

Crime against Women: With Reference to Recent Incidents in Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT--- A Committee on empowerment on women this year rapped the Government for failing to formulate a concrete action plan to prevent the “astronomical” increase in incidents of sexual abuse and creating a safe environment for women. Considering the fact that there would not be any noticeable impact in issuing advisories to the States, specific modalities should be worked out and implemented by the Government. This paper tries to analyze the increasing trend in crimes against women in TamilNadu in recent years and the relevant measures to be taken by the State.

Keywords--- Crime, Women, DowryDeath ,Rape, Tamilnadu

1. INTRODUCTION

Crime against Women has been an area of high priority for Tamil Nadu Police. Several measures have been undertaken to tackle social menace affecting women at large. While on one hand, special attention is being paid towards prevention of crimes against women by increased police Virgil and by harnessing the resources of the community including women organizations, All Women’s Police Stations(AWPs) and Women Help lines are functioning in these AWPs.

2. PROVISIONS UNDER IPC DEALING WITH CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN

- 1) Rape (Sec. 376 IPC)
- 2) Kidnapping & Abduction (Sec. 363-373 IPC)
- 3) Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or theirs attempts (Sec. 302/304-B IPC)
- 4) Cruelty by husband or relatives(Sec. 498-A IPC)
- 5) Molestation (Sec. 354 IPC)
- 6) Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)
- 7) Importation of Girls(up to 21 years of age) (Sec. 366-B IPC)

2.1 Incidence of Crimes against Women

Head-wise incidence of reported Crimes against Women during 2008 to 2012 along with percentage variation is given below:

S. No	Crime Heads	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	% Variation In 2012 over 2011
1	Rape	573	596	686	677	737	8.8
2	Kidnapping and Abduction	1160	1133	1464	1743	1693	-2.9
3	Dowry Death	207	194	165	152	110	-27.6
4	Cruelty by Husband and his Relatives	1648	1460	1570	1812	1965	8.4
5	Molestation	1705	1242	1405	1467	1494	1.8
6	Sexual Harassment	974	501	638	464	382	-17.7
7	Importation of Girls	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Immoral Traffic(P) Act	687	716	567	420	500	19
9	Indecent Representation of	4	2	14	10	34	240

	Women(Prohibition Act)						
10	Dowry Prohibition Act	262	207	199	195	277	42.1
	TOTAL	7811	7220	6051	6940	7192	3.6

