

Action plan to control dowry deaths

2013. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government keep a record of dowry deaths;
- (b) if so, the number of dowry related deaths during the last one year; and
- (c) Government's action plan to control the rising trends of dowry deaths with a view to boost morale of the women?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs maintains the statistical data on crimes, including dowry deaths. As per the data compiled by the NCRB, 6285 cases of dowry deaths have been reported in the country (provisional figure) during 2003.

(c) The Government of India has been advising the State Governments from time to time to give more focused attention on improving the administration of the criminal justice system and to take such measures as are necessary for the prevention of crimes against women which include sensitizing of police officials charged with the responsibility of protecting women, vigorously enforcing existing legislations relating to dowry violence, setting up of women police cells in police stations and exclusive women police stations, appointment of Dowry Prohibition Officers and their effective functioning etc.

The Government is in the process of finalizing the revised Protection from Domestic Violence Bill for introduction in Parliament which will provide a civil remedy for women affected by domestic violence.

Since the menace of dowry is a reflection of women's low status in society, Government is taking a number of steps to raise the status of women and to change the societal attitudes towards girls and women. These include media campaigns, awareness generation camps, spreading legal literacy, counselling, legal aid, support to voluntary agencies and schemes for socio-economic empowerment of women.