

Understanding crimes against women: with special reference to Assam

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Abstract: Crimes against women is one of the most serious issue as we have been seen for a long period of time. India, the world's largest democratic country in which half of the population is compromised with the women, where 1/3 women have been still suffering from various forms of crime. Crimes against women don't only effect the life of a particular woman, but it also effects the whole family as well as the whole nation. It takes a dismaying variety of forms, from domestic abuse and child marriage to rape and female infanticide. Crimes against women is usually unreported in society because of fear and stigma that often presents women from reporting incidents of crimes.

Keywords: crimes, democratic, nation, domestic, abuse, child marriage, rape female infanticide, stigma etc.

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I. Introduction:-

Crimes against women isn't just a regional problem, now it becomes an issue of global concern. So, crimes against women in Assam as well as in India are a widespread problem that reflects the distribution of unequal-dominant power between men and women where men play the superior role and women are remained as inferior. In the era of digital India, it is very hard to accept that violence against women is still prevailing in every aspects of society i.e. social, political, economic & cultural and it is continues to prevail in India also. As a result of gender bias , women are usually viewed as inferior, family's burdens, dowry burdens and have lower social status in every grounds of society as compared to men. This dominant cultural system has made them socially , politically and economically isolated and they have to remain as deprived from the socio- economic opportunities and legal provisions in society. Unfortunately, crimes against women is a very pathetic phenomenon that exists into society in various forms of violence. We can classify this various forms of violence into 5 types as mentioned by the prominent social thinker, Ram Ahuja which are – 1) sexual violence, 2) abduction and kidnapping 3) bride burning 4) wife battering 5) murder. In this regard, a question must arise that why does crime take place in society. The most important reasons behind crimes against women are *poverty, lack of education, to preserve the patriarchal system in a radical way, demands of dowry, personal jealousy* etc. However, a few years ago, crimes against women was a domestic issue in nature and it is limited within the home itself or at the entire village or a community. Sociologists and many academicians have demanded that it was only the late 17th and early 18th centuries, violence against women became an issue of global concern. Although Globalization, Modernization and Liberal democratic education system have been helping women in a diverse way to uplift their status, but the official statistics showed a declining sex- ratio, literacy rates, health status, political participation rates among women. While a majority of women have been still facing discrimination and gender bias as well as the spread of social evils like dowry deaths, child marriage, domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment, exploitation of women workers etc. have grown up over the years, in the last few decades, it is also seen that the number of women successful in politics, technology and business etc. However, it is true that women have to face many challenges by virtue of their sex , jealousy, dowry etc. For centuries, women have been subjected to exploitation and torture, - by physically, mentally and socially and sometimes these may lead to force women to commit suicide or any crimes by itself. However, to understand and work on crimes against women , one should much know the term “crime “ as well. Generally, crime means an act which is against the all existing laws of a society and the person who has done the act is liable to punishment by the court or Government of a concern country. And coming back to the meaning of crimes against women it is stated that any kinds of direct or indirect physical or mental cruelty to women is regarded as crimes against women. In other words, crimes which are directed specially against women and in which women are victimized, are called as crimes against women, committed typically by a man. Crimes against women includes various criminal acts against women i.e. murder, rape, sexual assault, bride's burning etc. Crimes against women are categorized as murder with gang rape, dowry death, suicide abetment, acid attack, cruelty

against women and kidnapping (NCRB). Along with the concept of crimes against women, it is also equally important to clarify the concept of violence against women. Violence is the abuse of physical force intended to hurt, damage or kill someone. Women have experienced of violence in many ways, from physical abuse to sexual harassment ,whatever form it takes , violence against women can have serious long-term physical and emotional effects. When violence takes place at home and committed by the partner or the family members, it becomes domestic violence. Apart from this domestic violence against women, there is an another form of violence, namely mob violence against women, i.e. gang rape is a best example for it. Moreover, there might be different kinds of violence i.e. dating violence and abuse, emotional abuse, elder abuse etc. In this regard, we can mention the opinion of Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the United Nations; declared in a report which was posted on the United Nations Department Fund for Women, 2006 (UNIFEM) website that: “ violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. At least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or other wise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her.” Ultimately, it is a vital part of women’s lives in all societies throughout the world. It is a gender based problem. It exists in different forms such as domestic violence, criminal violence etc. But the saddest thing is that crimes against women are remained as only home talked issue before it has established as a global issue. crimes against women is a widespread problem of historically unequal power relations between men and women whereas violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position as compared to men.

