

# Sensitivity to women complainants by police

Praveen Dixit , IPS

Director General of Police ( Retired)

Maharashtra

# Different Categories of women

- 1) Women as complainants
- 2) Women as accused
- 3) Women as police officers
- What should be the 1) attitude and behaviour 2)skills & 3)knowledge of police officers in dealing with above categories?

# Women as complainants

- Many women are unaware of the system to redress their grievances , are reluctant to register a complaint due to shame and ignominy associated with being a victim of crime.
- Police mandate is to
  - Create awareness of the legal rights of the victims of crime
  - Play pro-active role in prevention of these crimes &
  - Detection and investigation of crimes against women
- Police may be First Responders, Investigators or SHOs

# How should be the response?

- Appropriate response has a balanced component of
  - Knowledge
  - Skill &
  - Attitude
- Knowledge of
  - sensitivity of service to the victims of crimes
  - Laws related to the offence committed
  - Procedures to be undertaken for the investigation of the offence
  - Victim and witness protection
  - Prosecution of the offence

# Skills

- Skills consist of
  - Deft evidence collection
  - Investigation of the offence
  - Adequate and timely compensation
  - Rehabilitation of the victim

# Behavior and Attitude

- Attitudes are reflected in behavior.
- Attitudes can be changed through
  - Effective counselling
  - Mentoring
  - Training &
  - Behavioral modification therapies
- Attitude is defined as a learned tendency to evaluate things, people, issues, objects, or events in a certain way which may be positive or negative.

# Police training

- While knowledge and skills are imparted during police training, it is imperative that
- The focus of training of the police should be broadened from 'knowledge and skills' to include attitudinal transformation as an important component of training.
- When the complainant approaches the police, police behavior would determine how she reacts and cooperates with them.

# Precautions

- Who receives the complainant first in the police station?
- How much time is taken to write down the complaint?
- Whether the complaint is recorded as mentioned by her or reduced in gravity?
- Whether the complaint is recorded in the language and words as mentioned?
- Whether audio –visual recording is done of the complainant?
- Whether there was any demand of illegal gratification?
- Whether the senior officer contacted the complainant to verify these details subsequently & maintained record of the same?



# Examples of insensitivity to women complainants

- Reluctance to register cases of the nature of ‘family quarrel’
- Registering cases under sections of law inviting lesser punishment
- Viewing premarital pregnancies as sole responsibility of women
- Ignoring instances of eve-teasing as due to ‘dressing style’
- Attitude of branding a rape victim as ‘of lose moral character’
- Dismissing dowry related torture cases as matters of ‘quarrelsome women’
- Continued on next slide

# Examples of insensitivity

- Blaming child sexual abuse cases as caused by failure of the mother in bringing up the child
- Very liberal attitude in dealing with bigamy cases
- Tendency to brand persistent women petitioners as ‘insane’.
- ( from The national Commission for Women and Gender Sensitisation article published in Course curriculum on ‘Gender Sensitisation of Administrative Personnel by Dr Purnima Advani , Member , National Commission for Women.)

# Women as accused

- Increasing number of women are detected committing crimes
- Women are observed as abettors/ accomplices in crimes
- Women are detected in organised crimes, mafia operations, terrorist activities, spying, insurgency , naxal activities, white collar crimes, conventional crimes including thefts, robberies, chain –snatchings, cyber and economic crimes, political crimes.
- Safety of women in custody is extremely important . Rapes by policemen against women in custody is considered as heinous offence and invites deterrent punishment as well as termination from service.

# Women as police officers

- Male police officers must display courtesy to women counterparts
- Complaints of sexual harassment must be enquired fairly
- Special efforts need to be done to fill up the prescribed quota of 33 %
- Increasing number of women with potential need to be encouraged to join as sub-inspectors and in higher ranks including in IPS
- Women who joined need to be given challenging executive assignments to prove their competency
- Infrastructure in police stations including hygienic separate toilets, changing rooms, feeding rooms needs to be provided.

# Bibliography

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Thanks.