Table: 1

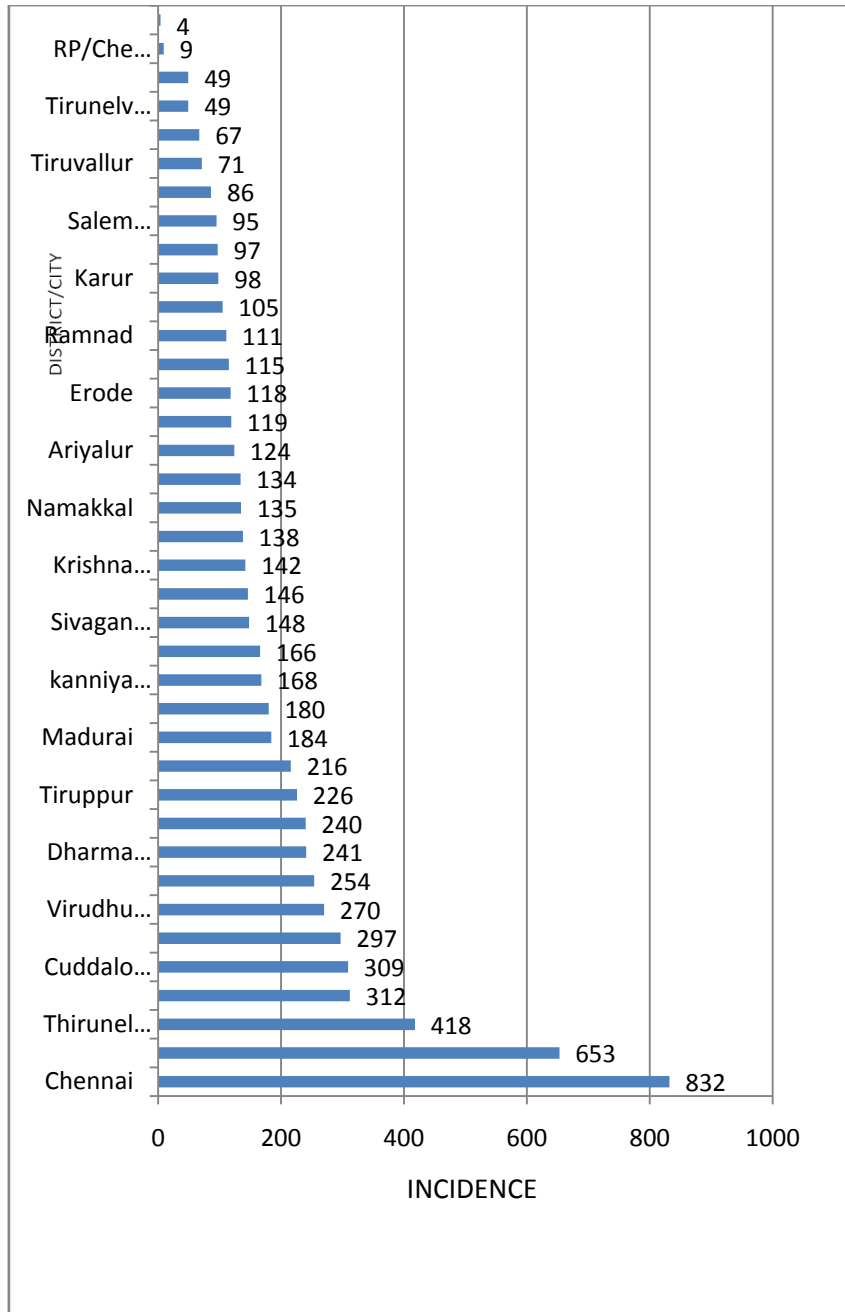


Figure -1

2.2 Increasing Incidents of Crime against Wome

2011		RAPE CASES IN WESTERN T.N. 2014
Crime against Women in TN 6940 cases	State accounted For 3% (national total)	July 18 19-yr old college girl gang raped by a gang of four at Rayakottai in Krishnagiri
Cases of Rape 677	Incest rape 2	June 11 Two girls aged 10 and 11 yrs who were staying in a home at pollachi in Coimbatore district were raped at knifepoint by a 23-yr old man
2012		Feb 23 Two brothers aged 20-yrs were arrested for raping an 18-yr old college student in Coimbatore
Crime against Women-7192	State accounted For 2.94%	
Cases of rape 737	Incest rape 4	Feb 14 10-yr old girl of Chendrapalayam village near vazhapadi in salem district was raped and murdered by a gang of five men of the same locality
2013		Feb 8 Nine yrs old differently abled girl raped by 45-yr old man Tiruchengodu taluk in Namakkal district
Crime against Women 7475 cases	State accounted For 2.41%	Feb 1 15-yr old girl was raped by her classmate's 45-yr old father in Namakkal districts
Cases of rape 923	Incest rape 6	

Table: 2

3. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The incidence of crimes against Women during the period 2012 has shown an increase of 3.63% over the previous year. Highest incidence of crimes against women has been reported under the head:- Cruelty by husband and his relatives followed by kidnapping and Abduction and Molestation together constitute the largest part. Rape accounted for 10.25% of the crimes against women. District/City wise incidence and rate of crimes against Women during 2012 is present in the above chart, these depicts the rate of Crimes against women during 2011-12.

An analysis of Crimes against Women reported in districts reveals that the highest incidence of Crimes against Women has been witnessed in Chennai City(832) while it was the lowest in Tirunelveli city and The Nilgiris(49 each) . An analysis of statistics of districts reveals that rape (94),Kidnapping and Abduction (188) as well as Molestation (239) were highest in Villupuram.Sexual Harassment was highest in Chennai City(141). Cruelty by husband and his relatives was reported the highest in Tirunelveli District (266) and Dowry death was reported the highest in Chennai city (12).