Assam, one of the most important states of India is also not free from this problem. The increasing numbers of reported cases has proven that crimes rate committed against women has been increased year by year. For the resolution of this problem, our Govt., administrative system , judiciary system, various legal organizations & NGOş should make necessary action as much as possible.

Objectives of the study:-

There are certain objectives of my research work which are mentioned below:-

- 1) To study the historical roots of crimes against women in India.
- 2) To study about the various crimes committed against women in Assam.
- 3) To examine the various forms of crimes against women.
- 4) To examine the causative factors which lead to commit crimes against women.
- 5) To analyze the constitutional privileges and Governmental laws enacted for women and their implications with regard to protect of women.
- 6) To suggest remedial measures of crimes against women that may able to protect the women from various forms of crimes and violence.

Research questions of the study :

- 1)What are the various cases reported as crime against women in Assam?
- 2)What are the various causes of crimes against women?
- 3)What are the major forms of crimes against women?
- 4)Who are the delinquents of crimes against women?

Hypothesis :

Ha¹= Male domination, as a result of patriarchal society is the root cause of the crimes against women.

Ho¹= Male domination is not the root cause of crimes against women.

Ha²= Laws are sufficient enough to protect and safeguard Indian women.

Ho²= In India, there are no sufficient laws to protect and safeguard Indian women.

Methodology of the research work :

Methodology is an integral part of every research work. In this research study, for the collection of data, I have used both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected on the basis of interview and observation. Moreover, as a secondary source of data collection, I have used many books, brochures, diaries, websites, newspapers, magazines, national and international publications, official reports, articles and journals etc. As methodology of my research work, I have used both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Study Area:

My study area for this current research work is in Assam. Assam is located between 26.24° N latitude and 92.93° E longitude. Assam, the Gateway to the North East India, is situated in the centre part of North east India. It shares border with Arunachal Pradesh in the East, West Bengal , Meghalaya, Bangladesh in the west, Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutan in the North, and Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram in the south. The total area

of Assam is 78,438km². It is the only region in south Asia to be surrounded by five countries. According to the census of 2011, there are 31,169,2727 people in Assam. Sex ratio of Assam is 958 i.e. for each 1000 male. And the literacy rate of Assam is 73.18% with male literacy at 71.3% and female at 54.6%. (Sources: census of 2011, Govt. Of Assam).

Significance of the study :

Crimes against women is generally a neglected field of research. Although women represent about half of the Indian population, but there is a lack of scientific attention to the problems presented by victims women is probably due to the recurring observation that considerably smaller number of women come into contact with the law as a large number of women are always remained as untouched by laws due to lack of education, their fear of losing status in society and lack of support from the other members of family. The official data on crimes against women show that one in four women have the experience with in different forms of crime in every single day. Now , the position of women become very worse because when she was a child, it was abused, raped or force to arrange early marriage and after marriage also, she was beaten, tortured, burned by male partner or other family members. And in administrative ground, in our country, crime against women is not treated seriously. Women have to live under a very pathetic condition. Despite having numerous rights and opportunities of women which are guaranteed by the Constitution of India and Parliament of India and several legal organs to ensure all around development of women, but some women who are neither educated nor aware of their rights are getting many difficulties and threat to live well, and some of them are badly exploited and dominated which can be considered as crimes against women. The Constitutional provisions remain failed & untouched yet by these women. This condition suggests that crimes against women deserve more research interest that it has received yet. In this regard, my opinion is that this research work is significant for the reason that it may able to draw an image on victims women as well as to bring this issue in a global context so that it will able to give justice to them or by reading & understanding this research work, one may able to raise voice on crimes against women and bring awareness into society on it so that it may reduce crimes rate committed against women in society.

