**Will allow women to enter defence forces through NDA, Naval Academy: Centre to Supreme Court**

The Central government on Wednesday informed the [Supreme Court](https://www.indialegallive.com/constitutional-law-news/supreme-court-news/) that it has decided to allow women to be inducted for permanent commission (PC) in the defence forces through the National Defence Academy (NDA) and the Naval Academy.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, informed the bench led by Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and M.M. Sundresh that three service chiefs and government have decided to allow women for PC in the armed forces. The ASG sought some time to place developments on the affidavit. She said the decision will be path-breaking for generational reform.

Reforms need time, but some progress has to be there: Supreme Court

The Court expressed happiness on the decision. Reforms need time, but there has to be some progress, the Bench opined. “We are extremely glad to know that Armed Forces themselves took a decision for induction of females and other issues,” the Court Noted.

The Armed forces are a very respectable force, but they need to do more towards gender equality, the apex court opined.

## Supreme Court last month permitted women to appear for NDA entrance exam

On August 18, the [Supreme Court](https://www.indialegallive.com/constitutional-law-news/supreme-court-news/) had issued interim directions, permitting women candidates to take part in the National Defence Academy (NDA) entrance exam for gaining commission as officers in defence services.

The Court was hearing a PIL that raised the issue of violation of Articles 14, 15, 16 and 19 of the Constitution of India, 1950 by denying the opportunity to eligible and willing female candidates to appear for the National Defence Academy and Naval Academy examination, affording them a chance to enroll, train and develop themselves in future leaders of the Indian Armed Forces through the National Defence Academy/Naval Academy, thus categorically excluding eligible and willing female candidates to choose joining the Armed Forces as a profession after completing 10+2 level education and denying them a chance to train at the premier Indian joint training institute and centre of excellence for the Armed Forces.

The petition filed by Kush Kalra raised the issue of eligible and willing female candidates being denied the opportunity of entry to the National Defence Academy on the basis of their sex and thereby, systematically and categorically excluding eligible female candidates the opportunity to train at the premier joint training institute of the Indian Armed Forces, which at a later point of time, becomes a hurdle in the career advancement opportunities for Female Officers in the Armed Forces and therefore, seeks the interference and suitable directions from this Court with regard to this issue.

The plea stated that there is no rational basis for such discrimination as this discrimination by the respondents does not stand the test of “reasonable basis for treating equals differently”.

The ASG had submitted that by an interim measure, a policy decision should not be interfered. The Court had recorded her submission that “the three modes of recruitment of officers in the Indian Army are through the National Defence Academy (NDA), the Indian Military Academy (IMA) and the Officers Training Academy (OTA). NDA and IMA are modes of direct entry through UPSC. Whereas through OTA, women are commissioned along with men, both through UPSC and non-UPSC mode of entry. They are granted Short Service Commission, both men and women, and subsequently are considered for grant of Permanent Commission.”

The ASG had submitted that through various developments, SCC women officers in 10 streams are appointed subject to certain conditions laid down in the judgment of this Court in Secretary, Ministry of Defence vs Babita Puniya.

Further the Court said, “We would have expected a more considered affidavit on policy decision based on gender equality, more specifically keeping in mind the observations of this Court in Babita Puniya’s case (Supra).”

The Court had also directed the UPSC to take out the necessary corrigendum in view of the interim orders passed by it and to give it wide publicity, so that the intent of the order translated into benefit at the ground level.

The Court was also informed by the petitioner that the Examination, which was scheduled to take place on September 5, 2021, now has been postponed and going to be held on November 14, 2021, and further prayed the Court to make necessary changes in its order dated August 18, 2021, wherein it had issued interim directions, permitting the women candidates to take part in the said examination subject to further orders of the Court.