

LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA
ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY SECOND REPORT
ON
REVIEW OF RAPE LAWS MARCH, 2000

D.O.No.6(3)(36)/2000_LC(LS)

March 25, 2000

Dear Shri Jethmalaniji,

I am forwarding herewith the 172nd Report on Review of Rape Laws.

2. In Writ Petition (Crl.) No.33 of 1997, the petitioner, "Sakshi" an organisation interested in the issues concerning women, approached the Supreme Court of India inter alia for directions concerning the definition of the expression "sexual intercourse" as contained in section 375 of the Indian Penal Code.

3. The Supreme Court by its order dated 13th January, 1998 directed the Law Commission to indicate its response with respect to the issues raised in the above writ petition. The Commission filed an affidavit dated 28.7.1998 setting out in extenso the portions of its 156th Report on the Indian Penal Code dealing with the issues in question. In the said Report, the then Law Commission (14th Law Commission) did not agree with the viewpoint of the writ petitioners except in certain minor respects. The Supreme Court was inclined to agree with the submissions of the writ petitioners that the contents of the 156th Report did not deal with the precise issues raised in the writ petition.

4. On the directions of the Hon'ble Court, the petitioner drew up a note containing the precise issues involved in the petition. The Commission was asked by the Hon'ble Court by its order dated 9th August, 1999 to examine

the said issues afresh. The Court observed that the issues needed a thorough examination. By the said order dated 9th August, 1999, the Hon'ble Court requested the Law Commission "to examine the issues submitted by the petitioners and examine the feasibility of making recommendations for amendment of the Indian Penal Code or deal with the same in any other manner so as to plug the loopholes".

5. A copy of the draft of comments prepared by the Law Commission was thereafter forwarded to Sakshi inviting their views thereon and for suggesting changes of a procedural nature, whether in the Criminal Procedure Code or the Evidence Act. Later on, three other organisations, namely, Interventions for Support, Healing and Awareness – IFSHA, All India Democratic Women's Association – AIDWA and the National Commission for Women – NCW also presented their views on the proposed suggestions.

6. After detailed discussions with these organisations, the Commission has recommended changes for widening the scope of the offence in section 375 and to make it gender neutral. Various other changes have been recommended in sections 376, 376A to 376D. We have also recommended insertion of a new section 376F dealing with unlawful sexual contact, deletion of section 377 of the IPC and enhancement of punishment in section 509 of the IPC. In order to plug the loopholes in procedural provisions, we have also recommended various changes in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and in the Evidence Act, 1872.

7. The Hon'ble Supreme Court forwarded vide its order dated 18.2.2000 the comments of the petitioner on the Response and Recommendations of the Law Commission of India for consideration. The Commission accordingly considered those comments and submitted its further response and recommendations dated 14.3.2000.

8. The present Report focuses on the need to review the rape laws in the light of increased incidents of custodial rape and crime of sexual abuse against youngsters. The crime of sexual assault on a child causes lasting psychic damage to the child and as such, it is essential to prevent sexual abuse of children through stringent provisions. The UN Conventions and various constitutional provisions also underline the need for protecting the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. This Report aims at the attainment of these objectives.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(B.P.JEEVAN REDDY)

**Shri Ram Jethmalani,
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(Nov.1998)

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Under an order dated August 9, 1999 made in Writ Petition (Crl) No.33 of 1997, the Supreme Court of India requested the Law Commission "to examine the issues raised by the petitioners and examine the feasibility of making recommendations for amendment of the Indian Penal Code or deal with the same in any other manner so as to plug the loopholes."

1.1.1. The petitioner 'Sakshi', an organisation interested in the issues concerning women, had approached the Supreme Court of India with the aforesaid Writ Petition praying for (a) issuance of a writ in the nature of a declaration or any other appropriate writ or direction declaring inter alia that 'sexual intercourse' as contained in section 375 of the Indian Penal Code shall include all forms of penetration such as penile/vaginal penetration, penile/oral penetration, penile/anal penetration, finger/vaginal and finger/anal penetration and object/vaginal penetration and (b) to issue a consequential writ, order or direction to the respondents in the Writ Petition and to their servants and agents to register all such cases found to be true on investigation.

