



PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
(Research Unit)
Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
Government of India



International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25)

Government of India committed to eliminate any form of violence against women

(Ministry of Women and Child Development)

November 24, 2022

"A distortion has crept in our conduct and we at times insult women. Can we take a pledge to get rid of this from our behaviour and values? It is important that in speech and conduct we do nothing that lowers the dignity of women."

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Introduction

November 25 is celebrated every year as the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#). Violence against women and girls (VAWG)¹ is one of the most widespread, persistent and devastating human rights violations in our world today and remains largely unreported due to the impunity, silence, stigma and shame surrounding it.

In general terms, VAWG manifests itself in physical, sexual and psychological forms. The "Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women" issued by the UN General Assembly in 1993, defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."



History

On December 20, 1993, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, paving the path towards eradicating violence against women and girls worldwide.

Further, on February 07, 2000, **November 25 was officially designated as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women**. This step also became an invitation for governments, international organizations as well as NGOs to join together and organize activities designed to raise public awareness of the issue every year on this date.

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/observances/ending-violence-against-women-day>

UNITE! Activism to End Violence against Women & Girls is the theme for year 2022.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women will mark the launch of the **UNITE** campaign (Nov 25- Dec 10) — an initiative of 16 days of activism concluding on the day that commemorates the **International Human Rights Day**² (December 10).



Violence against women continues to be an obstacle to achieving equality, development, peace as well as to the fulfilment of women and girls' human rights. All in all, the promise of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) - to leave no one behind - cannot be fulfilled without putting an end to violence against women and girls.

In India, the Central Government is committed to eliminating any form of violence against women and girls through numerous policies, schemes and programmes.

Constitutional Provisions for the Protection of Women in India

- The Constitution of India not only grants equality to women but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women to ease the cumulative barriers of socio-economic, educational and political disadvantages faced by them.

As mentioned under the Fundamental Rights:

- The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.
- The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.
- There shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Also, the Directive Principles of State Policy mention that:

- The State shall direct its policy towards securing to all citizens men and women, equally, the right to means of livelihood, and shall strive to ensure equal pay for equal work.
- The State is also directed to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.

Above all, the Constitution imposes a **Fundamental Duty** on every citizen to **renounce practices derogatory to dignity of women**.

Legislative measures – Laws to Counter Violence against Women in India

To uphold the Constitutional mandate, the State has enacted various legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights, to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and also to provide support services, especially to working women. The crimes which are directed specifically against women are characterized as 'Crimes Against Women'. These are broadly classified under two categories³:

² <https://www.un.org/en/observances/human-rights-day>

³ <https://pib.gov.in/newsite/erecontent.aspx?relid=35773>

1. Crimes against women identified under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)	2. Crimes against women identified under the Special laws
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rape (Section 376 IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kidnapping and abduction for different purposes (Section 363 – 373 IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their attempts (Section 302/304-B of IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Torture, both mental and physical (Section 498-A of IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Molestation (Section 354 of IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual harassment (Section 509 of IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importation of girls (up to 21 years of age) (Section 366-B of IPC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2018

National Commission for Women (NCW)

The Government of India, on January 31, 1992, set up a statutory body called the National Commission for Women (NCW) with a specific mandate to study and monitor all matters relating to the Constitutional and legal safeguards provided to women; review the existing legislations to suggest amendments wherever necessary; and to look into complaints involving deprivation of the rights of women. Almost all the state governments have also set up State Commissions for Women (SCW) with similar functions.

NCW under its statutory mandate has been looking into complaints under various categories of violence/deprivation of women rights from across the country. These complaints are received in writing or online through its website i.e., www.ncw.nic.in. The Commission processes complaints to facilitate providing adequate and expeditious relief to women ensuring suitable redressal of grievances.



Meanwhile, giving utmost importance to women's empowerment, the Union Government, under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has taken a plethora of steps in the last eight years towards assuring the safety and security of women and girls.

