



Rashtra Mahila

Vol. 1 No. 211 FEBRUARY 2017

Published by the National Commission For Women

Editor's Column

The recent incidents of sexual assaults of women in Bengaluru and other parts of the country have highlighted the need for serious introspection into the causes of such recurring atrocities all over India, especially, in a country, where women were once apotheosized as goddesses. India has become not only one of the most gender-insensitive countries globally but has the distinction of being called one of the unsafest countries for women as well.

Despite several laws, rules and regulations formulated and measures initiated by the government and the civic agencies in the wake of the Nirbhaya incident in December 2016, the evil in our society refuses to die. Women are being assaulted, brutalised, abused and trafficked with impunity. It is high time we ascertain why men behave in such a way and what is wrong with men in general, particularly, Indian men.

From day one, as soon as a girl child is born, she is discriminated against by many parents, whose

desire for a male child has been thwarted. Thus, from cradle to grave, she endures myriad forms of gender injustice, be it in respect of nourishment, education, freedom, compared to her male siblings. The seeds of disrespectful behaviour towards a girl has been sown. As boys progress from boyhood to manhood, they consider women as commodities and objects of gratification as was viewed by their fathers and

FOCUS

**MORAL
DECLINE**

forefathers. As a principal of a reputed school said, "children are not born violent or aggressive or disrespectful of women. They learn to be so from grown-ups and other sources." Hence, respect for women not only in the family settings but also in public places and the notion of gender equality and gender sensitivity must be inculcated in men from childhood with gender education in schools, colleges and universities.

Admittedly, both men and women, as individuals, or belonging

to business, non-profit institutions, government, or the civil society, have a role to play in re-establishing and re-inculcating respect for women and girls. Currently, it has become "my" or "our" priority, and not merely that of others. On the contrary, we all need to "own" this ethos in order to bring about sustainable change.

However, a change in the patriarchal attitudes and mindsets will take time. Till then, the government has an urgent role to play. It must revamp the legal system and set up many more fast-track courts to dispose of women-related cases expeditiously and effectively mandating stricter punishment. The functionaries of the criminal justice system must be gender-sensitized, so that they develop empathy for women victims of violence, helping them to overcome their trauma and sense of shame. Finally, the media should be an effective partner of the government in highlighting quick actions taken by the government so that culprits realize that crimes do not pay.

Important Decisions

- In the wake of Prime Minister's address on the New Year 's eve , the Niti Aayog has prepared a cabinet note for granting Rs 6000 each to pregnant women, who undergo institutional delivery and vaccinate their children. The move is aimed at improving maternal mortality rate as well as health of the mother and child.
- The government has decided to set up a Victims Compensation Fund drawn from the Nirbhaya Fund to provide compensation of Rs three lakhs to help child victims of sexual abuse.

Complaints received by NCW in January, 2017

Month	Complaints Received	Action Taken Reports received	Complaints Closed
January 2017	1185	298	405

The Commission took suo motu cognizance in 16 cases in the Month of January, 2017.

Women Leadership Conclave

● NCW Chairperson Lalitha Kumaramangalam addressed the South Asian Young Women Leadership Conclave organised by the High Commission of Canada in New Delhi. Delivering the keynote address, the Chairperson urged young women to engage and empower themselves, transforming into agents of change. She asked women to actively embrace leadership roles and participate in political and social processes.

● The Chairperson attended a meeting organised by the Urban Development Ministry to make smart cities gender sensitive.



Chairperson (extreme left) speaking at the meeting held at the Urban Development Ministry

Suo motu cognizance

● Taking suomotu cognizance, the Commission constituted an Enquiry Committee headed by Member Rekha Sharma to enquire into a media report captioned “21-year old engineering student raped at gunpoint at Panchkula in Haryana.” The Member talked to the doctors and her parents in this connection and later met the Commissioner of Police to ensure speedy investigation.



Member Rekha Sharma interacting with women of Dimana village in Sirmour district



Member Rekha Sharma in discussion with the Commissioner of Police, Panchkula

● An enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Member Sushma Sahu was constituted to enquire into the matter of “alleged killing of a woman in Palaghat district in Kerala.” She met the family members of the victim, who alleged cavalier attitude of the state government officials, even failing to visit the house of the victim, who died after receiving third degree burns in an incident of political violence.

● To enquire into reports of “atrocities against girl students in Kerala Law Academy in Thiruvanthapuram,” Ms Sushma Sahu visited the Academy and met about 75 students, who apprised her of alleged atrocities meted out to the students by the former principal of the college. Taking serious view of these allegations, the Member directed the concerned police officials to take immediate action.

● An Enquiry Committee headed by Member Rekha Sharma was constituted to enquire into a report that “women and girls being trafficked in Sirmour district in Himachal Pradesh” in the name of marriage.

NRI Cell

NCW Chairperson along with Member Secretary Dr. Satbir Bedi and Member Alok Rawat met a delegation of British MPs on 13th February, 2017 at IIC in New Delhi. Issues relating to Indian women marrying NRI/Overseas spouses were discussed, particularly, cases against UK residents, registered in the Commission.

NCW for Banning Female Mutilation

NCW Chairperson Lalitha Kumaramangalam has said that the Commission would examine legal and other options in order to end the practice of female genital mutilation, an infringement of an individual human right prevalent within the two million strong Bohra Muslim community in India. On the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation, (FGM) the Chairperson received two petitions on the issue with 85,000 signatories initiated on Change.org- by 'Speak Out on FGM' and a collective of 33 global organisations, which includes 'Sahiyo', which brought out a study on the issue.



