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Crime Against Women Up 83%, Conviction Rate Hits Decadal Low

By Chaitanya Mallapur | 12 Dec, 2017

As many as 39 crimes against women were reported every hour in India, up from 21 in 2007, according to Crime in India 2016 report by National Crime Records Bureau.

The rate of crime against women--crimes per 100,000 female population--was 55.2 in 2016, up from 41.7 in 2012.

"Cruelty by husband or his relatives" was the most reported crime against women, accounting for 33% of all crimes in 2016. Rape accounted for 11% of all crimes against women with 38,947 cases reported in 2016, or four every hour.

o Read - India's Invisible Workforce: Women Home-Based Workers Paid Little, Have No al Protection

The year 2016 saw the lowest conviction rate (18.9%)--percentage of cases convicted to cases

in which trials were completed by the courts--for crimes against women in a decade.
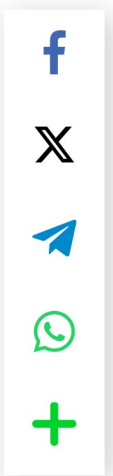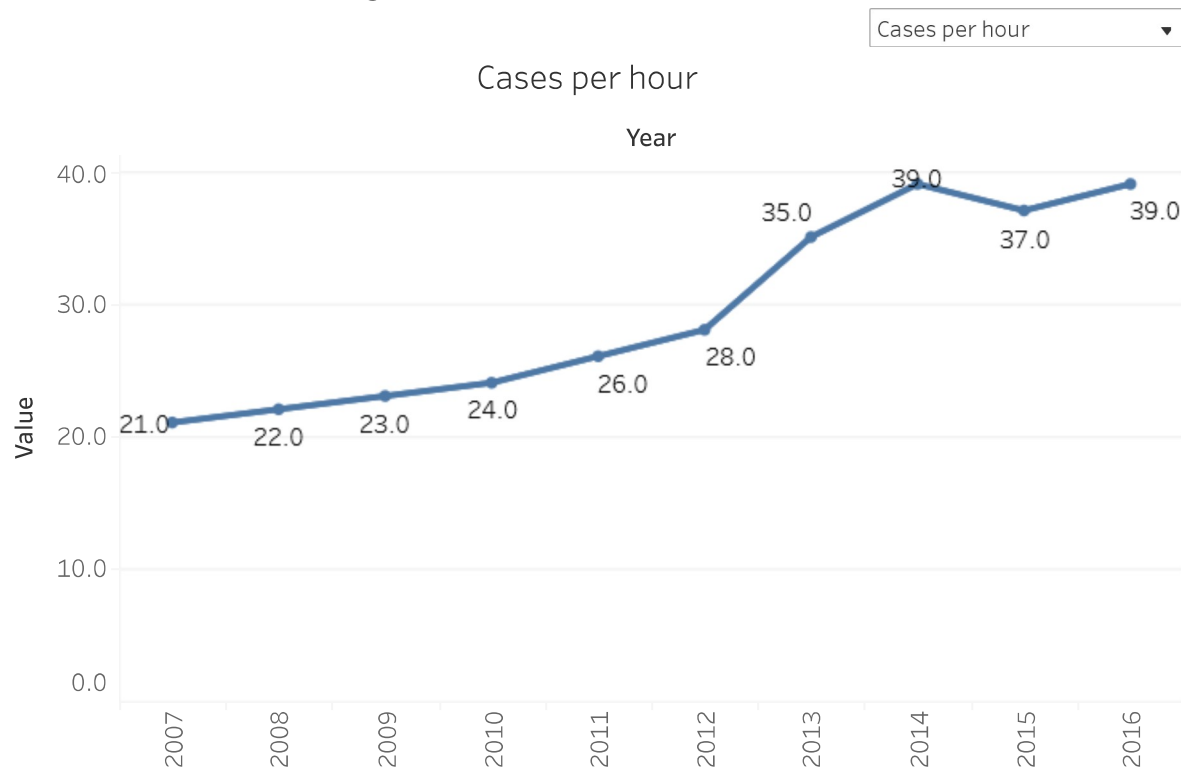
As many as 2.5 million crimes against women have been reported in India over the last decade. Reported cases of crime against women increased 83% from 185,312 in 2007 to 338,954 in 2016.

ore than the increase in crime rate, it is increase in reporting," Flavia Agnes, women's its lawyer and co-founder of Majlis, a non-profit that provides legal services to women children, told **IndiaSpend**.

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"There are no mechanisms to analyse such events," said Agnes. "I feel that due to media pressure on certain brutally violent incidents, there is greater awareness, and women are coming forward to report crimes."

Crime Against Women In India, 2007-16

Cases per hour ▼

Cases per hour

Year

Source: National Crime Records Bureau 2016; Previous Publications

Note: Prior to 2012, the crime rate was calculated on the basis of the population of India and state/union territory. From 2012, it is calculated

based on the female population (incidences of crimes against women/female population x 100,000 female population).

