

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3156

ANSWERED ON:19.08.2011

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram; Sayeed Muhammed Hamdulla A. B.

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has introduced the Protection of Women against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill, 2010;
- (b) if so, the salient features thereof;
- (c) whether it is mandatory for the institutes to set up an internal committee to settle the matter through conciliation under the said Bill;
- (d) if so, whether the internal committee headed by senior officers of the institute is likely to provide unbiased justice to the victim at junior level; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b): The 'Protection of Women Against Sexual Harassment at Workplace Bill, 2010' was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 07.12.2010. It seeks to provide protection to women against sexual harassment at all workplaces both in the public and private sector, whether organised or unorganised. It provides for prevention and redressal of complaints of sexual harassment. Women who are employed as well as those who enter the workplace as clients, customers or apprentices besides the students and research scholars in colleges and universities and patients in hospitals are sought to be covered under the proposed legislation. However, domestic workers have been specifically excluded from the purview of the Bill.

(c): The Bill casts a responsibility on every employer of a workplace, except in respect of workplaces employing less than 10 persons, to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee. Before initiating an enquiry and at the request of the aggrieved women, such Internal Committees are required to take steps to settle the matter between her and the respondent through conciliation. In respect of workplaces employing less than 10 persons, Local Complaints Committees constituted by the District Officers are responsible for taking similar steps.

(d) & (e): As per the provisions of the Bill, the Internal Complaints Committee should comprise not less than two members from amongst the employees and one member from the non-governmental organisation or association committed to the cause of women besides the Presiding Officer. Involvement of a member of a non-governmental organisation or association in the Committee is expected to prevent the possibility of any undue pressure or influence from senior levels.