The Chairperson receiving petitions

Intervention by NCW

● Member Rekha Sharma visited Berhampore Mental Hospital at Murshidabad in West Bengal in August, 2016, to enquire into the wellbeing of women inmates as well as examine the infrastructural facilities of the hospital. She found the condition of the inmates pitiable as no proper food, clothing, bedding, hygiene or medical facilities were being provided to the inmates. The hospital was overcrowded and posts were lying vacant. Officials of the health department hardly visited the hospital. Returning to Delhi, the Member sent a detailed note to the West Bengal Government, citing her observations and recommendations. The West Bengal government, in a note to the Commission on 18th January, 2017, has written that most of the recommendations have been accepted and were being acted upon. ● Ms Sharma conducted 11 hearings between 21st January and 20th February, 2017.

Jan Sunwai

The National Commission for Women organized 7 "Mahila Jan Sunwais" in collaboration with the District Police and the District Legal Services Authority: -

1. West District, Delhi on 17-18th January, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Alok Rawat. Out of 102 cases, 82 were settled and closed.
2. Gurugram, Haryana on 30-31st January, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Rekha Sharma. Out of 130 cases, 120 were solved and closed by the Commission. 4 other cases, taken on the spot, were solved in the Jan Sunwai as well.
3. Jaipur, Rajasthan on 31st January and 1st February, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Alok Rawat. Out of 135 cases, 115 were settled and closed.
4. Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh on 1st and 2nd February, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Sushma Sahu. Out of 93 cases, 48 were disposed of and in 19 cases, Bhopal Police was directed to take speedy action and file charge-sheets. In the remaining 23 cases, directions were given to the concerned Police authorities to submit ATRs to the Commission. 3 cases were taken up on the spot and forwarded to the police authorities for further action.
5. Ahmedabad, Gujarat on 16th and 17th February, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Alok Rawat.
6. Faridabad, Haryana on 17th and 18th February, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Sushma Sahu. 120 cases were taken up and out of this, more than 100 cases were closed. In remaining cases, directions were given to the concerned police authorities for speedy action. 10 cases were also taken up on the spot and forwarded to the police for further action.
7. North District, Delhi, on 20th and 21st February, 2017, under the Chairmanship of Member Rekha Sharma.



Member Sushma Sahu at a jan sunwai in Bhopal

Members' Visits

❖ Member Sushma Sahu inaugurated a folk festival at Santhpur, Bidar in Karnataka, organized by the Animal Welfare Board of India. Around 3000 artists participated in this festival, including 2,000 people from Maharashtra, Telangana and Karnataka.

● The Member had an interactive meeting with about 1,000 girl students of Karnataka Degree College and also held a review meeting with the DC and other District officials at Bidar.

● Ms. Sahu attended a Mahila Samavesh at Basavagiri, in which around 4,000 representatives from Mahila Bhajan Mandali and youth clubs participated.

● Ms. Sahu visited Howrah in Kolkata to conduct an enquiry into a case of alleged gangrape, policy apathy and murder. The Committee enquired into the circumstances leading to the incidents of burning of clusters, properties and personal belongings. The Committee blamed the police for not providing any assistance to the affected people.



Member Sushma Sahu talking to the complainants at Howrah

❖ Member Alok Rawat visited Ahmedabad and held discussions with the Gujarat DGP and the Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad, as well as concerned IOs and ACPs regarding pending cases relating to complaints received from the women of Ahmedabad. Detailed discussions were held with the DGP and Commissioner of Police as well as with the representatives of State Legal Authority/DLSA in the matter of acid attack victims. The legal functionaries had agreed upon the desirability of prescribing timebound payments of interim relief and final compensation to the victims. Later, the Member called on the Chairperson of the State Commission for Women and discussed some cases.

● The Member visited Jaipur and held discussions with DGP Rajasthan and the Commissioner of Police regarding pending cases relating to complaints made by women of Jaipur area. Detailed discussions were also held with the Member Secretary and other functionaries of Rajasthan State Commission for Women with regard to acid attack victims.

From the Legal Cell

- The National Commission for Women organized a capacity-building programme on “Investigation of cases involving crimes against women for women police officers” in collaboration with the Bureau of Police Research & Development at Jharkhand Police Academy in Ranchi, from 13th to 15th February, 2017.
- The Commission also organized a similar programme at the Maharashtra Police Academy, Nashik, from 13th to 15th February, 2017. It was attended by Member Alok Rawat.
- Another programme was organized by Tamil Nadu DGP, Training, Ashok Bagar at Chennai from 21st to 24th February, 2017. The programme was attended by Under Secretary, G. Nagarajan and Jr. Technical Expert, Ms. Ranjani.
- A Legal Awareness Programme was conducted by the Law Faculty, University of Delhi, on 3rd and 4th February, 2017.

From the PPMRC Cell

Four seminars have been sanctioned by the Commission in the month of February dealing with the following topics: (1) Issues related to single women and women in difficult circumstances; (2) Empowerment of women through skill development; (3) Role of women in biodiversity conservation for environment sustainability and (4) Issues relating to availability of accommodation faced by single women living in urban areas.

Three research studies have been sanctioned by the Commission in the month of February dealing with the following topics: (1) Dimensions affecting and facilitating the efficacy of protection officers under Prevention of Domestic Violence Act in Tamil Nadu; (2) Maternity benefits to women in organized sectors: a comparative analysis of public and private institutions of higher education in Odisha and (3) Reproductive rights of women with disabilities: Law and practice.

for further information visit our website at : www.new.nic.in

Published by the National Commission for Women, Plot No. 21, Jasola Institutional Area, New Delhi-110025, Editor : Gouri Sen, Printed at Akanksha Impressions, 18/36, Street No. 5, Railway Line Side, Anand Parbat Indl. Area, New Rohtak Road, New Delhi-11