1.1.2. The Law Commission was not made a party to the Writ Petition. The Supreme Court however directed the Law Commission, by its Order dated 13th January, 1998, to indicate its response with respect to the issues raised in the said Writ Petition. The Law Commission in its affidavit dated 25.3.1998 brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Court that the 156th Report of the Law Commission on the Indian Penal Code had dealt, inter alia, with the issues raised in the Writ Petition, but since

the said Report was not yet placed on the table of the Houses of Parliament, the matter may be adjourned by a few months. The matter was adjourned by three months. Meanwhile, the aforesaid Report of the Law Commission was placed on the table of both the Houses of Parliament. Thereafter, the Law Commission filed its affidavit dated 28.7.98 setting out in extenso the portions of the said Report dealing with the issues in question. Suffice it to say that by and large the then Law Commission (14th Law Commission) did not agree with the viewpoint of the writ petitioners except in certain minor respects which would be indicated at the appropriate stage later. It is after considering the said affidavit and the affidavit filed by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs, that the Hon'ble Court passed the aforesaid order dated 9th August, 1999.

1.1.3. The order of the Hon'ble Court records the statement of the learned counsel for the writ petitioners that the contents of the 156th Report of the Law Commission were known to the petitioners, but since according to them the Report did not deal with the precise issues raised in the writ petition, a request was made by the counsel for the petitioner to seek further consideration of the issues by the Law Commission and the Government of India. The Court was inclined to agree with the said submissions. The Court also noted that the 156th Report was submitted by the Law Commission prior to these issues being referred to the Commission and further that the said Report of the Law Commission did not in terms deal with various aspects of the issues raised in the Writ Petition. The order further recorded that at the suggestion of the Hon'ble Court, the petitioner did draw up a note containing the precise issues involved in the Writ Petition as well as other connected issues. After perusing the same, the Court asked the Law Commission to examine the said issues afresh. A copy of the 'precise issues' with the appendix and affidavit were sent to the Secretary, Law Commission with a request to place the same before the Chairman of the Law Commission for consideration. It was also observed that the Law Commission may, if so advised, call upon the petitioner to assist it in such manner as the Commission thought appropriate. The issues, the Court observed, "need a thorough examination". The matter was accordingly adjourned for three months within which period the Law Commission was expected to submit its response to the Hon'ble Court.

1.1.4. The order of the Hon'ble Court was received by the Secretary to the Law Commission on 19.8.99 and placed before the Chairman.

1.2. "Precise issues".- The `precise issues' submitted by the petitioner before the Court and which have been sent to the Law Commission for consideration are divided into three parts (Annexure-A). Part I carries the title "Precise issues submitted for consideration of the Law Commission and the Government of India". Part II carries the heading "Existing inadequacies" and Part III is titled "Suggestions for amendment to the Indian Penal Code". We shall set out in brief the substance of the submissions made in all the three parts.

1.2.1. Part I: Precise issues submitted for consideration of the Law Commission and the Government of India.- (1) Having regard to the widespread prevalence of child sexual abuse, would it not be appropriate to include all forms of penetration such as penile/vaginal penetration, penile/oral penetration, penile/anal penetration, finger/vagina and finger/anal penetration and object/vaginal penetration within the meaning of the expression "penetration" in the Explanation to section 375 of the IPC. The restrictive interpretation of `penetration' in the Explanation to section 375 defeats the very purpose and object underlying section 376(2)(f);

(2) Is it not wrong to classify the penetrative abuse of a child below the age of 12 as unnatural offence under section 377 IPC or as outraging the modesty of a woman under section 354, depending upon the `type' of penetration ignoring the `impact' on such child.

(3) Is it not wrong to continue to treat non-consensual penetration upon such a child as offence under section 377 IPC on par with certain forms of consensual penetration (e.g. consensual homosexual sex) where consenting party can be held liable as an abettor or otherwise.

1.2.2. `Appendix A' appended to Part I contains three notes, which we shall refer to in seriatum: Note 1: The Explanation to sections 375 and 376 says that "penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary to the offence of rape". By the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 1983, raping of a woman under twelve years of age was made punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may be for life in addition to fine. In such a situation, it would be appropriate to broaden the meaning of penetration to include not only vaginal penetration but also anal and

oral penetration as well as penetration by any part of the body or by any object.

Note 2: In a vast majority of child sexual abuse cases the penetration is other than penile-vaginal. Such penetration causes lasting psychic damage to the child. In such a situation, a restrictive meaning attached to penetration is likely to prove inadequate.

