

On the question of female safety



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Gaurav Tyagi 20 November 2017 6888 views

A case involving the son of a senior politician from Haryana made headlines across [India](#) during the first week of August. This man and his friend were arrested for harassing a woman, while she was driving home.

They tried repeatedly to force her [vehicle](#) to pull [over](#) and tried to abduct the complainant, Varnika.

The main accused happens to be the son of Haryana BJP [President](#). Haryana, where this incident occurred is governed by BJP.

In a related development, Varnika Kundu's [father](#), the additional chief secretary of Tourism in the Haryana government was transferred to Science & [Technology](#) department

Mr. VS Kundu's (Varnika's [father](#)) transfer order came hours after the bail plea of the Haryana BJP chief's son, who is the main accused in this case was rejected by a Chandigarh court.

Many people are calling it a backlash for his and his daughter's filing a case against the son of a powerful politician.

The following are just a few ghastly incidents reported by the Indian Media during the month of October 2017.

A 100 year old woman was raped to death by a 24 year old youth at a village in Uttar Pradesh's; Meerut district.

A woman was raped in front of several passersby on a busy pavement in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh in South [India](#). While the culprit indulged in the heinous act, people either looked away or were busy filming it on their smart phones, instead of rescuing the woman.

A 17 year old school girl in a village of Punjab was raped by three men. She was [found](#) dumped in bushes and later died due to profuse bleeding. The girl's family didn't take her to a hospital to save the so called 'family honour'.

Even the authorities do not have the real figures of rapes in [India](#) because the majority of rape cases are not reported to the Police since, the [victims](#) and their families [fear](#) further harm from the culprits, social boycott, loss of 'family reputation' and a very lengthy legal system, where court cases drag on for decades.

Majority of Indian men, sadly consider women as an inferior gender. The main reason is because the parents of a male child in [India](#) excessively pamper them. It thus results in boys developing a ‘superiority complex’ [over girls](#) from their childhood.

The Parents exercise excessive control [over](#) their wards because they mainly [fear](#) when their boy grows up and falls in love with a girl of his choice then they would lose the dowry money at the time of their son’s [marriage](#).

Majority of weddings in [India](#) are still arranged by the boy’s parents. [Dowry](#) system is a toxic tradition widely prevalent in [India](#), wherein bride’s family has to give gifts such as cash, car, house etc. to the groom and his family at the time of fixing the [marriage](#).

The country outlawed the practice in 1961 but it continues unabatedly across all cross-sections of society.

According to Delhi Police statistics, dowry harassment allegations, filed under Indian Penal Code’s Section 498A almost doubled in four years from 2046 cases in 2012 to 3877 in 2016.

Fifty-four women in Delhi alone died between January and June of 2017 after being bullied for more dowries by their husband and in-laws.

The spectrum of dowry sought ranges from a [gas](#) cylinder to an Audi Q5 SUV. Cash is the most common form of dowry ranging from (Indian Rupees), INR. 5,000- 2, 50, 00,000 besides Gold Jewellery, Refrigerators, LED T.V sets, flats and land assets.

The Centre for the study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in Delhi along with German political foundation Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, conducted a youth survey of 6,122 respondents between 15-34 years of age across 19 Indian states in April-May 2016. The report is titled; “Attitudes, Anxieties and Aspirations of Indian Youth: Changing Patterns.”

This survey shows that 84% of married youth had an arranged [marriage](#); out of which 92% marriages took place within the respondents own castes. 51% of married men said that women should not work after [marriage](#). Close to 60% of married women had to leave their jobs after their wedding and become unemployed by just staying at home. 67% of youth disapprove of a live-in relationship.

This conservative attitude in Indian society, sadly prevailing among the majority of youth as well, results in women facing great risk of pestering starting from discrimination at homes to eve-teasing and sexual harassment outside.

The 2017 list of 10 most dangerous countries for Women travelers by International Women’s [Travel](#) Center places [India](#) as the 5th most risky place for a woman to travel.

In 2015 the same list has [India](#) at the top, as the most dangerous country in the world for a female traveler with travel advisories and warnings by Australian, Canadian, [UK](#), [US](#), Japanese and Chinese governments about sexual assaults and harassment of women in [India](#).

[India](#)'s ranking dropping from number-1 to number-5 is nothing about [India](#)'s improvement but is due to the deterioration of political situation in other countries.

[Schools](#) and Colleges segregated by gender i.e., all boys and all [girls](#) educational institutes are also quite common in [India](#). This results in no healthy relationship formation between boys and [girls](#).

It later manifests itself in high degree of sexual frustration among Indian males, thereby leading to ever increasing incidents of sexual violence against women.

The whole Indian society cutting across its social and economic stratum urgently needs a paradigm shift in its attitude towards women.

It has to [start](#) from homes, where both the boy and girl child must be treated equally by Parents and the family elders. Boys need to be taught from their early childhood that [girls](#) are in no way inferior to them.

These values imbibed in male kids from early childhood by their families' needs to be further reinforced constantly at schools otherwise, the situation for [girls](#) and women in [India](#), would unfortunately keep getting [worse](#).

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BY GAURAV TYAGI

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