

## MHA nod to form 1st all-woman CISF reserve battalion

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THE MINISTRY of Home Affairs (MHA) has approved establishment of a first-ever all-woman CISF battalion comprising more than 1,000 personnel.

An MHA official said the decision has been taken keeping in mind the burgeoning duties of the force in VIP security, airports and other vital installations.

"The unit will be raised from within the sanctioned manpower of the force of about two lakh personnel. The MHA issued a sanction order on Monday approving an exclusive women unit called reserve battalion in the force with a total strength of 1,025 personnel led by a senior commandant-rank officer," the official said.

A CISF spokesperson said preparations for the early recruitment, training and selection of location for stationing the new reserve battalion has been initiated. "The training is being specially designed to create an elite battalion capable of performing a multifarious role as commandos in VIP security and also security of airports, Delhi Metro, etc," the spokesperson said. Once raised, it will be the first all-women reserve battalion of the Central Industrial Security Force.

The CISF has 12 reserve battalions under its establishment

at present and they have a mix of both men and women personnel. Women personnel constitute over seven per cent of the CISF.

"CISF has been a preferred choice for women who wish to serve the nation in the Central Armed Police Force. The addition of a Mahila battalion would encourage more aspiring young women across the country to join CISF. It will give a new identity to women in CISF," the spokesperson said.

The force has a huge interface with women commuters and visitors at facilities like the 68 civil airports it guards, the Delhi Metro and historical monuments like the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort. It already has female personnel deployed at these duty locations.

Apart from these installations, the 1969-raised CISF provides a counter-terrorist security cover to a number of facilities in the nuclear and aerospace domain apart from those in the private sector like the Infosys offices in Bengaluru and Pune, Reliance refinery in Jamnagar (Gujarat), among others.

The CISF projected a requirement of having an all-women reserve battalion early this year following the directions of Union Home Minister Amit Shah during the 53rd Raising Day of the force that was held in March 2023, an MHA official said.