Mission Shakti

'Mission Shakti' is a scheme in mission mode aimed at strengthening interventions for women safety, security and empowerment. It seeks to realise the Government's commitment for "women-led development"⁴ by addressing issues affecting women on a life-cycle continuum basis and by making them equal partners in nation-building through convergence and citizen-ownership. The scheme seeks to make women economically empowered, exercising free choice over their minds and bodies in an atmosphere free from violence and threat. It also seeks to reduce the care burden on women and increase female labour force participation by promoting skill development, capacity building, financial literacy, access to micro-credit etc.



Detailed guidelines of 'Mission Shakti' Scheme are available [here](#).

Shelter homes under 'Swadhar Greh Scheme'

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing the 'Swadhar Greh Scheme' revised with effect from April 01, 2016. The scheme caters to **primary needs of women in difficult circumstances – women and girls rendered homeless due to family discord, crime, violence, mental stress, social ostracism** or are being forced into prostitution and are in danger. Through the provisions of shelter, food, clothing, counselling, training, clinical and legal aid, the scheme aims to rehabilitate such women in difficult circumstances economically and emotionally.

The details of capacity and occupancy of state-wise Swadhar Grehs can be found [here](#).

Sakhi - One Stop Centres

The Ministry of Women and Child Development also implements the One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme⁵ with effect from April 01, 2015. These OSCs provide a range of integrated services under one roof including police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and counselling, psycho-social counselling and temporary shelter to **women affected by violence or in distress**. The setting up of OSCs from the year 2015 onward, at district level, have provided a **dedicated platform to women facing violence and who are in distress** to get necessary help and assistance, which was not available earlier. As of 30 September, 2022, 733 OSCs have been approved for 729 districts across the country, out of which 708 OSCs have been operationalized in 35 States/ UTs, which have **assisted over 6.17 lakh women**. For details on state-wise number of One Stop Centres (OSCs) set up in the country, click [here](#).

⁴ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1812422>

⁵ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1814091>

Stree Manoraksha

Ministry of Women and Child Development has engaged the services of National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru for providing basic and advanced training under the project named 'Stree Manoraksha'⁶ to the staff of One Stop Centres (OSCs) across the country on handling psycho-social and mental health care needs to support the women facing violence and women in distress.



Digital Shakti Campaign

The National Commission for Women has been implementing the Digital Shakti Campaign⁷, a pan-India project aimed at digitally empowering and skilling women and girls in the cyberspace. In line with its commitment to create safe spaces for women and girls online, Digital Shakti is focused on making women digitally skilled and aware to stand up against any illegal/inappropriate activity online.

National Domestic Violence Helpline

- The Government of India implements **the Universalisation of Women Helpline (WHL)⁸ Scheme** since April 01, 2015 with the aim to provide 24x7 emergency and non-emergency responses, including **assistance to women facing any kind of violence and distress**, through a toll-free telecom service with short code **181** across the country by referral service. Women helpline is operational in 34 States/ UTs and it **has handled more than 68.70 lakh calls** since its operationalization (as on March 2022).
- The Government also implements **Emergency Response Support System (ERSS) under Nirbhaya Fund**, which is a pan-India, single, internationally recognized number, i.e., 112 based system for various emergencies such as police, fire and ambulance services, with computer aided dispatch of field resources to the location of distress. It has been operationalized in 35 States/ UTs.
- Further to protect women from any kind of violence including domestic violence, the **National Commission for Women (NCW) has launched Helpline number(s) for reporting of domestic violence incidence** during the year 2020-21. One such helpline number is **7827170170** to provide 24x7 online support to women in distress through referral by linking them with Police, Hospitals, District Legal Services Authority, psychological counsellors etc. The portal is driven by Interactive Voice Response (IVR) mechanism through Digital India in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- Further, to assist the women facing domestic violence during the pandemic when the survivors were confined at homes with their abusers, a **WhatsApp number 7217735372** was also launched as emergency response during lockdown. In matters which require urgent intervention, the State Police authorities were also approached through telephone calls/ email for providing immediate assistance to these women.

