

## Despite the 18 per cent shortage of manpower during the Corona period, the Mumbai Police risked their lives

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Whatever the crisis in Mumbai, we have all seen the Mumbai Police take to the streets for the safety of the citizens. Twelve years have passed since the recent 26/11 terror attacks on Mumbai. The police duty in this hall is a good example of this. The attack was followed by a number of security announcements, but the extent to which they were actually implemented remains to be seen. However, in the Corona era, it has been proved once again that even with insufficient manpower, the police protect the people at the risk of their lives. According to a report published by the Praja Foundation, despite the 18 per cent shortage of manpower, the police have maintained law and order in the city.

As the prevalence of corona increased, so did the talk of landown in India in January 2020. In such a situation, the police took to the streets for the safety of crores of Mumbaikars living in the densely populated area. As a result, Corona banned police from coming to work for more than 50 years after many policemen died. Still, the graph of corona-infected police was growing. However, the police did their best to protect the citizens. Looking at the year 2019-20, it seems that there was an 18 per cent difference between the sanctioned posts of the police and the actually filled posts. Due to non-recruitment, the on-duty police have to bear the extra workload. You have to work long hours. This affects the work and health of the police. At the same time, their efficiency is low, said Nitai Mehta, founder and managing trustee of the Praja Foundation. Both overtime and working conditions are affecting the health of the police and the number of lifestyle related illnesses seems to have increased in the last few years – most of the police personnel who died between April 2017 and October 2020 died of heart attack, including 113 police officers. , While 16 people committed suicide. Police accommodation has not improved, and not everyone has access to adequate housing. By March 2020,

police flats have been distributed to only 38% of Mumbai Police personnel. Inadequate facilities for police personnel are having an adverse effect on the overall performance of the police, especially on crime investigation work. This is evident from the fact that by the end of 2019, 64 per cent of cases under Bhadan were pending for investigation.

Some special laws were passed with the aim of reducing the number of pending cases and provisions were made by the special courts to complete the work of cases within a specified period, but this does not seem to have made any difference. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCO) 2012 is an example of this. The law is aimed at expediting the hearing of cases of sexual abuse of children and provides for a special hearing by the Pokso Court within a year, but in 2019, 1319 cases were registered under Pokso, of which only 448 cases were heard and only half of them (222). The hearing took place in a special Pokso court. According to the law, only 20 per cent of cases are disposed of in a year, Mehta said. Vacancies need to be filled urgently, even if they are first approved to reform the police and judiciary. Also, in order to reduce the work stress on the employees now, concrete reforms are needed to improve the working conditions, only then the police will be able to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. These improvements will enhance the quality of investigations and help deliver justice in a timely manner, observes the Praja Foundation..

Approved posts have not been filled in the judiciary either. Approved posts of 28 per cent public prosecutors and 14 per cent sessions judges have not been filled yet. As a result, a total of 24,992 cases under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) were pending in Mumbai courts in 2019, of which only 6 per cent were settled by the end of the year, Mehta said. A study of Sessions Court cases from 2013 to 2017 found that it takes an average of 11.1 months to file a chargesheet since the FIR was filed, which should be done within 90 days, the law says. After that, the average time from the first hearing to the verdict seems to be 2.4 years.

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