

2. LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

Legal Rights

To uphold the Constitutional mandate, the State has enacted various legislative measures intended to ensure equal rights, to counter social discrimination and various forms of violence and atrocities and to provide support services especially to working women.

Although women may be victims of any of the crimes such as 'Murder', 'Robbery', 'Cheating' etc, the crimes, which are directed specifically against women, are characterized as 'Crime Against Women'. These are broadly classified under two categories.

1. The Crimes Identified Under the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

- (i) Rape (Sec.376 IPC)
- (ii) Kidnapping & Abduction for different purposes (Sec.363-373)
- (iii) Homicide for Dowry, Dowry Deaths or their attempts (Sec.302/304-B IPC)
- (iv) Torture, both mental and physical (Sec.498-A IPC)
- (v) Molestation (Sec.354 IPC)
- (vi) Sexual Harassment (Sec. 509 IPC)
- (vii)** Importation of girls (upto 21 years of age)

2. The Crimes identified under the Special Laws (SLL)

Although all laws are not gender specific, the provisions of law affecting women significantly have been reviewed periodically and amendments carried out to keep pace with the emerging requirements. Some acts which have special provisions to safeguard women and their interests are:

- i. The Employees State Insurance Act, 1948
- ii. The Plantation Labour Act, 1951
- iii. The Family Courts Act, 1954
- iv. The Special Marriage Act, 1954
- v. The Hindu Marriage Act, 1955
- vi. The Hindu Succession Act, 1956,
- vii. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956

- viii. The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 (Amended in 1995)
- ix. Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- x. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971
- xi. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1976
- xii. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976
- xiii. The Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act, 1979
- xiv. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983
- xv. The Factories (Amendment) Act, 1986
- xvi. Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition) Act, 1986
- xvii. Commission of Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987