⁶ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1802477>

⁷ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1876462>

⁸ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseIframePage.aspx?PRID=1809716>

Ujjawala Scheme

The Ujjawala Scheme⁹ is being implemented as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and for Rescue, Rehabilitation, Re-integration and Repatriation of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation.

Working Women Hostel

Working Women Hostel Scheme is being run by the Government with the objective to provide safe and conveniently located accommodation for working women, with day care facility for their children, wherever possible, in urban, semi urban, or even rural areas where employment opportunity for women exist.

Special Courts for Offence against Women and Children

The Government has been running a [Centrally Sponsored Scheme](#) since October 2019 for setting up of 1023 Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) for expeditious trial and disposal of cases related to rape and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. The scheme is to be implemented in all 31 States/UTs. As on 30 June 2022, a total of 728 FTSCs, including 408 exclusive POCSO Courts were made operational in 28 States/UTs¹⁰.



IT initiatives and other steps taken by the Government to enhance the safety and security of women in India

Taking a tough stand against heinous incidents of sexual assault, Government of India has made the punishment for rape more stringent through the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2018. To ensure that amendments in the law effectively translate at ground level, various initiatives have been taken and their progress is continuously monitored. **Let's take a look at them here:**

ITSSO and NDSO

Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO) is an online analytical tool launched to monitor and track timely completion of police investigations in sexual assault. Further, **National Database of Sexual Offenders" (NDSO)**¹¹ has been launched to identify repeat offenders and receive alerts on sex offenders.

Cri-MAC

Crime Multi Agency Center (Cri-MAC) has been introduced on March 12, 2020 for police stations and higher offices in all States/UTs to share information on heinous crimes and other issues related to coordination in cases of inter-state crime. It can be used to send alerts or related information on crime and inter-state criminals to the States/UTs via an email/SMS.

⁹ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1781686>

¹⁰ <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=1846197>

¹¹ <https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1575574>

New Citizen Services

New citizen Services have been launched by National Crime Records Bureau on its portal digitalpolicecitizenservice.gov.in relevant for cases of Crimes against Women. These services include functionalities like 'Missing Person Search' that helps citizens find their missing kin from the national database of recovered unidentified found person/unidentified dead bodies. Another service is the 'Proclaimed offenders' functionality that helps to provide online information on proclaimed offenders to citizens.

Cyber Crime Prevention against Women

Cyber Crime Prevention against Women & Children is a key focus area for the government. The Ministry of Home Affairs has launched a portal, www.cybercrime.gov.in wherein citizens can report obscene content and expect it to be blocked within 72 hours. A revamped portal has been launched on 30th August 2019 by the MHA.

Filing a Complaint on National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal

This portal is an initiative of Government of India to facilitate victims/complainants to report cyber crime complaints online. This portal caters to complaints pertaining to cyber crimes only with special focus on cyber crimes against women and children. Complaints reported on this portal are dealt by law enforcement agencies/ police based on the information available in the complaints. It is imperative to provide correct and accurate details while filing complaint for prompt action.

Please contact local police in case of an emergency or for reporting crimes other than cyber crimes. National police helpline number is 112. National women helpline number is 181 and Cyber Crime Helpline is 1930.

[Learn about cyber crime](#) [File a complaint](#)

Safe City Projects in 8 cities

Among the projects funded by the Nirbhaya Fund, Safe City Projects in eight cities (Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai) are under implementation. The projects involve the use of technology to improve the safety of women in India. This includes the use of drones, installation of CCTV cameras to alert Police about criminals and criminal activity, technology-enabled infrastructure like smart lighting systems which glow as soon as it gets dark to eliminate dark alleys and crime hot-spots from cities, and toilets for women which can be located on Google Maps.

Government of India accords paramount importance to the safety and security of women. As a result of the various steps taken by the Government of India towards women's safety, there has been a significant decline in the number of incidents of crime and violence against women and girls, giving them a hope for a better and safer future.

References:

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