Limitations of the study:

All scientific inquiries are subjected to few limitations, although this may differ with respect to the magnitude of limitation. The findings of the present study are subjected to the following limitations:

- 1) The study pertains to a certain time period. The result may not be valid for over a large period of time due to fast changing socio- economic and socio- cultural setting in this study area.
- 2) Due to the limitations of time, the present study was restricted to a limited number of samples.
- 3) There is scarcity of works that throw light on the essential characteristics of the problems of crimes against women.

There is an ethical issue of my present study as follow:-

*Some respondents were hesitated to take participate on my research work as well as refused to provide any information. And as a researcher , I can't push them to engage in my research work or force them to share their experiences with crimes.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

For the present study of my research work, I have used many books, articles, national and internet journals as literature review, which I have discussed below:-

J P Bhatnagar, in his work, " Offences against women: Marriage and Married women (1987)" has stated that women have to face various offenses in various forms in their life. Before marriage, they have been faced the problem of molestation, devdasi system, child trafficking and rape by the family members or the outsiders. Moreover, married women are also not free from this disease. They are also faced the various forms of crimes i. E. Sexual harassment, bridges' beating and burning, force labour, dowry death etc. So, they have to live in a pandemic situation in their entire life.

Shobha Saxena, in her book, " crimes against women and protective laws"(2008)²⁶ reflects on various forms of crimes committed against women and has given a description on vital causes for committing crimes and gives some resolutions how to reduce crimes rate in the society. She also has focused on various special laws that were passed to control crimes against women as well as relevant sections of the IPC, Cr. P. C. etc. She has also reviewed the failure of the criminal justice system in checking the domestic violence against women.

In the work, " women & law"(2011)³¹ written by Dr. S. R. Myneni, broadly speaking about the whole scenario of various crimes against women and various laws with regard this matter. We can divided his discussion on it as follows – 1) He broadly speaking to various rights of women enacted by constitution of India and various legal authorities. 2) various personal laws relating with marriage of women and divorce of women.

3) social legislations of women's issues , i.e. dowry prohibition act,1961 . , child marriage restrain Act, 1929 etc.
4) various crimes committed against women in different forms, i.e. domestic violence, mob violence against Indian penal code.

Kamla Bhasin , in her work " what is patriarchy?" has given a brief description on patriarchy and its origin where she stated that patriarchy is the root cause of various crimes committed against women. Bhasin tried to give an interpretation on the impact of patriarchy on every grounds of society, i.e. economic, social, political and cultural institution. She has also sketched an image on women's struggles for social change in the context of patriarchal control in major Social, political, cultural and economic institutions.

V.K. Dewan , in his book " Law relating to offenses against women" (2009)²⁸ has given an overview on various laws relating with various forms of crimes, i.e. domestic violence, rape, wife-beating & burning, kidnapping, dowry death, women and child trafficking etc. He also stated that women have to face many problems in society in compared with men. Women have to remain as exploited and subordinate in the male domination society.

In the book, " Offences against women: Judgement of Supreme court and high court" (2010)³⁰ , U.K. Sarkar has discussed about various cases reported as crimes against women related judgments delivered by supreme court and various high court, i.e. dowry harassment cases under section 498-A(Rajesh Kumar v. State of Haryana, 2009), dowry death cases(Premaraj Barik v. State of Orissa, 2009) , rape(public prosecutor, high court of AP, Hyderabad v. Radha Krishna watesh, 2009) , domestic violence (S.R. Batra v. Taruna Batra,2007), etc. and he has analysed various important judgement.

Ram Ahuja, in his work " Violence against women " has discussed various forms of crimes committed against women. He gives a theoretical understanding on these violence & crimes and stated the limitations of these theories to use in the practical field too. The main feature of this book is that the writer pays attention to the five types of violence that normally women have to face. These violence are- 1) sexual violence 2)bride burning 3)abduction and kidnapping 4)wife battering 5) murder. He has this book by asking the question of atrocities against women. In this book, he has discussed the post- violence adjustment issues of the victims in the society and the role of police and judicial system to solve this problems are also discussed in this book.

