



drishti

Permanent Commission for Women in Indian Navy

 drishtiias.com/printpdf/permanent-commission-for-women-in-indian-navy

Why in News

Recently, the Supreme Court upheld **the right of serving Short Service Commission (SSC) women officers of the Navy to be granted Permanent Commission (PC)** on a par with their male counterparts.

- The judgment was based on a case filed by 17 women SSC officers who were denied PC and discharged despite completing 14 years of service as SSC officers.
- The verdict comes after the top court had **opened the doors for similarly-placed women officers in the Army.**

NOTE

A **permanent commission** entitles an officer to serve in the Navy **till he/she retires** unlike **Short Service Commission (SSC), which is currently for 10 years** and can be **extended by four more years**, or a total of 14 years.

Key Points

- **PC for Women :**
 - SC has directed that SSC women officers found suitable for the grant of PC shall be entitled to **all consequential benefits, including arrears of pay, promotions and retirement benefits as and when due.**
 - The grant of PCs will be subject to availability of vacancies in the stabilised cadre, suitability of the candidate and recommendation by the chief of Naval Staff.
- **Criticism of Government's View:**

It rejected the submissions of the Centre stating that **certain sea-sailing duties are ill-suited for women officers** as there is no return to the base, unlike in the Army and the Air Force.

- **Stand against Discrimination:**
 - The Court **denied the discrimination on the grounds of physiology, motherhood and physical attributes** of the women officers in the Indian Navy.
 - Thus the judgement ensured the **right to fair and equal treatment with constitutional entitlement to dignity at the workplace for women.**
- **Previous Notifications for PC of Women :**
 - The Court stated that the government had already drawn up **policies in 1991 and 1998 to give Permanent Commission to women in the Navy.**
 - The 1991 notification lifted the restriction on the appointment or enrolment of women for specified cadres/branches of the Navy.
 - The 1998 notification made women eligible for appointment as officers in all the branches of the Indian Navy.
 - It also directed that the stipulation in a **policy letter dated September 26, 2008,** making the grant of PC prospective and restricting its application to specified cadres/branches of the Navy **shall not be enforced.**

Source:TH