4. MAJOR ISSUES

Major issues pertaining to crime statistics include:

- i) Large extent of non-reporting/ recording of crime/offences at different levels of administration, particularly with reference to non-cognizable offences having social implications.
- ii) Inadequate coverage of crime heads –under coverage due to non-reporting for indetified reasons.

- iii) Reliability-systemic biases, errors due to overlaps between different sections of IPC, outreach to vulnerable (women, children and backward communities).
- iv) Timelines-rationalization of data flow.
- v) Identification of new types of crime/offences for collection of statistics theorem.

The above issues were discussed by Committee on Crime statistics constituted in October, 2010 by the Ministry of Statistics & Program Implementation. Crime is a State subject and State governments might be sensitive to the number of cases reported in their domains. States with better reporting systems are more empowered and educated public might record higher rates of crime. Further, in lot of cases the offended person may not report the crime put of social considerations or out of the fear of consequences example, crime against women, children etc. Hence the comparisons across the states and across categories of crime must always be done with caution.

4.1 Long road to justice

The supreme court mandated Victim Compensation Fund is an excellent scheme for rehabilitating the victims of such heinous crimes as acid attacks, rape, sexual abuse, human trafficking and molestation. But herein lies the catch. No claim made by the victims under sub-section (4) of the Section 357-A of the code shall be entertained six months after the date of commission of crime as per the government notification on the scheme.

4.2 Provisions for appeal

Though provisions for appeal to condone delay in seeking compensation are in place, senior advocate Sudha Ramalingham told The Hindu that such a short cut off period might unnecessarily jeopardize the prospects of victims getting assistance. The Tamilnadu Government has been operating victim assistance scheme even before the Supreme court ordered the setting up of the fund. The state scheme covers dowry deaths, attempt to burn or murder owing to dowry problem and eve-teasing, too.

3.3 Concerns at delays

Delays occur at various stages of addressing crimes, be it the fitting of the first Information Reports and charge sheets or court proceedings. During the course of interviews The Hindu conducted with lawyers, acid attack survivors, activists, and the families of the victims of sexual offences, concerns at delays came up again and again. P.T.Rajan, a BSNL employee and father of dowry death victim from Thirumullaivoyal, said that even over two years after the death of his daughter at her in-laws house, the police had not filed the charge sheet yet. She was set ablaze by her in-laws for not meeting her sister-in-law's demand for gold bangles.

“My son-in-law had forced her to drink acid a month before her death. I spent Rs.10,000 on her treatment. But, at the end of the day, it is not the lack of compensation that hurts me so much as the lack of justice.”

3.4 Four surgeries

D.Geetha, a Madurai-based lawyer fighting for women's rights, recounted the story of Kavitha of North Chennai who underwent four surgeries after an acid attack six years ago.

“She did not receive any financial assistance from the government. Though the government is often prompt in awarding compensation for the death of acid attack victims, it should prioritize funding for survivors of such attacks as they have to spend a lot on re-constructive surgeries”. The most disturbing story was the one narrated by Rani,48. Her husband had poured acid over her 20-years ago. To date, he is at large She told “ I make ends meet by tailoring. But the wounds of the past have not healed yet. I still suffer from fatigue and headaches and cannot work long hours like a normal, healthy person”.

Rani has lost hope that justice will ever be done. She echoes Mr.Rajan's sentiment “ I don't care for the money, but I want the culprit to be brought to books.”

5. CONCLUSION

Though the government is often prompt in awarding compensation for the death of acid attack victims, it should prioritize funding for survivors of such attacks as they have to spend a lot on re-constructive surgeries. Short cut off period might unnecessarily jeopardize the prospects of victims getting assistance. States with better reporting systems are more empowered and educated public might record higher rates of crime. Lethargic action by the Cops

plays a vital role in increasing trend in crimes against women. When interacted they accuse the State for poor strength in manpower. Lower reporting due to the treatment given by the Police when aggrieved come to the station for complaints is another cause. The need of the hour is that a special co-ordination or a monitoring mechanism should be put in place keeping in view the astronomical increase in crimes against women in all States and Union Territories as rightly recommended by the Committee on Empowerment on women by the Union Government.

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