Note 3(a): The 156th Report of the Law Commission has recommended that penile/oral penetration and penile/anal penetration be covered by section 377 IPC and that finger penetration and object penetration into vagina or anus can be adequately covered under section 354 with a more severe punishment. This recommendation requires reconsideration.

Such a restrictive view fails to take into consideration several forms of child abuse and the further fact that very often the sexual abuse of children is by persons known to them. As a matter of fact, rape is really intended to humiliate, violate or degrade a woman sexually. It adversely affects the sexual integrity and autonomy of women and children. The aforesaid recommendation of the Law Commission therefore defeats the very object underlying the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 1983 which inserted sub-section (2) and in particular clause (f) thereof in section 376. The above recommendation also does not take into account the fact that a child of tender years can not discern the degree of difference in terms of which orifice of hers is penetrated. Certain instances are then set out to illustrate the aforesaid point.

Note 3(b): Under this note, the petitioner has sought to argue in the light of the instances mentioned under Note 3(a) that the 156th Report of the Law Commission requires reconsideration.

1.3. Part II: Existing Inadequacies.- Various instances set out in Appendix-B to Annexure-A (a copy of the submissions of Sakshi including Appendix-B is enclosed herewith) to this part, the petitioner argues, would not amount to rape and perhaps not even to natural offence under section 377 or to outraging the modesty of a woman under section 354, in view of the existing law. They might just be a limited form of assault or criminal force, if at all, though all the said instances are of a grave nature and extremely disturbing. It is therefore necessary

that there should be a rethinking on this issue and the offence of 'sexual assault' should be more precisely defined and its parameters indicated.

1.4. Part III: Suggestions for amendment to Indian Penal Code.- This part sets out the several amendments proposed by the petitioner. Suffice it to say that they seek to substitute the definition of 'rape' with the definition of 'sexual assault' and make it gender neutral. The object is to widen the scope of the offence. The expression 'consent' is also sought to be defined. A new section, section 375A with the heading 'Aggravated sexual assault' is sought to be created. This new offence seeks to synthesise the offences now categorised under sub-section (2) of section 376 as well as sections 376B to 376D.

CHAPTER TWO VIEWS INVITED ON PROPOSED PROVISIONS

2.1. UN Convention and Constitutional provisions. Several cases of child abuse have all over the world have caused grave concern to the humanity. Article 34 of the Convention on Rights of the Child (20 November 1989) ordains the Member States to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, State Parties are required to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

2.1.1. Article 39(f) of the Constitution of India, one of the Directive Principles of State Policy requires the State to direct its policy, inter alia, towards securing that childhood and youth are protected against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment. There is, therefore, great need for tightening the existing provisions relating to child sexual abuse or assault.

2.2. Draft of the Law Commission's proposals.- On a consideration of the 'precise issues' submitted by the petitioner and in the light of the order of the Hon'ble Court and also taking into account the laws in force in certain western countries on this subject, the Law Commission prepared a draft (Annexure-B) containing the proposed new sections, namely, sections 375, 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D in substitution of the existing sections 375 to 376D and also suggested a new section, section 376E. The purport of these new sections is to substitute the offence of 'rape' under section 375 with the offence of 'sexual assault' by including all kinds of penetration in the vagina, anus or urethra of another, whether by a part of the human body or by an object. Section 376 is, accordingly, modified in the light of the change in section 375. Sections 376A, 376B, 376C and 376D are retained substantially except adapting them to the changes made in the offence under section 375 and a few changes in the matter of punishment. A new offence, namely, section 376E with the title 'unlawful sexual contact' is sought to be created. Besides the above, section 377 is proposed to be deleted as unnecessary in the light of the preceding provisions. Section 509 of IPC is also sought to be amended providing higher punishment where the offence set out in the said section is committed with sexual intent.

2.2.1. Views invited.- A copy of the said draft was forwarded to Sakshi on 27.8.99 and they were invited for a discussion on 13.9.99. It was indicated that the discussion would not only be with respect to the draft prepared by the Law Commission but that they shall be free to put forward their other suggestions and ideas, if any, and further they could also bring representations of other women's organisations, along with them, for discussion. Accordingly, three persons, namely, Ms Naina Kapur (Director, Sakshi), Ms Jasjit Purewal (Director, Interventions for Support, Healing and Awareness - IFSHA) and Ms Kirti Singh (All India Democratic Women's Association - AIDWA) participated in the discussion, on behalf of their respective organisations. All the three organisations have also put forward their suggestions in writing - apart from what Sakshi had filed before the Supreme Court.

