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Kerala Police to strengthen social media cell, recruitment soon

20% of police posts in state vacant, Ahmedabad tops chart

The issue of vacancies in the state police department rocked the state legislative assembly on Tuesday. The Congress and BJP traded barbs on the subject.

POLICE STRENGTH						
Sanctioned and present strength from police inspector to constable ranks (both armed and unarmed) in Gujarat*						
Rank	Sanctioned	Present	Vacancy	%		
Police inspector	1,058	734	324	31		
Police sub-inspector	3,233	2,755	478	15		
Assistant sub-inspector	9,561	8,152	1,409	15		
Head Constable	16,026	12,588	3,438	21		
Constable	55,299	44,107	11,192	20		
Total	85,177	68,336	16,841	20		
Recruitments carried out in past three years for Gujarat Police*						
Year	PSI	AIO	ASI	LRD	Jail Sepoy	Total
2015	500	—	800	7150	—	8,450
2016	—	—	—	—	—	—
2017	344	141	200	16,780	752	18,217
Total	844	141	1,000	23,930	752	26,667
<small>PSI: Police sub-inspector (both armed and unarmed), A.I.O.: Assistant intelligence officer, ASI: Assistant sub-inspector, LRD: Lok Rakshak Dal (both armed and unarmed), *Gujarat Police data</small>						

Recruitment drive on cards

State police officials said that in the last three years 12,772 jobs have been added to Gujarat Police, about 3,200 jobs per year. Thus, there is still a gap between sanctioned strength and positions filled, despite a record 18,217 personnel being inducted in 2017. The scheme for recruitment of 5,299 armed constables and 336 unarmed constables has been approved, and vacancies will fall from 20% to 10% in the near future.

Sustainable model needed

Experts said that while en masse recruitment is a welcome step in cutting vacancies, it should be seen in perspective. "The figures show not a single recruitment drive in 2016 whereas in 2017, 16,780 personnel were inducted in the constabulary. Thirty years later, 10% of the police force will retire at the same time. Other issues include seniority questions once they complete the specified terms.

Imran Khedawala, the Congress MLA from Jamalpur-Khadia, said in the assembly that the city saw rise in the number of incidents of police impersonators, due to the high number of vacancies in the police department. The state government, in reply to the question, stated that two cities — Ahmedabad and Vadodara — have the highest number of vacancies.

Pradipsinh Jadeja, MoS (home), said that the government in 2017 filled 17,532 vacancies. Moreover, sanction for another 5,632 has been approved in the state budget. Khedawala and other MLAs demanded to know the time frame for recruitment but the MoS wrote that it could not be given.

However, when the clamour over the law and order issue continued, Jadeja said the law and order situation is much better than during

Congress rule. “In the Congress rule, even Lord Jagannath had to go out in the city in bulletproof chariots during the Rath Yatra,” he said.

According to the state government officials, Ahmedabad city has 16% vacancies with 2,588 posts to be filled. Nearly half the posts of sub-inspectors (381 of 790) are vacant whereas at police inspector level 23% of posts are vacant. Officials said there were 4,916 vacancies in 2016, which has come down with new recruits.

Apart from Vadodara city, Banaskantha, Kutch and Bharuch districts reported high vacancy numbers according to the reply tabled in the assembly.

“The schedule for the recruitment process has already been prepared. For the first time, the state government has directly recruited inspectors and assistant sub-inspectors. A cadre especially for traffic management is also on the cards,” said a senior state police official.