By giving a critical understanding on the position of women in entire three states of India, namely Assam, Manipur and Tripura, H.Sudhir and Jubita Hajarimayum , in their work " Violence against women in north east India: with special reference to Assam, Manipur and Tripura " has also discussed the various aspects of violence against women and the root causes of this problems. They also reflect the various constitutional provisions and other legal safeguards towards women. They has also opined some tremendous resolutions to solve this problem.

Main body:

Theoretical understanding of crimes against women :

1)**Feminist perspective of crimes against women:** Feminist theory provides a framework to understand the origin of unequal status, hierarchy between men and women in domestic spheres, as well as the differential socialization of men and women which perpetuated violence and abuse in the home (Vackson:2007). Feminist perspectives viewed domestic violence starts from a gender perspective. For feminists issue of gender and power are the ultimate root of intimate violence(Anderson:1997). To find out the causes Of this violation and crimes against women, feminist perspectives have revealed that its patriarchy, which leads to create crimes & violence against women feminist perspective has revealed that its patriarchy which leads to create crimes & violence against women by using the power and control of men over women. In patriarchal society, men play a dominant role whereas women play subordinate role. Engaging with making violence against women is a tool to the process of maintaining coercive control and domination over women. Feminist theory emphasizes on sex role conditioning and impact of socio-cultural that leads to believe system that justify sexism, male privilege and gender socialization (Healey). Feminist perspective viewed patriarchy and power race as central to domestic violent perpetrated by men who believed in patriarchy and men's unlimited rights over wives. In patriarchal society, socialization process also begins in behalf of male, where it is believed that socialization process conceptualises and idealises male behaviour to be strong, aggressive, powerful and superior to female and place them in a higher position. Feminist perspective rejects both patriarchy and gender-socialized system. Feminist perspective sees women are marginalized in every aspect of society i.e. social, political and economic. According to societal perspective of women, the position of women is very low and their status is mostly determined by how the male partner pretend to her in family as well as society. Moreover, in political sphere, women are exploited in many ways by their colleagues and force to leave politics because they are women. They think that home is the only right place for women where they must sacrifice their lives by worshipping the male partner. So, there is no place in politics for women. In economic ground, women are exploited and or marginalized by unpaid work, unequal salary in compared to men etc. As we know that "Anatomy is destiny"(Sigmund Freud) women are socialized to manage the household work and serve for her male partner. Moreover,

those women who have come out into public places for doing job any kinds of activity, but on that place also people don't threat them equally as compared to men. They are paid in low salary by saying that women never work in actively as compared with men and their work never be satisfactory. So, these are the example of discrimination against women and when discrimination take place in a radical way or in a extreme way, it becomes as violence & crimes against women.

2) **Sociological perspective on understanding of crimes against women:** Conflict theory, as one of the dominant theory in sociology, has stated that violence or crimes against women is not just a result of patriarchal system of society, but it's capitalism in which women have to engage in a unpaid household activity which creates unequal divisions of resources between men and women. This perspective claims that women give huge contribution to the growth & for the continuity of capitalism. In capitalism, men involve in a paid work, enjoys holding of property rights which further increase men's power and women's dependence on their male partner. To reduce this inequality, society as well as the family should support women to engage itself in a paid work in equal level of men. However, this perspective has also stated that at the end of capitalism, gender bias will be removed from society and at the same time women's abuse will also ended up. Apart from conflict theory, the social exchange theory has stated that individuals always try to maximize their profit in wherever they are. This perspective claims that human interaction is based on the pursuit of rewards or profits maximize. So, to gain this reward in the form of social status, people may sacrifice any cost. Any loss in status, loss of relationship and feeling of being disliked by anyone or any group is consistent to be cost (Nye, 1979). In the context of violence against women, the exchange theory believes that individuals used violence against their intimate partners when they expect that rewards for such violence acts will be higher than the costs. Those men who are just looking for to collect wealth or rewards from the bride's home. Moreover, rewards are vary from society to society i.e. rewards may consist of obedience of a wife to her husband, dowry may also be considered as a reward. In this context, Bloch and Rao(2002) has stated that dowry violence doesn't refer directly to marriage related payments made at the time of the wedding but to additional payment demanded after the marriage by the groom's family where the husband systematically abuses the wife in order to extract larger transactions. Along with social exchange theory, functionalism also states that crimes against women has many functions in society although it's actually dysfunctional for the whole social structure. Making crimes against women is functional for some people who always try to conserve the orthodox patriarchal system or try to benefit from it in many ways, i.e. to collect resources from bride's home, too force to leave them(men) so that they can make sexual relationship with others etc.

