



## Violence Against Working Women

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### ABSTRACT

*Indian society is no doubt changing, but if there is progress on certain fronts it is accompanied by regression on others. The aspirations for equality and freedom for improvement in their status are undoubtedly increasing among Indian women. What is particularly distressing is that lack of security for women is prevailed everywhere. The incidence of violence against women in 2011 was the highest in Delhi, among all states. Even as the nation was protesting against the Delhi gang rape, more cases of sexual assault began to find column space in newspapers. There was an increase in the incidence of rape, escalation in kidnapping and abduction, a threefold increase in the incidence of cruelty by husbands and relatives, increase in dowry deaths, and a doubling of the incidence of molestation and sexual harassment. So far, the majority of the political parties have studiously ignored the sentiments of the people on the issues. The Delhi gang rape ignites public anger in an unprecedented manner, but can it force the state to summon the will to crack down on such violence and counter social attitudes that seek to resist women's growing in the public sphere? The incidence was the trigger, and what followed was a response to the every-day reality faced by women. This was the first time students poured out into the streets on the issue of violence against women. The government should ensure the safety and security of working women by provisioning of infrastructure, setting up of fast-track courts, speedy trials.*

**KEYWORDS :** Sexual harassment, Sexual assault, Molestation, Violence, Gender Inequality

"Gender inequality is another important aspect, which deserves special attention. Women and girls represent half the population and our society has not been fair to this half. Their socio-economic status is improving, but gaps persist. The emergence of women in public spaces, which is an absolutely essential part of social emancipation, is accompanied by growing threats to their safety and security."

- Dr. Manmohan Singh

Violence against women is a crime and yet it is universal. It happens in every country in the world, in every echelon of society. Incidents of violence and rape against female gender have increased. In South Africa, a woman is killed every six hours by a partner, in Guatemala, two women are murdered on average each day, hundreds of women have been slaughtered in Mexico. Even after sixty five years of independence women are not safe in most parts of our country, including the capital. In India in 2010, about 8,391 dowry deaths cases were reported across the country, meaning a bride was burned every 90 min .

Indian society is no doubt changing, but if there is progress on certain fronts it is accompanied by regression on others. Percentage of women in literacy raised to 65.5. The aspirations for equality and freedom for improvement in their status are undoubtedly increasing among Indian women. If women reservations had been implemented some four decades ago, there could have been some changes.

India prides itself in having the largest number of professionally qualified women in the world. Our women excel as authors, actors, political leaders, legal workers, law enforcers, sportswomen, social activists and media personnel. The President of the country, Lok Sabha speaker and the three Chief Ministers were women in 2013. There have been many gains for Indian women in terms of the realization of their rights over the last five years, their active participation in society and their economic empowerment. These gains have come after many years of struggle against social, cultural and economic discrimination that has been a core element of Indian society.

India has transformed from a society where women received a little education to increasing opportunity and independence. Today's young women of India do things that their mothers and grandmothers would never have imagined about. Women are being educated, are joining the workforce and entering into spaces that have been male-dominated. Women across India continue to battle new challenges, they face them daily, are underpinned by patriarchy are striving towards a woman friendly future.

India is a society in transition. By the growth of India's middleclass, we are also seeing a growth in the number of modern Indian women. Their determination to build a new gender-friendly India gives us hope for a better future. Indian women face many challenges frequently in the India's movement feel that for every step they take

forward, they are pushed two steps back. They are slowly deconstructing traditional social mindsets and try to achieve something new for women's rights and empowerment. The achievements may be small but give them strength to continue in their struggle. In the past decade, there has been a sea change in the role played by women in all sectors, be it economic, socio-cultural administrative level.

Sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination are universal phenomena. Women face alarming rates of violence in both public and private spheres. A year after the Delhi gang-rape

case, little has changed. Despite new laws, victims still face apathy while reporting crimes. Impunity is a very important aspect in crimes against women.

- \* The rookie journalist who was gangraped in an abandoned mill complex in Mumbai was shown a pornographic clip during trial to confirm it was the same her rapists showed her.
- \* A young law researcher's blog about sexual harassment by a retired Supreme Court judge with whom she had worked.
- \* A young journalist of Tehelka magazine complained to her editor about molestation by Tarun Tejpal.
- \* A number of daily wage workers were being raped and killed at their workplaces.

### DREAMS DISBANDED

Members of Kashmir's first all-girl band forced to flee following fatwa. When the three Srinagar girls formed the band in 2012, they had no idea it would end this way. Their facebook page, Pragaash from darkness to light, gives an insight into the dreams and aspirations of the teens who shared a love for music. The band introduced itself from darkness to light ended because some abusive comments appeared in face book and fatwa followed proving that a change of scene is welcome, but not in Kashmir.

