

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 480
TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.12.2021

CASES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES DURING COVID-19

480 : DR. L. HANUMANTHAI AH:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any special steps were taken to address the increasing cases of violence against women with disabilities during COVID-19;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the helpline of the National Commission for Women is accessible to women with disabilities;
- (d) the number of complaints received by the National Commission for Women from women with disabilities;
- (e) the details of measures taken to redress their grievances; and
- (f) if not, the reasons thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (f) : 'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. Maintenance of law and order, protection of life and property of citizens including prevention of crime against women is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. Nevertheless, giving high priority to safety of women, the Central Government has also taken a number of initiatives in this regard during outbreak of Covid-19. The Government has ensured that their schemes of One Stop Centres (OSCs), Universalisation of Women Help Line (WHL), Ujjawala Homes, Swadhar Greh, Emergency Response Support System (112) and various authorities under women and child centric laws such as 'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005', 'The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961', 'The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006', etc. remain operational and available for providing assistance to women including the women with disabilities during the period. The Government has also undertaken sensitisation programs for the concerned officials of States and UTs for this purpose.

The National Commission for Women (NCW) took various steps to address cases of violence against women, including women with disabilities, during the Covid 19 pandemic. Besides processing their complaints through its online system available at www.ncw.nic.in. NCW launched a WhatsApp number 7217735372 for reporting cases of domestic violence during the pandemic and also took cognizance of the grievances relating to domestic violence reported in social media. The complaints received by NCW were acted upon by coordinating with police and other authorities to provide assistance.

During the second wave of corona virus pandemic in 2021, the NCW launched a WhatsApp helpline number for providing medical assistance to expectant mothers from across the country. Keeping in view the difficulties faced by pregnant women in accessing medical aid, NCW launched a message-only helpline service in addition to their email ID, which was already operational. Expectant mothers from across the country could reach out to the Commission through its helpline number 9354954224 which was functional round-the-clock. In addition, the National Commission for Women launched 24X7 Helpline No. 7827170170 with an aim to provide online support to women in distress, including women with disabilities, through referral by linking them with the concerned police authorities, hospitals, Legal Services Authorities, psychological counselling etc.

The helplines of NCW was accessible for every woman including women with disabilities in the country. However, no separate data is maintained by NCW for complaints received from women with disabilities.