We may mention that hereafter whenever we speak of or refer to Sakshi, it means not only the Sakshi, but also the two other women's organisations, namely IFSHA(Interventions for Support, Healing and Awareness) and AIDWA (All India Democratic Women's Association) as

well as the National Commission for Women (NCW), who were also heard on the proposals contained herein.

2.3. Views of the "Sakshi" on the IPC provisions.- On the first day of hearing (13.9.99), the said three persons expressed their appreciation of the draft prepared by the Law Commission stating that it was a substantial advance on the subject and met many of their ideas. Even so, after a good amount of discussion, they came forward with the following changes in the said draft:

(a) The age of the person assaulted - referred to in clause "sixthly" in section 375 and in Explanation (2) to section 375 and in section 376(1) (where the age of the wife is referred to) - should be raised to sixteen. Raising the said age to eighteen may not be appropriate.

(b) A provision must be inserted to the effect that if the person assaulted gives his/her age, the court shall presume it to be so. A provision on the lines of section 114A of the Evidence Act be suggested.

(c) In the definition of sexual assault in section 375, there should be an explanation saying that penetration shall mean penetration to any extent whatsoever, inasmuch the penetration is never complete in the case of children.

(d) Explanation (2) to draft section 375 (which says that sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under 15 years of age, does not amount to sexual assault) should be deleted. Forced sexual intercourse by a husband with his wife should equally be treated as an offence just as any physical violence by a husband against the wife is treated as an offence. Following the same logic, they submitted that the words "unless the person subjected to sexual assault is his own wife and is not under 15 years of age in which case he shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years or with fine or with both" in section 376(1) of the Law Commission's draft [adaptation of the existing section 376(1)] should also be deleted. Section 376A should also be deleted, they said, on the same reasoning.

(e) In the first proviso to draft section 376(1) (in the draft of the Commission), the words "the father, grandfather or brother" should be substituted with the words "a person holding position of trust vis-a-

vis the other person" and further to add an explanation saying that the said expression shall include father/step father, brother/step brother, teacher, instructor, guardian and the like.

(f) Consent should be defined to mean "unequivocal voluntary agreement".

2.3.1. A copy of the handout given by the persons mentioned in paragraph 2.2.1, supra of this chapter, on the first date of meeting is placed at Annexure-C.

2.4. Views of the "Sakshi" on the relevant provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act.- At the end of the discussion on the first day, it was indicated to the persons mentioned in para above that if they wished to suggest any changes of a procedural nature, whether in the Criminal Procedure Code or in the Evidence Act, they could send the same by the next date, which was specified as 17th September 1999. Though the "precise issues" did not speak of any changes in the procedural laws (and was confined to amendments to Indian Penal Code only), we were of the opinion that unless certain changes are effected simultaneously in the relevant provisions of the CrPC and Evidence Act, the purpose underlying the changes in the substantive law IPC - may not be fully served. It is for this reason that we suggested to Sakshi to come forward with their suggestions, if any, for amendment of procedural laws to achieve the purpose underlying changes in substantive laws. Accordingly, they came forward with as many as 14 suggestions proposing amendments not only in the Criminal Procedure Code and Evidence Act but also in the Indian Penal Code (Annexure-D). The procedural amendments suggested by them are to the following effect:

(1) The 84th Report of the Law Commission had suggested that where the statement of a girl-victim below twelve years of age is recorded, it should be done by a woman police officer or by a woman belonging to an organisation interested in the cause of women or children. The said recommendation should be accepted with certain changes set out in their note.

(2) The present proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure should be substituted by the following proviso:

"Provided that no male person under the age of sixteen years or a woman shall be required to attend at any place other than his or her home or place of his or her choice."

(3) A new sub-section, namely, sub-section (6) should be inserted in section 160 CrPC to the effect that the statement of a male person under the age of sixteen years or a female, during the course of investigation, should be recorded only in the presence of a relative, a friend or a social worker of the person's choice.

(4) A new section, namely, section 164A should be inserted in the Code of Criminal Procedure stating that as soon as a case of sexual assault is reported to a Police person, he shall have the person (allegedly assaulted sexually) examined medically by a registered medical practitioner and that such medical practitioner shall after due examination, prepare a report setting out the various specified particulars. This proposal is a slight modification of the recommendation contained in the 84th Report of the Law Commission.

