

Odisha has shortage of IPS officers

Resentment is brewing in the ranks of the state police as none of them have been promoted in time to become IPS officers. This has also created a shortage of police officers in the elite rank.

Since 2000, not a single state police officer has climbed the ranks to become an IPS officer.

The state government had in 1977 abandoned direct recruitment of officers through the Odisha Police Service (OPS) to promote subordinate officers to make it to the all India service. Though this decision was taken to encourage juniors, over the years it has resulted in 57 vacancies in the sanctioned strength of 188 IPS officers for the state, sources in the government said.

IPS officers in Bhubaneswar. Telegraph picture

The shortage in the IPS cadre has led the state government to resume direct recruitment of officers and also approach the Centre for allocation of more officers to the state.

A senior police officer said that the government's decision not to recruit senior officials at the rank of deputy superintendents of police (DSP) through the OPS had a laudable objective of providing promotional avenues for sub-ordinate officials, who join the force at the level of sub-inspectors, but the system had worked to the contrary.

"The reality today is that a sub-inspector is getting promotion to the rank of DSP after nearly 38 years. The rules stipulate that an officer to be considered for promotion to the all India service should be below 54 years. It's well nigh impossible for anyone to make it to the elite service in the present circumstances," he said.

"It is precisely for this reason, the state government has decided to resume the OPS examinations from 2015. But, its effect will be felt only after a decade," another officer said.

He pointed out that the last OPS officer to become an IPS was Bishnu Charan Mohapatra, who retired in 2008. Similarly, Murali Mohan Das and P.K. Mohanty, who had began their careers as sub-inspectors, retired as IPS officers in 2003. The two were promoted to the IPS rank in 2000.

In a letter to the home ministry this week, additional secretary, general administration department, S.S. Mohapatra has said: "Allocation of IPS probationers made to the state by the ministry of Home Affairs, government of India during last three/four years has been inadequate to meet the existing requirement for filling up the large number of vacant IPS cadre posts and future cadre of management in the state."

Odisha has a cadre strength of 188 IPS officers. Of these, 131 are supposed to be direct recruits from the IPS and the remaining 57 are drawn from the state police. Of the existing 108 IPS officers in the state, 24 are on central deputation. This leaves the state with 88 IPS officers.

Of these 88 IPS officers, 25 are heading the police in as many districts, while state police officers are manning the districts of Bhadrak, Cuttack rural, Nayagarh, Khurda and Sonepur

A senior state police official said: "The government lacks political will to give important assignments to the state cadre officers. But the state cadre officers have always been successful in heading the police in districts. We are unable to figure out why the government is insisting on getting more IPS officers from the Centre."