

India Ranked at Top as the Most Dangerous Country for Women

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Thomson Reuters Foundation in its recent survey released on June 26, 2018 ranked India as the most dangerous country in the world for women.

More than 500 global experts on women's issues took part in a survey covering areas such as healthcare, discrimination, cultural traditions, sexual and non-sexual violence and human trafficking. Not enough was being done to tackle the dangers women faced, they said. India was ranked fourth in a similar study conducted in 2011.

Afghanistan and Syria were ranked second and third in the study, followed by Somalia and Saudi Arabia. The only western nation in the top ten was the USA. The foundation said that this was directly related to the #MeToo movement.

According to government data gathered in the study, crimes against women in India rose by more than 80 per cent between 2007 and 2016. Nearly 40,000 rapes were reported in 2016, despite a greater focus on women's safety after the fatal gang rape of a student in Delhi in 2012 that prompted nationwide protests and led to tougher laws against sexual abuse being introduced.

India recorded 539 cases of sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016, 170 per cent from 2006, a report from last year suggested. However, campaigners have said that those figures are only the tip of the iceberg; a 2017 survey by India's National Bar Association found that nearly 70 per cent of victims did not report sexual harassment.

Manjunath Gangadhara, an official at the Karnataka state government, said:

"India has shown utter disregard and disrespect for women. Rape, marital rapes, sexual assault and harassment, female infanticide has gone unabated. The fastest-growing economy and leader in space and technology, is shamed for violence committed against women."

Some observers pointed out that the study, while it took in wider streams of figures, was primarily based on opinion.

Upasana Mahanta, of Jindal Global University in Delhi, told The Times:

"I'm not sure that India is any more dangerous now than it was six years ago. In terms of progress, having only legal provisions will not make the difference. Most studies show that women in India are mostly victims of violence from

their partners or family members. Which shows they are hurt because they are women, regardless of cultural, economic or social factors. Women are basically being put in their place through violence.”

In the past year several prominent rape and murder cases involving children have led to the introduction of the death penalty for those convicted and speedier trial process for violence against females.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development declined to comment on the survey results, said the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the news network’s philanthropic arm.

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