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Taller aspiring cops to get extra marks in Punjab

CHANDIGARH: Punjab police believes a good cop needs to stand tall, literally. As it sets out to select 7,416 constables, the department has implemented a proposal that accords 15 of a total of 30 marks to aspirants' height alone.

A male candidate with a height of 5'7" gets a score of 10, with an extra mark for every additional inch, 15 marks being the maximum one can get. Women get 10 marks for a height of 5'3" and earn an extra mark for every inch till 5'8".

Overall, 6,252 men and 1,164 women would be recruited in what is being seen as a poll sop from the state government ahead of the 2017 elections. Many candidates, primarily from Jalandhar, Ludhiana, and Mohali, have dubbed the revised height criterion discriminatory as height is a matter of genes and there is nothing they can do about it.

A retired DGP told TOI that the extra-marks-for-height initiative was a ploy to recruit more people into the police force, which would eventually mean a greater share of underqualified cops. The focus of the recruitment drive should have been on presence of mind and the ability to react quickly, he added.

Besides the 15 for height, the remaining marks are given according to a candidate's performance in Class XII. Every 10% jump above 40%, the minimum required, would earn aspirants an additional mark. Those who score 80% and above would receive a full score. Punjab police had earlier also included marks for an interview and personality test, but this was challenged in the Punjab and Haryana HC recently. The matter is under trial. Director general of police Suresh Arora was not available for comment. A senior state police officer told TOI that the height criterion was only to ensure that those with a poor performance in education did not fail the overall test. "It comes in only after the endurance test," the officer added.

As part of the physical test, male aspirants have to run 1,600 metres in six and a half minutes, and pull off a 3.8m long jump and a 1.1m high jump. Women are expected to run 800 metres in four minutes, and manage a 3m long jump and a 0.95m high jump.