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Delhi reported highest crime rate against women

The union territory of Delhi reported the highest crime rate--160.4 against the national average of 55.2. Delhi was followed by Assam (131.3), Odisha (84.5), Telangana (83.7) and Rajasthan (78.3).

Uttar Pradesh--India's most populous state--reported the most (15%) crimes against women in 6--49,262, or six every hour. UP was followed by West Bengal (32,513), Maharashtra 388), Rajasthan (27,422) and Madhya Pradesh (26,604).

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many as 13,803 crimes against women were reported in Delhi city, or 38 every day, bing the list among 19 cities with populations more than 2 million in 2016, **IndiaSpend** orted on December 1, 2017.

Delhi city had the worst crime rate, 182.1 crimes per 100,000 women, against the national average of 77.2.

Cruelty by husband/relatives most reported crime against women in 2016

"Cruelty by husband or his relatives" was the most reported crime against women, accounting for 33% of all crimes in 2016--110,378 cases or 13 crimes every hour. Cases reported under this crime head increased 45% from 75,930 in 2007.

Cruelty by husband/relatives was followed by cases reported under "assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty" (25%), "kidnaping & abduction of women" (19%) and "rape"

(11%).

West Bengal reported the most cases of "cruelty by husband or his relatives" in 2016--19,302, or two every hour. Assam had the highest crime rate (58.7) in 2016 compared to the national average of 18.

many as 84,746 cases of "assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty" were orted in 2016, or 10 cases every hour. Maharashtra reported the most cases in 6--11,396, or one every hour. Delhi UT was the worst in crime rate (43.6), against the ional average of 13.8.

nes covered under "assault on woman with intent to outrage her modesty" include tively more serious crimes such as 'sexual harassment', 'assault or use of criminal force to women with intent to disrobe,' 'voyeurism' and 'stalking.'

The most cases under "kidnaping & abduction of women" were registered in Uttar Pradesh (12,994) with 65,519 cases nationwide, Delhi reported the highest crime rate (40.7) in 2016.

Four rape cases reported every hour in 2016, from 2 nine years ago

Four rape cases were reported every hour in the country in 2016, up from two every hour in 2007. Madhya Pradesh registered the most cases (4,882), while Sikkim reported the highest crime rate for rape (30.3). The nationwide crime rate was 6.3.

Reported rape cases have increased 88% from 20,737 in 2007 to 38,947 in 2016.

Of 39,068 rape victims in 2016, 43% were girls below 18 years. Offenders were known to the victim in 95% reported cases. Of these, 29% were "neighbours", "known persons on promise to marry the victim" (27%) and "other known persons" (30%).

Delhi topped the list for most rapes reported among 19 cities with populations more than two [mil]lion in 2016--1,996, or five every day, **IndiaSpend** reported on December 1, 2017. The city [als]o ranked first in terms of crime rate (26.3 cases per 100,000 women) for rape, against the [nati]onal average of 9.1.

[Con]viction rate for crime against women lowest in decade

[At 1]8.9%, the conviction rate for crimes against women in 2016, as we said, was the lowest in [sinc]e 2007.

Source: National Crime Records Bureau 2016; Previous Publications

West Bengal, which registered the second most number of crimes in 2016, reported the lowest conviction rate (3.3%).

Mizoram reported the highest conviction rate (88.8%) in 2016, followed by Meghalaya (67.7%), Puducherry (62.5%), Uttar Pradesh (52.6%) and Uttarakhand (46.2%).

In 2016, one in four rape cases in India ended in conviction--the lowest since 2012, **IndiaSpend** reported on August 28, 2017.

"Greater reporting and a dismal conviction rate spells disaster for women," Agnes said.

"This means that with great faith in the system, victims and/or their relatives come forward to report crimes. After a rigorous criminal trial, if the accused is convicted, the victim gets a closure that she has secured justice. But when she has to withdraw or the verdict is adverse, the victim experiences a sense of failure and she is stigmatised."

...es said the conviction rate is low in cases of "cruelty by husband or relatives" because if ... couple decide to file for divorce under mutual consent, the demand is usually that the ... should withdraw the case she has filed under section 498A (section that deals with ...elty by husband or relatives).

...is does not mean that the case was false but she withdrew it only to bring in closure and ...ve ahead with her life. Despite this, what we read in the media is that women file false ...es despite the fact that women experience high degree of domestic violence in marriages," she added.

What is needed, Agnes said, is victim-support programmes so that once a case is filed, the survivor gets support to face the daunting criminal legal system. "If this is done, it will not be such a lonely battle for the victim. We need a provision in law so that victim support is built into the statute. Only then can we see change as more cases get registered."

(**Mallapur** is an analyst with IndiaSpend.)

We welcome feedback. Please write to respond@indiaspend.org. We reserve the right to edit responses for language and grammar.

Chaitanya Mallapur

Chaitanya has a masters degree in politics from the University of Mumbai and a bachelor's degree in computer science. His areas of interest are foreign policy and security studies. He has also worked with ET NOW, a business news channel, as an assistant producer in the digital team.

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