Constitutional and legal provisions for women:

Constitutional provision for women are as follows:

- Article 14 talks about the equal rights and opportunities both for men and women in political, economic and social sphere.
- Article 15 strictly prohibits any discrimination against any citizen on the basis of *gender*, religion, race, caste etc.
- Article 39 provides for equality of opportunities matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state.
- Article 39(a)(d), talks about the policy security of state equality for both men and women the right to a means of livelihood and equal pay for equal work for both men and women.
- Article 42 directs the state to make provision for ensuring just and humane conditions of work and relief.

There are certain legal provisions for women are as follows :

- Factories Act, 1948: Under this Act , a women cannot be forced to work beyond 8 hours and prohibits employment of women except between 6 A.M. and 7P.M.
- Maternity Benefit Act, 1961: under this act , a woman can take 12 weeks of maternity leave with full wages.
- Dowry prohibition Act, 1961: under this act, the demand of dowry either before marriage, or during marriage or after the marriage is an offence & strictly prohibited.
- Equal remuneration Act, 1976: this act grants equal wages for equal work both for men and women.
- Child marriage restrain Act, 1976: this act leads to raise the age for marriage of a girl from 15 years to 18 years and of a boy from 18 years to 21 years
- Indian Penal Code: section 354 to 509 safeguards the interest of women.
- The Medical Termination of pregnancy Act, 1971: The Act safeguards women from unnecessary and compulsory abortions.
- Amendments to criminal law, 1983: this Act provides for a punishment of 7 years in ordinary cases and 10 years for custodial rape case.
- 73rd and 74th constitutional Amendment act reserved 1/3rd seats in panchayat and urban local bodies for women.

- National Commission for women Act, 1990; which provides constitutional and legal safeguards for women.
- Protection of human rights act, 1993.
- Protection of women from domestic violence Act, 2005: it protects women from physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, psychological and verbal abuse etc.
- Protection of women against Sexual harassment at workplace bill, 2010: under this act, it is aimed to protect the women at work place from sexual harassment .

Classification of crimes against women: There are various new legislations have been brought and amendments have been made in existing laws with a view to handle these crimes effectively. These are broadly classified under two categories-(1) The crimes under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), (2) Crimes under the special & local laws(SLL).

(1) The crimes under the Indian Penal Code : there are seven crimes included under this head are as follows: (a) Rape (section 376 IPC), (b) kidnapping & abduction (section 363-373IPC), (c) Dowry death (section 302, 304B IPC), (d) torture (cruelty by husband & relatives) (sec. 498-A IPC), (e) Molestation (sec. 354), (f) sexual harassment (sec. 509 IPC), (g) Importation of girls (sec.366-B IPC).

(2) Crimes under the special & local laws(SLL) : the gender specific laws for which crime statistics are recorded throughout the country are as follows: (a) Immoral traffic(prevention) Act, 1956.

(b) Dowry prohibition act.

(c) Indecent representation of women (prohibition) act.

(d) Sati prevention act, 1987.

(source: “crimes against women”, reference note, Lok Sabha Secretariat)

Crimes against women in Assam :

In ancient India, women held a high place of respect in society as mentioned in *Rigveda* and other scriptures. Through the reading and understanding of the ancient texts, we can able to know the status of women and their heroic deeds from the vedic period to the modern times. One can understand the status of women by seeing the worshipping culture of many Goddesses in hindu religion. Apart from India, in Assam also, there is a deep rooted *shakti* cult with Goddess kamakhya at its centre , many , including academicians and researchers has argued that women naturally have a higher status in this region and are given due respect. On that society, a high value was attached to feminine qualities, showing the division between men and women in the social set-up. As Baruah(2009) writes, women were known to be free from male domination until the thirtieth century. During this period, there was no *purdah* and *sati* system, in *widow* marriage is common in that society. Later on during 13th century, when Ahom entered into Pragiyotipur (earlier name of Assam), and settled down in Brahmaputra valley and other parts of Assam. During the Ahom rule, women lost their economic strength and mobility since the settled agricultural system was started which continues to hamper women’s life. On that period, women were sold or to arrange marriage with others by force for political purpose .

