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WCD ministry to conduct an all India survey to assess the magnitude of problem related to sexual harassment of women at workplace

The Minister of Women & Child Development, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi launched an online complaint management system titled Sexual Harassment electronic-Box (SHe-Box) for registering complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace in New Delhi today. The complaint management system has been developed to ensure the effective implementation of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (the SH Act), 2013.

This portal is an initiative to provide a platform to women working or visiting any office of Central Government (Central Ministries, Departments, Public Sector Undertakings, Autonomous Bodies and Institutions etc.) to file complaints related to sexual harassment at workplace under the SH Act. Those who had already filed a written complaint with the concerned Internal Complaint Committee (ICC) constituted under the SH Act are also eligible to file their complaint through this portal. The SHe-Box portal can be accessed at the link given below:

<http://www.wcd-sh.nic.in/>

Speaking at the launch, Smt Maneka Sanjay Gandhi said that though currently this facility has been extended to employees of Central Government, the scope of the portal will soon be extended to women employees of private sector also.

The WCD Minister said that there are some surveys, which give the extent of sexual harassment of women at workplace. However, the WCD Ministry will carry out a national level survey to assess and understand the magnitude of the problem.

This portal (SHe-Box) is an effort to provide speedier remedy to women facing sexual harassment at workplace as envisaged under the SH Act. Once a complaint is submitted to the portal, it will be directly sent to the ICC of the concerned Ministry/Department/PSU/Autonomous Body etc. having jurisdiction to inquire into the complaint. Through this portal, WCD as well as complainant can monitor the progress of inquiry conducted by the ICC.

Government of India is the largest employer in the country employing 30.87 lakh people to carry out its various functions. As per the Census of Central Government employees, 2011, women constitute 10.93% (3.37 lakhs) of the total regular Central Government employees.

The WCD Ministry has taken several measures to ensure implementation of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act. The Ministry has published a Handbook on the SH Act with the objective to provide information about the provisions of the Act in an easy to use practical manner. Further, the Ministry in collaboration with Institute of Statistical Training and Management (ISTM), New Delhi has prepared a training module to build the capacity of government officials above the provisions of the SH Act and develop in them professional competence to implement the same. Recently, on 5th May, 2017, the Ministry in collaboration with ISTM organised a day long workshop for chairpersons of Internal Complaint Committee constituted in various Ministries/Departments of Central Government.

Besides, in order to create wide spread awareness about the Act across the country both in organized and unorganized sector, MWCD has identified a pool of 29 resource institutions willing to provide capacity building programs i.e. training, workshops etc on the SH Act. The list of these institutions is available at the link given below:

Link:<http://wcd.nic.in/act/recommended-panel-institutes-or-organizations-under-sexual-harassment-women-workplace>

Link to Training Module for Two Day Workshop on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013: <http://wcd.nic.in/act/training-module-two-day-workshop-sexual-harassment-women-workplace-prevention-prohibition-and>

The SHe-Box will provide a platform to these empanelled institutes/organisations to share their capacity building activities with the Ministry which in turn will be able to monitor the activities of these institutes/organizations so empanelled from across the country. As of now, as per the reports received, in the past 5 months, the empanelled institutes/organisations/companies have organised 35 capacity building exercises which were attended by approximately 1700 people.

Ensuring the dignity and safety of women must be first priority for any digital society. Towards realisation of the vision of the **Digital India programme**, the **Ministry** is promoting utilisation of information and communication technology to achieve the goal of gender equality and women empowerment. It is an effort to utilise the digital space to enable speedier response to the complaints of women against sexual harassment at workplace.

The Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Smt Krishna Raj; Secretary WCD, Shri Rakesh Srivastava and senior officers of the Ministry as well as its associated organizations were present at today's launch event.

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