

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2691
TO BE ANSWERED ON 04.08.2023

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

2691. SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA:

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

- (a) the steps taken for the abolition of dowry and prevention of domestic violence in the last three years, State-wise;
- (b) the efforts in addition to the present laws taken by the Government at the social level to eradicate dowry and domestic violence;
- (c) whether the units of local administration, Panchayats etc have been included in this;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to utilize visual and audio medium including Doordarshan to create awareness and encourage public participation in eradication of these social evils, if so, the details and plan/programme of the Government in this regard; and
- (f) if not, the reasons therefor?

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. 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 including the cases of domestic violence, rests primarily with the respective State Governments and they are competent to deal with it. Further, the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 and the Indian Penal Code (IPC) have adequate provisions to tackle the menace. The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 prohibits and penalizes giving or taking of dowry so as to safeguard women against dowry harassment.

As per Section-9 of 'the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 (PWDVA), it is 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. However, conviction of a person comes under purview of the Judiciary, who decides the matter after careful consideration of factual positions and all related aspects as per the provisions of the PWDVA. The PWDVA defines dowry harassment within the purview of domestic violence and provides remedies such as protection order, residence order etc. against it.

The implementation of 'the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA), 2005' and 'the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961', comes under purview of the respective State Government/ UT Administration. Nevertheless, the Central Government gives highest priority to ensuring safety and security of women and is implementing "Mission Shakti" an umbrella scheme for safety, security and empowerment of women. The Scheme include 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 and Universalisation of Women Helplines (WHL) which provide emergency and non-emergency services to women in need by connecting them with appropriate authorities. 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. 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, 13557 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 smooth functioning of Women Help Desks. 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.

Under the "Samarthya" sub-scheme of umbrella Scheme **Mission Shakti**, a new component i.e. Hub for Empowerment of Women (HEW) has been included with the aim to facilitate inter-sectoral convergence of schemes and programs meant for women at the Central, State/ UT and District levels for creating an environment in which women are able to realize their full potential. The support under the HEW provides for guiding, linking and hand holding women to various institutional and schematic set ups for their empowerment and development including access to healthcare, quality education, career and vocational counseling/ training, financial inclusion, entrepreneurship, backward and forward linkages, health and safety for workers, social security and digital literacy at districts/ Blocks/ Gram Panchayats level across the country.

Further, the Government, through institutions like the National Commission for Women (NCW), National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and their 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 children 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.