(5) Sub-sections (1A), (1B), (1C) and (1D) should be inserted in section 53 of the Criminal Procedure Code as recommended by the 84th Report of the Law Commission, with necessary adaptations.

(6) While granting bail to a person accused of sexual assault, one of the conditions which should be imposed by the court shall be that such person shall not be in the proximity of the person assaulted.

(7) In the case of sexual assault, there shall be no interference with or disturbance of the natural habitat of the person sexually assaulted by or through the criminal justice process.

(8) The investigation and trial of sexual offences should be time-bound and should be concluded within six months.

(9) The expression 'social worker' shall be defined to mean a woman interested in or working for the cause of women and/or children

and who is familiar with issues of violence against women and children.

(10)(a) A new section 114B should be introduced in the Evidence Act stating that where in a prosecution for aggravated sexual assault under sections 376A to 376D of the IPC, the question is whether the person so assaulted consented to it and where such person states before the court that he/she did not so consent, the court shall presume it to be so.

(b) Clause (4) in section 155 to the Evidence Act (which permits the person accused of rape or attempt to ravish to prove that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character) should be deleted.

(c) In section 146 of the Evidence Act, another clause, namely, clause (4) should be added stating expressly that in a prosecution for sexual assault, it shall not be permissible to adduce evidence or to put questions in cross-examination of the person assaulted with respect to his/her previous sexual history, character or conduct whether to establish consent or otherwise.

(d) The absence of a medical report in the case of a sexual assault shall not be a factor against the complainant/person assaulted.

(11) There should be a provision either in the CrPC or in the Evidence Act to the effect that a minor who has been assaulted sexually, should not be required to give his/her evidence in the presence of the accused as it will certainly traumatise the minor. Steps should also be taken to provide an appropriate and safe environment in which the child can recover.

(12) The testimony of a child who is subjected to sexual assault should be recorded at the earliest opportunity by a judge/magistrate in the presence of a friend, relative or social worker whom the minor trusts. For a proper implementation of the above suggestion, videotape/circuit television should be provided. Further, where the child is to be cross-examined, the questions shall be handed over to the judge who shall in turn put those questions to the minor. While recording the evidence of the minor, appropriate breaks should also be given to make the minor feel comfortable.

(13) All cases of sexual assault should be tried by special courts which shall be manned by judges, prosecutors and counsellors, 'specially trained/sensitised to issues of sexual assault'.

(14) A new offence should be created by appropriately amending section 166 IPC making it an offence for a public servant to disobey the direction of law prohibiting the summoning of a minor/woman at any place other than her place of choice and also a public servant who disobeys any direction of law with respect to the manner in which the investigation concerning a minor shall be conducted.

2.4.1. Discussion on the suggestions of "Sakshi".- Each of the above suggestions were discussed in the Commission in the presence of the three persons representing organisations mentioned in para 2.2.1 above, in the light of the 84th Report of the Law Commission as well as the 154th Report of the Law Commission. While we agree with some of the aforesaid suggestions (as would be evident from the recommendations set out in the succeeding chapters), we find ourselves unable to agree with all of them.

2.5. Views of the National Commission for Women (NCW) invited.- The Law Commission would also wish to put on record that before finalising their recommendations, the Law Commission had also sent a letter to the National Commission for Women (NCW) enclosing the aforementioned draft (prepared by the Law Commission) (Annexure-B) and inviting them to come and have a discussion with the Law Commission on 16.9.99. The National Commission for Women deputed their Joint Secretary, Ms Leena Mehendale. One of the Members of the Law Commission, Mrs Justice Leila Seth, heard the Joint Secretary and also asked her to put her ideas/suggestions in writing. Accordingly, the NCW sent a set of suggestions in writing signed by the Joint Secretary. A copy of the said proposals is appended herewith (Annexure-E).

CHAPTER THREE

Changes recommended in the Indian Penal Code, 1860

3.1. Substitution of definition of 'rape' by definition of 'sexual assault'. Not only women but young boys, are being increasingly subjected to forced sexual assaults. Forced sexual assault causes no less

trauma and psychological damage to a boy than to a girl subjected to such offence. Boys and girls both are being subjected to oral sexual intercourse too. According to some social activists like Ms Sheela Barse, both young girls and boys are being regularly used for all kinds of sexual acts and sexual perversions in certain tourist centres like Goa - mainly for edification of the foreign tourists. Sakshi have also recommended for widening the scope of the offence in section 375 and to make it gender neutral. Some of the Western countries have already done this. It is also necessary to include under this new definition (sexual assault) not only penile penetration but also penetration by any other part of the body (like finger or toe) or by any other object. Explanation to section 375 has also been substituted by us to say that penetration to any extent whatsoever shall be deemed to be penetration for the purpose of this section. This is so provided for the reason that in the case of children, penetration is rarely complete - for physical reasons. So far as the Exception is concerned, we have retained the existing Exception the only change made being in the matter of age; we have raised the age of the 'wife' from fifteen to sixteen. The age of the person assaulted sexually referred to in the clause "sixthly" has also been raised to sixteen from fifteen.