C.A.Sundaram Supreme Court lawyer said, "If we seek to be a developed nation and an economic power, we need to get our systems organized in a manner comparable to the superpowers, where all facilities are basic to crime detection and prevention."

In 2013 two important laws on women's safety – Criminal Law (Amendment) Act and Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act were passed. The movement against atrocities on women is, therefore, at a crucial juncture. There are encouraging developments which show that even influential people like Tarun Tejpal and Asaram Bapu cannot expect immunity, there are still thousands of women who dare not complain for fear of brutal backlash.

It is very difficult for a young woman who has been sexually harassed at workplace to come forward. Even though she is uncomfortable, she doesn't want to think her professional success is unearned. A Professional woman wants to grow in her career and not to be noticed for these things. Mihira Sood a lawyer says that the silence of women emboldens perpetrators, they know very well that women will not speak out, speaking out is important, even if they do not prosecute someone legally.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexually determined behavior whether directly or by implication as:

- \* Physical contact and advances
- \* A demand or request for sexual favours
- \* Sexually coloured remarks
- \* Showing pornography
- \* Any other unwelcome physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of sexual nature.

**LAW STILL DEFEATS THE VICTIM**

"Hardworking student, dutiful daughter, caring sister, the Delhi Gang-rape victim was Every woman" Unfortunately in India, many women and even girls below ten are being attacked and some are killed, we never hear about them. Delhi gang-rape is a case where the horror has rung around the world. In some sense she has done what many other victims couldn't she's somehow managed to make her sad fate known to others. She was always a warrior. The 23-year-old gang-rape victim did not turn into a fighter only on the night of December 16, when she kicked and clawed to defend herself during the brutal attack she had been fighting every day of her young life.

**ORDINANCE**

The Criminal Law Ordinance 2013, approved by the President on February 3, was meant to be the nation's dream tryst with its women citizens. Instead it has started a debate on its legal ramifications. The much awaited ordinance on sexual violence leaves women, lawmakers and jurists angry with its imprecise and hurried drafting. The government should introduce stringent laws to punish rapists. This is the least we can do to honour the victims.

**COMMITTEES**

A Committee set up by the Maharashtra government to recommend measure to curb crime against women has suggested a clampdown on obscene and offensive material available on the internet and social networking skills.

Justice Chandrasekhar Dharmadhikari Committee also suggested that a rape accused who is 15 years old or above must not be treated as Juvenile.

Immediate restrictions on networking, facebook, mobile phone and vulgar and indecent conversations and exchange of pictures.

The names of the people convicted crimes against women be pub-

lished, this would bring about awareness and prevent such crimes.

Those who do not report the violence against women too should be treated as offenders."Being a mute spectator is a crime".

If a Police Officer refuses to take cognisance of a crime against women, he should be prosecuted and his senior should be held responsible too.

The Haryana State government has taken several steps to curb cases of violence against women, posting a woman officer of IG rank to assist the additional DGP, and setting up 21 fast track courts for speedy trial of heinous crimes against women.

Directions have been issued to register cases within 24 hours against the culprits involved cases of rape and molestation.

A four digit women help line '1091' has been activated to provide instant help to women in distress. PCR vans exclusively with woman cops have been introduced.

Comparitively the crime rate reduced by all these measures taken by the Haryana government. All states should go in the way of Haryana.

The government should ensure the safety and security of women by providing infrastructure, tightening of laws, setting up of fast-track courts, speedy trials, and better policing of the roads might be a part of the wider solution, but the processes that shape mindsets and attitudes need to be corrected first. And that cannot happen in a society where everything, including are viewed as commodities. Then only woman can secure life and can empower the nation as well as the world

**SUMMARY**

If India does not treat the assaults upon her women more seriously, then India not only denigrates half of its citizens, it also diminishes the country's prospects. Because how can a country thrive, how can it bloom, if half of its citizens are confined by fear, if half of its citizens cannot trust the police or the judiciary or indeed, it's men? India must act to right this wrong, and it must act now. The real battle is to change the way in which men relate to women and create a culture that does not involve subjugation of women. The government must act wisely now or perish.

Firstly, would we resolve not to remain inert spectators when a girl is molested in public in broad day light.

Secondly, would we protest against and prevent gender discrimination with in our families.

If we just protest and avoid bringing about changes in our homes and society around us, we will continue to get the administration we deserve.

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