

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO. 473
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.07.2022

INCREASING CRIME AGAINST WOMEN

473. DR. KIRODI LAL MEENA:

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

- (a) whether there has been a rapid increase in the case of crime against women in many States of the country and if so, the steps being taken to contain such crimes;
- (b) the facilities being provided by Government to women victims of related harassment and domestic violence;
- (c) whether any special training is being imparted to the officers investigating cases of dowry related harassment and domestic violence;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the assistance provided by Government to the aggrieved women?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (e): The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) publishes the data on crime against women which is available for the year up to 2020. The data published by NCRB shows a declining trend in the crime against women which was 3,71,503 in the year 2020, as against 4,05,326 in the year 2019.

For the first time, almost all indicators related to marital and natal violence such as dowry death (Sec. 304B Indian Penal Code or IPC), cruelty by husband or his relatives (Sec. 498A IPC), dowry harassment (the Dowry Prohibition Act), domestic violence (the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act) have registered decline as indicated in the following table:

Marital Offences	2019	2020
Cruelty by husband or his relatives (Sec. 498A IPC)	1,24,934	1,11,549
Dowry Harassment (under the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961)	13,307	10,366
Dowry Death (Sec. 304B IPC)	7,141	6,966
Domestic Violence (under The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005)	553	446

'Police' and 'Public Order' are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and the responsibility to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens including investigation and prosecution of crime against women rests primarily with the respective State Governments.

The Constitution of India guarantees the right to equality and also provides for positive interventions by the State to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and to ensure their holistic empowerment. Keeping in mind the vision articulated in Constitutional provisions, there has been enactment of various legislation such as the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 which addresses the issue of gender inequality, discrimination and violence faced by women.

In addition, Government of India has introduced various schemes and projects including One Stop Centres (OSCs) for violence affected women, Women Helplines (WHL) running on tollfree telephonic short code 181, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Swadhar Greh for women facing difficult circumstances or destitution, Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) which is a pan-India single number (112)/ mobile app based system for emergency response, safe city projects in 8 cities (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai), training and skill development programs for Investigation Officers, Prosecution Officers and Medical Officers, setting up/ strengthening of Women Help Desks (WHDs) at Police Stations etc. to ensure safety of women across the country.

Further, the National Commission for Women (NCW), in addition to handling complaints through regular mode, helps women in distress through a dedicated WhatsApp Number at 72177-35372 for reporting domestic violence cases. NCW also takes cognizance of the grievances relating to domestic violence reported in social media. The complaints received by NCW are acted upon by coordinating with victims, police and other authorities to provide immediate assistance.

Under Nirbhaya Fund, Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has also undertaken several initiatives, which, inter-alia includes training and skill development programs for Investigation Officers, Prosecution Officers and Medical Officers, distribution of Sexual Assault Evidence Collection (SAEC) Kits to States/ UTs. BPR&D has also prepared Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for 'Women Help Desk at Police Stations' to ensure smooth functioning of Women Help Desks by focusing on four critical components viz., infrastructure, training, human resource development and response mechanism. A book titled 'Women's Safety and Security- a Handbook for First Responders and Investigators in the Police' has also been prepared for the purpose of prevention and investigation of crime against women with specific reference to the crime of sexual assault, which includes investigation, victim compensation and rehabilitation. Emphasis has been laid upon appropriate behavioural and attitudinal skills of the police in course of prevention and detection of crime against women and children and interaction with victims of crime. Webinars on women safety with sensitivity, gender sensitization of police personnel etc. have also been organized by BPR&D.

Ministry of Women and Child Development has engaged the services of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) for providing basic and advanced training under the project named 'Stree Manoraksha' to the staff of One Stop Centres (OSCs) across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support the women facing violence and women in distress.

These measures have resulted in positive outcomes such as reduction in the percentage of women aged 18 to 49 years who have ever experienced spousal violence from 31.2% as per National Family Health Survey (NFHS)-4 (2015-16) to 29.3% in NFHS-5 (2019-20), increase in the sex ratio of total population (females per 1000 males) from 991 as per NFHS-4 to 1,020 as per NFHS-5, and extension of support to more than 5.40 lakh violence affected women through 708 One Stop Centres operationalized across the country till March, 2022.