3.1.1. We may also mention that in redrafting the section, we have stuck to the existing provision as far as possible. This is for the reason that since these provisions have already been interpreted and elucidated by the decisions of the courts, it is better to stick to them rather than use new expressions and new wording. In drafting clauses (a) to (e) in section 375, we have drawn inspiration from the Criminal Law Western Australia.

3.1.2. Substitution of existing section 375 of the IPC recommended.- We accordingly recommend that the existing section 375 be substituted by the following:

"375. Sexual Assault: Sexual assault means - (a) penetrating the vagina (which term shall include the labia majora), the anus or urethra of any person with -

i) any part of the body of another person or ii) an object manipulated by another person except where such penetration is carried out for proper hygienic or medical purposes;

(b) manipulating any part of the body of another person so as to cause penetration of the vagina (which term shall include the labia majora), the anus or the urethra of the offender by any part of the other person's body;

(c) introducing any part of the penis of a person into the mouth of another person;

(d) engaging in cunnilingus or fellatio; or (e) continuing sexual assault as defined in clauses (a) to (d) above in circumstances falling under any of the six following descriptions:

First- Against the other person's will.

Secondly- Without the other person's consent.

Thirdly- With the other person's consent when such consent has been obtained by putting such other person or any person in whom such other person is interested, in fear of death or hurt.

Fourthly- Where the other person is a female, with her consent, when the man knows that he is not the husband of such other person and that her consent is given because she believes that the offender is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married.

Fifthly- With the consent of the other person, when, at the time of giving such consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by the offender personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, the other person is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which such other person gives consent.

Sixthly- With or without the other person's consent, when such other person is under sixteen years of age.

Explanation: Penetration to any extent is penetration for the purposes of this section.

Exception: Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under sixteen years of age, is not sexual assault."

3.1.2.1. Representatives of Sakshi wanted us to recommend the deletion of the Exception, with which we are unable to agree. Their reasoning runs thus: where a husband causes some physical injury to his wife, he is punishable under the appropriate offence and the fact that he is the husband of the victim is not an extenuating circumstance recognized by law; if so, there is no reason why concession should be made in the matter of offence of rape/sexual assault where the wife happens to be above 15/16 years. We are not satisfied that this Exception should be recommended to be deleted since that may amount to excessive interference with the marital relationship.

3.2. Modification of S.376.- So far as the proposed section 376 is concerned, we are not suggesting any substantial changes except two and adapting the language of the section to accord with the change in section 375. In the light of instances coming before the courts and the instances mentioned in the Note prepared by Sakshi, we have proposed addition of a proviso to sub-section (1) (while treating the existing proviso as the second proviso) providing that where the sexual assault is committed by the father, grandfather or brother, the punishment should be severe. On the basis of suggestions made by Sakshi, we have also added the words "or any other person being in a position of trust or authority towards the other person" after the words "father, grandfather or brother". The second change suggested by us is in the matter of the age of wife referred to in proposed sub-section (1) as also of the person assaulted in clause

(f) of sub-section (2). The age "fifteen" is raised to "sixteen".

3.2.1. The reasons for these changes are: (1) to visit with a severe penalty the near relations and persons in position of trust and authority who more often than not commit the offence of sexual assault on the members of the family or on unsuspecting and trusting young persons. We have in this connection taken note of the extremely odious and debased conduct of the father of the minor girl in the facts highlighted in *Sudesh Jakhoo v. K.C.J. and others* [1996 (3) AD Delhi 653 = (1996) 62 DLT 563] and (2) to maintain uniformity in the matter of age of wife or any other young person who needs special protection – as sixteen.

