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Four years and stricter laws later, Delhi still reports 6 rape cases daily

In December 2012, the horrific gang rape and murder of a 23-year-old physiotherapy student shocked the collective conscience of a nation, sparking street protests and leading to an overhaul of laws on crime against women. Four years later and after laws having been made stricter, Delhi continues to report six cases of rape every day.

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Hindustan Times



Four years later and after laws having been made stricter, Delhi continues to report six cases of rape every day.(Ajay Aggarwal/ HT photo)

In December 2012, the horrific gang rape and murder of a 23-year-old physiotherapy student shocked the collective conscience of a nation, sparking street protests and leading to an overhaul of laws on crime against women.

Four years later and after laws having been made stricter, Delhi continues to report six cases of rape every day.

As per Delhi Police, last year the city reported 2,155 rape cases, a slight decrease from 2,199 cases in 2015 and 2,166 in 2014.

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Official records further show that 3,423 women were kidnapped from Delhi last year, at an average of nine women per day.

Acting on the recommendations of the Justice Verma Committee, the Parliament passed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013, that widened the definition of rape and also provided for the death penalty in rape cases that caused death of the victim or left her in a vegetative state.

Though the law should have acted as a deterrent, the latest figures of Delhi Police show that crimes against women, such as rape, had increased three-fold from 706 in 2012 to 2,155 in 2016.

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Till March 15 this year, 376 cases of rape had been reported in Delhi, as compared to 406 cases reported in the same period last year.

As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) latest figures, a total of 34,651 cases of rape were reported during 2015 all over India, of which Delhi alone reported 2,199 cases — a contribution of 6.34%.

Though the government has said that several other measures are being taken to ensure that crime against women do not go unreported, the figures should act as a wakeup call to shift focus from reporting of crime to preventing it.

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Advocate Meera Bhatia, who is assisting the Delhi High Court in a case initiated by the court itself after the December 16 incident to improve safety of women and children, told HT that prevention should be the underlying point.

“One has to understand that stricter laws only come in play when the act of crime has taken place. Therefore, we need preventive options such as education and sensitization,” Bhatia said.

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