



Editor's Column

This December, like the one, two years ago, has once again witnessed a shocking incident of rape of a woman by a radio-taxi driver in his vehicle. The young woman had hired a cab run by Uber only to be attacked by the driver with a long but suppressed history of committing sexual offences. This only demonstrates once again that the national outrage following the Delhi gangrape of December 2012 has gone in vain.

Admittedly, in this country, there is no safe public transport system. The arrival of radio cabs was considered safer than the existing services because they have GPS and companies are supposed to do a proper police verification of their drivers. Uber boasts of a stringent system of background checks for its drivers in the United States. It must answer why it did not follow the same system of checks while operating in India.

Moreover, the transport department now says that Uber does not have the required taxi operating permits for Delhi; then how was it allowed to ply all these days? How the accused could produce a forged "police verification" document?

According to some officials, Uber has been operating its services illegally in Delhi for a long time. If so, how is it that they got away with such blatant

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Unsafe Ride for Women

irregularity until now? Obviously the transport authorities had been aware of the illegality but decided to take no action. Not only Uber, now the authorities have also cracked down on other offending taxi service providers. In fact, the bus in which the December 16 incident had occurred had also been running without permission. Clearly, no lessons have been learnt.

Surprisingly, the driver who had at

least three cases of rape or attempt to rape in police stations in UP, has been working freely in New Delhi and neither the Uber management nor the police authorities seems to have known of his antecedents. If there had been a national database shared across the country, the accused driver's antecedents would have come to light.

Clearly, the failure of police authorities (who allegedly gave the serial offender a "character certificate") and regulatory regimes once again demonstrates that the government, the police and the transport authorities have failed to initiate foolproof measures to improve women's safety in public places. Unless systemic shortcomings like lack of visible policing in large parts of Delhi or crackdown on transport vehicles that ply without due licenses and clearances are rectified and specific demands for accountability are made, women will continue to be at the receiving end for a long, long time.

Nirbhaya Day

To commemorate Nirbhaya Day, on 16th December the National Commission for Women and Pran Sabharwal Foundation presented a play entitled "Ji-Jaisi Aapki Marzi" by Nadira Babbar & Ekjute in New Delhi. NCW Chairperson Lalitha Kumaramangalam was the Chief Guest and all other members of the Commission were present on the occasion.

The play consisting of four monologues played by four women of different ages showcases the typical relationships by which a woman is known in our society namely, mother daughter sister and wife. The play shows how women have been denied education, financial independence and gender justice from time immemorial. The play reiterates that these mute and muffled voices should be allowed to be heard.



Chairperson addressing the gathering

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI)

The National Commission for Women signed an MOU with Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) recently for conducting situational analysis of women and girls in the states of Odisha, West Bengal, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Tripura.

The study will aim at providing a holistic picture of the status of women and girls in the states so as to evaluate the progress of development of women and girls and recommend

ways and means for strengthening them in their respective states. The Commission will provide the required fund and support for the study. Prof. Lakshami B., signed the MOU on behalf of ASCI while Sunita H. Khurana, Joint Secretary, NCW signed on behalf of the Commission in the presence of NCW Chairperson, Members and officers.



Ms. Sunita Khurana, Joint Secretary, NCW and Lakshami B., exchange MOU as Chairperson (left) Members and officers look on

One Stop Help Centres

Two, One-Stop-Help-Centres (OSHC) for rape survivors have recently become functional at the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital and Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital respectively. These centres provide immediate medical, police, counselling and transport services to rape victims. The unique thing about these one-stop centres is that the victim doesn't have to go to the police station to lodge an FIR. The police will go to the centre, record the statement of the victim and eventually lodge an FIR. The investigation will start from there. The medical examination, treatment, collection of forensic evidence and counselling will be done at these centres.

Important Decisions

- Concerned over safety and security of women passengers, the Indian railways is planning to have a separate women wing in Railway Protection Force. They will be deployed in the ladies compartment. While CCTV will be installed in coaches, a mobile APP for women passengers can send distress messages which will be flashed everywhere.
- The Supreme Court has said that judges found guilty of sexual harassment may have their judicial work taken away and face removal proceedings. Signalling zero tolerance for such crimes, the apex court has said that when allegations have substance for removal of a judge, the Chief Justice of India will advise the concerned judge "to resign or seek voluntary retirement and no further judicial work will be allotted to him if he disregarded the advice". Simultaneously, if the judge "is not abiding by the advice of the Chief Justice of India," the CGI shall intimate the President and the Prime Minister of the findings of a committee of three judges, warranting the launch of proceedings for removal of the concerned judge.
- A day before the second anniversary of the December 16 gang rape, the Delhi police launched an initiative under which girls from the under-privileged strata of the society will be trained in driving and self defence with a view to empowering them both physically and financially.
- To prevent cases of female foeticide in the city, the Gurgaon District Administration has made it mandatory to install close-circuit TV cameras in all ultrasound centres and keep a detailed record of the visiting patients.
- The Union Finance Ministry has launched a special deposit scheme for the girl child - Sukanya Samriddhi Account which can be opened in banks and post offices and 50% of the deposit fund can be withdrawn for higher education and marriage of the girl child after she attains 18 years of age. The scheme would mature on completion of 21 years from the date of the opening of the account and deposits can be made till completion of 14 years.

