

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4843
TO BE ANSWERED ON 31.03.2023

FUND FOR WOMEN VICTIMS OF HEINOUS CRIMES

4843. SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL:

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

- (a) whether this Ministry has any scheme or introduced any special fund for women victims of heinous crimes such as rape and survival of acid attack for helping them in treatment as well as boosting them to achieve their goal of life;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and number of beneficiaries thereunder;
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (d) the concrete measures being taken by the Government to punish the culprits and provide quick help to victims in view of the rise in such cases in the country?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d): "Police" and "Public Order" are State subjects under the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. The responsibility to maintain law and order, protection of life and property of the citizens including investigation and prosecution in cases of crimes against women and children (including rape and acid attack) rests primarily with the respective State Governments. The State Governments are competent to deal with such offences under the extant provisions of laws.

Nevertheless, the Central Government has taken various steps to support and supplement the efforts of the States / UTs in ensuring safety and security of women and girls.

The Government of India is implementing "One Stop Centre (OSC)" and "Universalisation of Women Helpline (WHL)" components under umbrella scheme 'Mission Shakti'. OSCs aim to facilitate women affected by violence with a range of integrated services under one roof such as police facilitation, medical aid, legal counselling, psycho-social counselling, temporary shelter etc. "Universalisation of Women Helpline" scheme provides 24 hours emergency and non-emergency response to women affected by violence through the short code 181 by linking them with appropriate authorities such as Police, One Stop Centre, Hospital, Legal Services etc. WHL also supports women in distress with rescue van and counselling services in addition to providing information about women welfare schemes and programs across the country. Further, the Ministry of Women and Child Development is also administering Swadhar Greh Scheme for relief and rehabilitation of women in difficult circumstances, including victims of rape and acid attack.

Section 357A of Cr. P.C. provides that compensation under Victim Compensation Scheme is to be paid to the victims. Section 357B of Cr.P.C. further provides that compensation payable under section 357A shall be in addition to the payment of fine to victim. The Ministry of Home Affairs has also issued a comprehensive Advisory on 20th April 2015 on taking steps to implement the provisions of Indian Penal Code (IPC), expediting action in cases of acid attack, and to provide treatment and compensation to victims.

Further, pursuant to the Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 11.05.2018 in the WP(C) 565/ 2012 - Nipun Saxena Vs. Union of India, National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) has formulated the revised scheme enhancing the compensation to be given to Women Victims/Survivors of Sexual Assault/ other crimes. The scheme also covers the cases of acid attacks. The scheme was circulated by Ministry of Women & Child Development on 18.05.2018 and again by Ministry of Home Affairs on 28.06.2018 to all States/UTs for compliance

Moreover, the National Legal Services Authority has framed NALSA (Legal Services to Victims of Acid Attacks) Scheme, 2016 under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The main objectives of the Scheme include enabling victims of acid attacks to get access to medical facilities and rehabilitative services, and strengthening legal aid for victims of acid attack

In addition, under the Prime Minister's Relief Fund Rs. One lakh as compensation is also being provided by the Prime Minister Office to the acid attacks victim since 08-10-2016.

In addition to above, the Government implements various other projects / schemes under Nirbhaya Fund, which include Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) which is a pan-India single number (112)/ mobile app based system for emergencies; a cyber-crime reporting portal to report obscene content; safe city projects in 8 cities (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai) including infrastructure, technology adoption and capacity building in community through awareness programmes, establishment of state of the art DNA Laboratory at CFSL, Chandigarh; assistance to 28 States/ UTs to strengthen Forensic Science Laboratories; setting up of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for speedy disposal of cases of rape and cases under POCSO Act; setting up/ strengthening of Anti Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) in all districts of the country; setting up/ strengthening of Women Help Desks (WHDs) at Police Stations etc.

Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) has also undertaken several initiatives, which, inter-alia include 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. Webinars on women safety with sensitivity, gender sensitization of police personnel etc. have also been organized by BPR&D.

Recognizing the need for psycho-social counselling to women affected by violence and in distress, the 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 of women facing violence and distress.

The Government of India attaches top priority to the Public Grievances and complaints of women and girls received in the Ministry through various channels and regularly monitor them through periodic meetings, weekly Video Conferences, emails, phone calls etc.

Moreover, 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 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 and children. In respect of the registered complaints, NCW takes up the matter with stakeholders especially the Police Authorities to ensure that the complaints are redressed and brought to logical conclusion.
