

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 319
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.11.2024

MEASURES TO REDUCE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

319. SMT. KIRAN CHOUDHRY:

Will the Minister of Women and Child Development be pleased to state:

- (a) the measures introduced by Government to reduce incidents of domestic violence, especially in rural areas; and
- (b) the steps being taken to improve the implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, across the country especially in Haryana?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SAVITRI THAKUR)

(a) and (b): “Police” and “Public Order” are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution of India. The responsibility to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens including investigation and prosecution of crime against women and children rests primarily with the respective State Governments and they are competent to deal with it.

Nevertheless, the Central Government gives highest priority to ensuring safety and security of women and has taken several legislative and policy interventions. Under the “Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005” (PWDVA), the States/UTs are mandated to appoint such number of Protection Officers (POs) in each district as it may consider necessary and also to notify the area or areas within which a Protection Officer shall exercise the powers and perform the duties conferred. It is the duty of the Protection Officer to report the cases of domestic violence to the Magistrate upon receipt of complaints and to assist the Magistrate in the discharge of his functions. The accused person is convicted as per the mandate of the legal process. The PWDVA provides remedies such as protection order, residence order, monetary relief, custody order and compensation order against it. The Act also empowers the Magistrate to grant any such interim and ex-parte orders as deemed just and proper. These measures are implemented through the legal process.

Further, the Central Government implements "Mission Shakti", an umbrella scheme for safety, security and empowerment of women. The Scheme includes components of 'One Stop Centers (OSCs)' under which integrated services such as Medical Aid, Psycho-social Counselling, Police Facilitation, Legal Aid and Counselling and Temporary Shelter upto 5 days are provided under one roof to any women under assault or distress. A total of 870 OSCs have been approved across the country, of which 798 are currently functional. In Haryana, 22 OSCs have been approved, all of which are functional and have actively assisted 44,478 women. 24×7×365 toll-free Women Helpline (181) has been universalised. It provides emergency and non-emergency services to any women in need by connecting them with appropriate authorities. As of October 31, 2024, a total of 81,64,796 women have been assisted across the country, of which 21,654 women have received assistance in Haryana. Besides, Emergency Response Support System (ERSS), which is a pan-India single number (112)/ mobile app based system for emergencies is also available to women in distress. Now, Women Help Line (WHL) is integrated with ERSS for providing 24×7 emergency and non-emergency help and support to needy women. In addition, under Nirbhaya Fund, the Central Government has provided assistance to States/ UTs for setting up/ strengthening Women Help Desks (WHDs) in all police stations. So far, 13916 Women Help Desks have been established.

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. BPR&D has also prepared Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for 'Women Help Desk at Police Stations' to ensure their smooth functioning. 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.

Further, the Government, through institutions like the National Commission for Women (NCW) and its counterparts in States have been spreading awareness through seminars, workshops, audio- visual, print and electronic media etc. to sensitize the people about the safety and security of women and also about various provisions of the legislation and policies etc. In addition, Ministry of Women and Child Development and Ministry of Home Affairs have issued advisories to States/ UTs from time to time on various issues pertaining to safety and security of women.