Expert Committee on North Eastern States

NCW has constituted an expert committee on social, economic and political empowerment of women in North East states in collaboration with State Women Commissions. The second meeting was held at NCW in New Delhi. All State Women Commissions were asked to identify experts and institutions to do research work and prepare questionnaire for this purpose. All State Commissions provided the status report of progress regarding the development of the sub committee and the research design.



Participants at the expert committee meeting of North East States

NCW Chairperson, Members, Officers and Members of the expert committee and representatives of the North East states were present. The states such as Tripura, Sikkim, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur and Assam presented the status of progress regarding the development of the sub committee and the research design. The State Commissions were also directed to incorporate issues and concerns of north east women in their reports.

Chairperson Interacts with HIV Positive Women

NCW Chairperson Lalitha Kumaramangalam addressed a gathering of around 40 community representatives of women living with HIV and sex workers from all over the country in New Delhi. Encouraged by the Chairperson to discuss freely and openly, women raised various issues affecting areas of prevention, treatment, care and support. During the interactive session, they highlighted the above issues requesting her to facilitate a dialogue and interaction with all concerned ministries, departments and agencies.



NCW Chairperson (right) receiving the Memorandum

A memorandum summarizing the discussion was presented to her by the community members. The Chairperson said that having worked in areas concerning HIV/AIDS for many years, she realized the importance of community involvement in such programmes and in monitoring the outcomes of these interventions. "I will do my bit to broaden the dialogues between the government and the community groups," she added.

Complaints Received by NCW in writing and online in November 2014

Month November, 2014	Opening balance (Pending of previous month)	Complaints received	Number of complaints on which action taken		Complaints pending for action
			Previous	Current	
In Writing	847	3146	847	3146	NIL
On Line	157	176	157	176	NIL
Cases closed	In Writing - 335	Online - 10			

Members' Visits

❖ Ms. Hemlata Kheria, Member, NCW was invited as the Chief Guest in an exhibition by All India Artists Camp in New Delhi to raise relief funds for the flood affected people of Jammu & Kashmir. ● Member Kheria was invited as the Guest of Honour at a painting exhibition on 'NIRBHAYA' theme, at Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi. ● The Member inspected the Community Health Centre of Nebu Naurangia, Kushinagar, Uttar Pradesh.



Ms. Hemlata Kheria at the Painting Exhibition

Inquiries undertaken by NCW

● Ms. Hemlata Kheria, Member, NCW chaired an Inquiry Committee comprising Mr. Vidya Bhushan Rawat, social activist and Mr. Kunwarjeet Singh, Advocate into media reports titled "6 doctors perform tubectomy operations on 42 women at Kushinagar in UP". ● The Member also chaired an Inquiry Committee comprising Mr. Kunwarjeet Singh, Advocate and Mrs. Savita Gupta, social activist into media reports titled "Mahila ko nirvastra kar gadhe par ghumane ke aarop mein 25 ko jail" at Charbhujia in Rajasmand, Rajasthan.

NCW launches radio awareness campaign on women safety

To commemorate the "Nirbhaya Day" on December 16, the National Commission for Women launched an awareness campaign through radio in North East and other parts of the country. The campaign will educate people about issues like violence against women, sexual harassment, women empowerment, dowry and human trafficking. It is aimed to teach men and boys to respect women. One-month long campaign will be aired on private FM channels and All India Radio channels of North Eastern States.

Intervention by NCW

The National Commission for Women has taken cognizance of the unfortunate incident, wherein a woman was raped by a cab driver of Uber Cab Service. It has issued a suo moto notice to Uber Cabs and a time-bound suo moto notice to the Delhi police seeking action taken report.

Do You Know?

The global average of mandatory paid maternity leave or the length of paid time off work that female employees are entitled to, to take care of a new born is 109 days. In India, it is for 84 days and is usually available only to women in the organized sector. In the unorganized sector, millions of working women get no paid maternity leave at all. In 15 countries, mandatory paid maternity leave is between 30 to 60 days; only 13 countries give over 150 days or about 5 months; in 69 countries it is between 60 to 100 days; and in 37 countries, it is between 100 to 150 days; that is more than 3 months but less than 5.

Source : Human Development Report, 2014

for further information visit our website at : www.ncw.nic.in