

PRESS RELEASE

Date: 22nd January, 2012

National Commission for women represented by Ms Kirti Singh Advocate deposed before the Justice Verma committee constituted consequent to the widespread protest as a result of 16th December Gang rape. The NCW highlighted the following points before the committee:

- It has been the consistent endeavour of National Commission for Women to address the needs and concerns of women in the country not only the one Delhi incident.
- The Commission, as per its mandate has continuously been recommending amendments in the Criminal and other relevant laws to make them more effective for protections of the rights of the women. Proposed the Sexual Assault Bill –recommended amendments to laws relating to rape.
- Substitution of new Sections of 375 IPC and 376 IPC wherein Section 375 is now being proposed to be defined as Sexual Assault and includes various forms of Sexual Assault.
- Section 376 of the proposed bill provides for the punishment for sexual assault.
- The exception provided in section 375 of the proposed Bill is an omission and has to be deleted since marital rape has been defined and punishment provided in section 375 (1) of IPC.
- Recommendation of NCW to add a **new section 509 (B) IPC making stalking of women a crime.**
- Inclusion of separate clause **for acid attack with minimum punishment.**
- **Throwing or using of acid in any form on the body of other persons –penalty not less than 10 years imprisonment**

- **Attempt to throw or use acid also a crime with punishment.**
- NCW has proactively been working and in recent past constituted at least 10 inquiry committees for all over India taking suo-moto cognizance on complaints relating to rape alone. Some general Recommendation- - like fast track courts, prompt filing of FIR, speedy trial, toll free help line, counseling, capacity building and sensitisation of police & judiciary etc. by respective concerned agencies.
- **Proposed for a scheme for relief and rehabilitation of rape victims.**

The NCW formulated the Scheme in pursuance of the Hon'ble Supreme Court direction in the case of Delhi Domestic Working Women's Forum Vs. Union of India and others writ petition (CRL) No.362/93 .Under the Scheme, NCW proposed that victims of rape should be provided with interim assistance of Rs. 20,000 in favour of the victim preferably within 15 days to 3 weeks, to be disbursed by the District Board after preliminary enquiry.

On assessment of needs of affected women, the Board may also provide for support service and incur a maximum expenditure of Rs.50,000.

The final amount of Rs.1.3 lacs is to be directly disbursed by the District Board within a period of 1 month from the date on which the affected person gives evidence in the trial or within 1 year from the date of filing of FIR, (whichever is less) in case where the recording of evidence has been unduly delayed for reasons beyond control of the victim.

In special cases, the assistance may be increased by the State Board up to Rs. 3 lacs, in cases involving minor girls, mentally challenged, handicapped women, HIV / AIDS affected women or those who get pregnant because of the rape etc.

Proposed for a Scheme for relief and rehabilitation of Offences (by Acids) on women and children- Considering the gravity of the impact of acid attacks on the life of the victims. The Commission had earlier drafted a Bill titled "Prevention of Offences (By Acids) 2008". Subsequently it was suggested to have a scheme on the lines of relief and rehabilitation to victim of rape and accordingly the Commission has formulated scheme to relief and rehabilitation to the victims of

rape which is on the lines of the scheme relating to rape victims. Main features of the scheme are:-

- Scheme would be administered by the NCW
- The authorities at District and State level shall be the same as suggested for the scheme for relief and rehabilitation of victims of rape
- Amount upto Rs 5 lakh to be immediately provided to the medical facility towards treatment upto the maximum of Rs 30 Lakhs
- Rs 5 Lakh earmarked towards rehabilitation of the victim

The revised scheme has been sent to the Ministry for consideration

- NCW has written to the Hon'ble Law Minister for setting up of exclusive fast track courts for crimes specifically targeted against women.
- Committees have been constituted on various issues like 'Gender and Education', Expert Committee on Laws, Expert Committee on North East etc .
- The National Commission for Women recommended certain amendments in the NCW Act 1990 which have been forwarded to the Ministry of Women and Child Development in 2006 and again in 2007. The Commission felt the need to review the Act with a view to make it strong, independent and more effective. Recently an Expert Committee has also been formed –relooking into the same – elevation of status and powers of the Commission.