

Palam - Max 33.0°c
Min 19.0°c
Safdarjung - Max 32.0°c
Min 19.0°c

Sunrise - 06:30 am
Sunset - 05:41 pm
Moonrise - 06:22 pm
Moonset - 08:52 am

Mujhe biwi se bachhao

While the spotlight is on abusive husbands, there are also many 'poor men' who are tortured by their wives through anti-dowry laws

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WHILE around 98 per cent of men face domestic violence once in three years of their married life, only few find a voice against their suppressed status.

Harassed husbands under three organisations staged a dharna against the Domestic Violence (DV) Act 2006 on one year of its commencement yesterday.

Only for women

"It is not only wives, but husbands are also victims of domestic violence. The law takes into cognizance violence against women only. What about men?" asks Swaroop Sarkar, co-coordinator of the Save Family Foundation. "Almost every man faces domestic violence in some form or the other. We must get united against the provisions of the law which are being widely misused," Sarkar said.

"These male groups came into existence due to the growing abuse of Section 498-A of the IPC and the DV Act has just given them another reason to continue their fight for justice and amendment in the women laws," says R P Chugh, Supreme Court advocate and president of Men Cell, an NGO working for harassed husbands.

The organisations raised their voices against the abuse of the

pro-women DV Act and Section 498-A of the IPC in marital discord. The members of Men Cell, supported by Save Family Foundation an NGO working for the harassed husbands and My Nation participated in the dharna against the biased women laws in the country.

Jail for violation

Interestingly, unlike Section 498-A of the IPC, which provides wives the right to move court against any act of cruelty for

dowry, the DV Act covers not only wives and live-in-partners, but also sisters, mothers, mothers-in-law or any other female relative living with a man, who can be jailed for a year for beating, threatening and even shouting at them.

While the DV Act provides yet another provision for a woman with ulterior motives to initiate criminal proceedings against her husband, a major loophole in the Act is its Section 14(5). The section reads that the respondents shall not be allowed to plead any counter justification for the alleged act of domestic violence, a clear violation of human rights", said Swaroop Sarkar, co-coordinator of the Save Family Foundation.

Harassed hubbies

The foundation has since last year received 72 cases in the Capital and 3,500 cases from all over India. While another organisation Men Cell claims that it receives about 50 calls daily on its helpline number 9810170681 from the harassed husbands.

"Our main motive to organise the dharna was to make people aware how women are misusing this particular Act. How the husbands and their relatives are being tortured, blackmailed and implicated in false domestic violence and anti-dowry cases in India and abroad by their



CRY FOR A BETTER DEAL: Activists of the Save Family Foundation protest against the Domestic Violence Act at Jantar Mantar

PIC/SUBHASH BAROJIA

unscrupulous wives and daughters-in-law for ulterior motives", said R P Chugh, Supreme Court advocate and president of Men Cell.

Various demands on the agenda of these groups are that

Section 498-A be made bailable and non-cognizable and it, along with the DV Act, be made gender neutral as domestic violence is not gender specific and those misusing these provisions should be penalised.



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