. According to data procured by Praja, the lab does not appear to be capable of handling the caseload. In 2016, 36,157 cases were received by the lab, of which 73 per cent were examined and 27 per cent carried forward to 2017. In 2022, even though the cases were 32,109, the arrears were 26,095.

“Due to a high level of arrears in 2021, despite having fewer cases in 2022, the lab was burdened with a total of 58,204 cases. They managed to examine 50 per cent (28,851) cases, and 44 per cent (25,392) cases were carried forward to 2023,” said Yogesh Mishra, head of Research and Analysis, Praja Foundation. “Vacancies at the lab are to be blamed for this. The vacant posts are worrisome and need urgent attention of the government,” Mishra said.

Of the 61 per cent vacancy in class one posts, more than 50 per cent are for the posts of deputy and assistant directors, while all three posts for senior admin officer were vacant until March 31, 2023. The class two posts, which comprise assistant chemical analyser, scientific officer and admin officer, have 46 per cent vacancies, and class three posts, comprising scientific assistant, lab assistant and clerk, have 47 per cent vacancies. Class two and three employees are mainly involved in forensic investigations.

The data in the report reveals vacancies in technical roles at [Mumbai police](#). The Motor Transport department has the highest personnel shortage this year, with 92 per cent of posts vacant. This is in stark difference to seven per cent vacant posts in 2022. Technical posts in the police have 59 per cent vacancies, followed by the wireless section having 43 per cent vacancies this year and 44 per cent in 2022. Though staff shortage in the police control room reduced from 43 per cent in 2022 to

24 per cent this year, the vacancies remain a concern as they are the first point of contact for citizens in trouble.

Heart disease among cops

In the five-year period between 2018 and 2022, the top cause of death among policemen was heart disease, with 150 policemen having died of heart-related ailments. This was followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, which claimed the lives of 124 cops in 2020 and 2021. Jaundice and liver ailments are the third biggest killers, with 67 policemen having succumbed to them. This was followed by death by suicide, which led to the death of 29 policemen.

On the other hand, reporting of major crimes increased in 2022 in comparison to 2013, with rape cases going up by 130 per cent, theft by 126 per cent, and molestation by 105 per cent. The report also revealed a positive development — a reduction in chain snatching cases. As compared to 2,092 cases in 2013, 2022 saw a 91 per cent reduction in 2022 with just 190 cases.

Link: <https://www.mid-day.com/mumbai/mumbai-news/article/mumbai-vacancies-cripple-kalina-lab-44-percent-pendency-in-probes-23321485>