However, along with Ahom rule, the another deterioration of women status came with the *Vaishnavite* movement, started by Srimanta Sankardev in which women were considered as the most sinful of all human, the most immoral and addicted to constant sexual pleasure. In *vaishnavism*. Sankardev wasn’t free from the influence of the caste system and he had treated women in a equal level of *Sudras*(Nath). Sankardev gave worse place to women and he kept women outside its *Monikut*(prayer hall) by reflecting patriarchal domination and tried to control over women’s lives(Nath: 1992). However, by the end of Ahom Rules and the during the British period, women’s status had been changed. By the help of Christian missionaries, a few number of women were able to get education. Before it women’s education was for behind and considered harmful for society (Barpujari:2004). However, through the passes of time, women’s status has been changing in society, but the saddest &shocking thing is that crimes rate committed against women are also increasing in a large number.

Along with the women from various parts of India, Assamese women are also not free from gender based crimes and violence. The increasing number of crimes against women are the manifestations of the historically unequal power relation between men and women. This unequal power hierarchy results in domination and control over women and consequently gives rise to various crimes against women. From the 2011 census data, a total of 11,503 incidents of crimes against women have been recorded which constitutes 5 percent of the all India total. Now-a-days crime has become a critical area of concern in Assam. In Assam, one out of every seven women faces one or many other forms of violence (Sharma and Das:2005) . In Assam, 34 percent of women aged 15-49 years have experienced physical violence, and 12 percent have experienced sexual violence. In all, 37% of women have experienced physical or sexual violence including 42 percent of ever married women (NFHS³). The data available with the National crimes accords Bureau shown that Assam ranks second in the country in the category of crimes against women. Moreover, most of the cases are related to kidnapping , rape and domestic violence under section 498A of the IPC. The number of rape cases increased from 1631 in 2009 to 1721 in 2010. Molestation cases increased from 1389 to 1611 in the same period. In

addition, 5745 cases of cruelty by husband and relatives were registered in Assam in 2011 and 2998 cases of kidnapping and 2011 cases of rape were registered in the same period(source: crimes in India:2011) . The ongoing armed conflict situation prevalent in Assam as well as North East India has intensified the violence faced by women, which take in the form of sexual, mental or physical abuse, killing and clashes. The high rate of crimes against women depicts the poor social status of women and reveals that Assam has become a vulnerable place for women. If we look into the various data on crimes against women; as mentioned by various legal organizations, along with Govt. Of India, Govt. Of Assam and National Crime Records Bureau, we are able to understand that crimes rate committed against women has been increased day by day. Moreover, according to the report of the National Crime Records Bureau(2012), Assam has reported the highest rate of crimes against women (89.5%) during the year of 2012 as compared to 41.7% at the national level among all the states of India. In the ground of crimes against women in Assam, the highest number of cases is recorded in the category of domestic violence. In this regard, NCRB has stated that under the category of domestic violence, the highest number of cases were reported from Assam with the rate of 56.4 in the year of 2013. Not only in domestic violence, Assam has reported as the highest rate of crimes under kidnapping to compel her for marriage. According to the report of NCRB(2017), there were 27 cases of murder with rape and gang rape recorded in Assam, 193 dowry deaths , 43 abetment to suicide, three victims of acid attacks; 10,598 victims of cruelty by husband or relatives, 5703 victims of kidnapping, 123 victims of human trafficking, 14 cases of selling minor girls, 2048 rape victims- of which 100 are below 18 years of age, 3569 cases of assault outrage the modesty of women. The crime rate is calculated as a crime per one lakh of the population. Assam recorded rate was 143.6, followed by Delhi, in which crime recorded rate was 133.3. In absolute terms, 23,082 cases of crimes against women involving 24,449 number of victims were reported in the state in 2017 up from 20,869 registered in 2016 as reported by NCRB. Thus, a crime against women specifically domestic violence is a significant issue in the state of Assam. However, in the recent year 2018, Assam is reported within top 5 unsafe states for women followed by Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, west Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Assam is in the 5th position where there were 27,728 cases had been reported. Moreover, in Assam, there are 308 cases registered cases under Unlawful activities and prevention Act (UAPA). Along with the various cases on crimes against women, Assam has also reported as a place of highest rate of sedition cases followed by Jammu & Kashmir (12) it had the most number of offenders-27 of them booked in 17 cases.