3.2.2. Views of "Sakshi" considered.- Though the representatives of Sakshi have suggested that we should delete the second proviso to section 376 (1) and the proviso to section 376 (2) (which confer a discretion upon the court to award a sentence lesser than the minimum punishment prescribed by the sub-sections), we are not satisfied that there are any good reasons for doing so. Any number of situations may arise, which it is not possible to foresee, and which may necessitate the awarding of lesser punishment than the minimum punishment prescribed. Safeguard against abuse is provided by requiring that adequate and special reasons be mentioned in the judgment, for awarding such lesser punishment. Nor is there justification in the criticism that such discretion once conferred is liable to be abused or that it will always be misused to help the accused.

3.2.3. Recasting of section 376 of the IPC recommended.- Accordingly, we recommend that section 376 shall be re-cast as follows: -

"376. Punishment for sexual assault - (1) Whoever, except in the cases provided for by sub-section (2), commits sexual assault shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than seven years but which may be for life or for a term which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine unless the person subjected to sexual assault is his own wife and is not under sixteen years of age, in which case, he shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

If the sexual assault is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority towards the person assaulted or by a near relative of the person assaulted, he/she shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to life imprisonment and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than minimum punishment prescribed in this sub-section.

(2) Whoever,-

(a) being a police officer commits sexual assault-

(i) within the limits of the police station to which he is appointed; or

(ii) in the premises of any station house whether or not situated in the police station to which he is appointed; or

(iii) on a person in his custody or in the custody of a police officer subordinate to him; or

(b) being a public servant, takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on a person in his custody as such public servant or in the custody of a public servant subordinate to him; or

(c) being on the management or on the staff of a jail, remand home or other place of custody established by or under any law for the time being in force or of a women's or children's institution takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on any inmate of such jail, remand home, place or institution; or

(d) being on the management or on the staff of a hospital, takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on a person in that hospital; or

(e) commits sexual assault on a woman knowing her to be pregnant; or

(f) commits sexual assault on a person when such person is under sixteen years of age; or

(g) commits gang sexual assault, shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may be for life and shall also be liable to fine :

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment of either description for a term of less than ten years.

Explanation 1.- Where a person is subjected to sexual assault by one or more in a group of persons acting in furtherance of their common intention, each of the persons shall be deemed to have committed gang sexual assault within the meaning of this sub-section.

Explanation 2.- "Women's or children's institution" means an institution, whether called an orphanage or a home for neglected women or children or a widows' home or an institution called by any other name, which is established and maintained for the reception and care of women or children.

Explanation 3.- "Hospital" means the precincts of the hospital and includes the precincts of any institution for the reception and treatment of persons during convalescence or of persons requiring medical attention or rehabilitation."

3.3. Amendment of S.376A.- Representatives of Sakshi wanted us to recommend the deletion of section 376A (as well as Exception to section 375). Their logic was this: when a man who causes hurt or any other physical injury to his own wife is liable to be punished for such offence like any other person causing such hurt or physical injury, why should a husband who sexually assaults his wife, who is living separately under a decree of separation or under any custom or usage, be not punished like any other person. Section 376A, which provides a lesser punishment to a husband who sexually assaults his own wife living separately in the aforesaid circumstances, they argued, is arbitrary and discriminatory. They say that once section 376A is deleted, the husband in such a case would be punished under section 376(1) which carries higher punishment than section 376A. While we appreciate the force of said argument in the context of the wife who is living separately under a decree of separation or under any custom or usage, we can not at the same time ignore the fact that even in such a case the bond of marriage remains unsevered. In the circumstances, while recommending that this section should be retained on the statute book, we recommend enhancement of punishment under the section.

3.3.1. Modification in section 376A of the IPC recommended.- Accordingly, section 376A shall read as follows: -

"376A. Sexual assault by the husband upon his wife during separation.- Whoever commits sexual assault upon his wife, who is living separately from him under a decree of separation or under any custom or usage, without her consent, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than two years and which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine."

3.4. Amendment of S.376B, 376C and 376D: Having regard to the gravity of these offences, we recommend enhancement of punishment - with a minimum punishment of not less than five years. We have also added an Explanation which will govern all these three sections. The Explanation defines "sexual intercourse" to mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 will however apply even in the case of sexual intercourse as defined by the Explanation to this section.

3.4.1. Modifications in sections 376B, 376C and 376D of the IPC recommended.- Accordingly, section 376B with necessary adaptations and changes, shall read as follows:

"376B. Sexual intercourse by public servant with person in his custody.- Whoever, being a public servant, takes advantage of his/her official position and induces or seduces any person, who is in his/her custody as such public servant or in the custody of a public servant subordinate to him, to have sexual intercourse with him/her, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine. Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation: "Sexual intercourse" in this section and sections 376C and 376D shall mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 shall also be applicable."