Here, I have mentioned the total number of all kinds of registered cases under crime are as follows:-

Years:->

Number of registered cases in Assam:->

2014	2015	2016	Percentage share of the state(2016)	Rank based on incidence in % share 2016
94,337	103,616	102,250	3.4	14

From above this chart, it is clear that the number of crimes have been increasing day by day. However, along with these increasing number of cases, the rate of crimes against women has also been increased. In this regard, I have draw the following chart with compared to the crimes rate occurring in the state of Delhi (one of the most crime prone areas in India) which have clearly shown how crimes against women have been increased year by year-

<i>Assam</i>		vs	<i>Delhi</i>	
Year	Rate of crimes against women		Year	Rate of crimes against women
2016	131.9		2016	182.1
2017	143.3		2017	133.3
2018	166		2018	149.6

(Source:- “ Crimes in India 2016” National Crime Records Bureau. Retrieved 1February, 2018)

From the above chart, it is clear that now Assam is very much a place of unsafe for women as compared with the capital state of India, Delhi. “Assam continues to be unsafe for women, with at least 3,009 rape cases and 17,106 cases of violence against women registered since the *Sarbananda Sonowal* Govt. Took charge in 2016. After the BJP-led Govt. Came to power, at least 1,552 rape cases were registered in the state in 2016-17. Some 1457 rape cases were recorded between January 2017 and 2018. In Assam, there are some districts of Assam, i.e. Kamrup(Metro), Nagaon, Jorhat, Kokrajhar and Cachar is the most crime prone area or as considered as the main centre of crimes against women as mentioned by *Sarbananda Sonowal* , the Chief

Minister of Assam. Assam also topped in the list for cyber crime against women in 2018 with 295 cases. And with 208 cases, Odisha came in second position. By looking into the increasing number of crimes rate in Assam, one may use to call Assam as the New Rape Capital of India. (Source: “*Times of India*,” February 20, 2018). However, the increasing number of registered cases on crimes against women in Assam have reflected that Assamese women are strong enough to register a case against any kinds of crimes faced by them in their day to day life. In this regard, Polly Vauquiline, Professor of women studies department at Gauhati University, Assam has said to the reporter of *Hindustan Times*, as it has mentioned below, “the number of cases registered is just the tip of the iceberg and the worrying thing is that the cases are increasing every year. These figures are also a sign that women from Assam feel more empowered to report crimes against them. And they also get more support from the family, community and women groups to register cases.” (Source: “*Hindustan Times*,” January 11, 2020). However, the above indication reveals the position of women in Assam. Each of the above indications shows the low and weak status of women. Most importantly the rising crime rate against women reflects the insecurity and violence that women are facing in Assam. Along with the existing crime rate, the occurrence of new forms of crimes, i.e. domestic violence and dowry deaths, are being seen in the crime records. This further indicates the continuously degrading status of women.

III. CONCLUSION :

From above this discussion, it is clear that although in India, the Constitution, the Government and various legal organizations have been working for the safeguard of women and to protect them from various forms of crimes, but it is also true that only legislation and law enforcement agencies cannot prevent the matter of crime against women. There is need of social awakening and change in the attitude of masses, so that due respect and equal status is given to women. It's a time when the women need to be given her due. As a means, education & educational campaign among youth may lead to make them aware of existing social evils. As the fourth pillar of Democracy, mass media, as well as various NGOs can hold a responsible position here by assigning them with the task of highlighting socio-economic causes leading to such crimes and by disseminating information about their catastrophic effects on the womanhood and the society at large.

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