"376C. Sexual intercourse by superintendent of jail, remand home, etc.- Whoever, being the superintendent or manager of a jail, remand home or other place of custody established by or under any law for the time being in force or of a women's or children's institution takes advantage

of his/her official position and induces or seduces any inmate of such jail, remand home, place or institution to have sexual intercourse with him/her, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation 1.- "Superintendent" in relation to a jail, remand home or other place of custody or a women's or children's institution includes a person holding any other office in such jail, remand home, place or institution by virtue of which he/she can exercise any authority or control over its inmates.

Explanation 2.- The expression "women's or children's institution" shall have the same meaning as in Explanation 2 to sub-section (2) of section 376.

376D. Sexual intercourse by any member of the management or staff of a hospital with any woman in that hospital. Whoever, being on the management of a hospital or being on the staff of a hospital takes advantage of his/her position and has sexual intercourse with any person in that hospital, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation.- The expression "hospital" shall have the same meaning as in Explanation 3 to sub-section (2) of section 376."

3.5. Insertion of section 376E: This is a wholly new section recommended by us.

We have called it the offence of 'unlawful sexual contact'. This section is intended to cover a wide variety of offences including sexual harassment at work place and sexual perversions of the kind mentioned in the note submitted by Sakshi. Sub-section (1) of this new section covers touching, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of another person (not being the spouse of such person), with sexual intent and without the consent of such other person. In case the other person is below sixteen years of age, we have recommended higher punishment. Sub-section (2) is an extension or elaboration of the offence mentioned in sub-section (1), while sub-section (3) deals with a case where such offence is committed on a young person - young person being defined by the Explanation to mean a person below the age of sixteen years. If the offence of unlawful sexual contact is committed on a young person by a person with whom such young person is in a relationship of dependency, the punishment is rigorous imprisonment which may extend to seven years or with fine or with both and in case the offender happens to be the father, grandfather or brother, a still higher punishment is provided for. In the case of a 'young person', consent is treated as irrelevant. (Sections 151, 152 and 153 of the Canadian Criminal Code also contain similar provisions).

3.5.1. Insertion of new section 376E recommended.- We therefore recommend that a new section, namely, section 376E be inserted in the IPC in the following terms:

"376E. Unlawful sexual contact (1) Whoever, with sexual intent, touches, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of another person, not being the spouse of such person, without the consent of such other person, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine or with both.

(2) Whoever, with sexual intent, invites, counsels or incites a young person to touch, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, the body of any person, including the body of the person who so invites, counsels or incites, or touches, with sexual intent, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object any part of the body of a young person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

(3) Whoever being in a position of trust or authority towards a young person or is a person with whom the young person is in a relationship of dependency, touches, directly or indirectly, with sexual intent, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of such young person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.

Explanation: "Young person" in this sub-section and sub-section (2) means a person below the age of sixteen years."

3.6. Deletion of section 377:

In the light of the change effected by us in section 375, we are of the opinion that section 377 deserves to be deleted. After the changes effected by us in the preceding provisions (sections 375 to 376E), the only content left in section 377 is having voluntary carnal intercourse with any animal. We may leave such persons to their just deserts.

3.7. Amendment of section 509:

So far as this section is concerned, the only change we are suggesting is enhancement of punishment. We recommend that the existing section 509 be amended as follows:

"509. Word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman:

Whoever, intending to insult the modesty of any woman, utters any word, makes any sound or gesture, or exhibits any object intending that such word or sound shall be heard, or that such gesture or object shall be seen, by such woman, or intrudes upon the privacy of such woman, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

3.8. New Section 166A, IPC:

The 84th Report of the Law Commission had recommended (para 3.20) that a new section, namely, section 166A, be inserted in the Indian Penal Code. The object behind this new section was to punish a public servant who knowingly disobeys any direction of law

prohibiting him from requiring the attendance at any place of any person for the purpose of investigation into an offence or other matter or knowingly disobeys any other direction of law regulating the manner in which he shall conduct such investigation and which act of his causes prejudice to any person. The representatives of Sakshi with whom we had a discussion, requested that a new section as recommended by 84th Report of the Law Commission be recommended to be inserted in the IPC. This provision must be understood in the light of the fact that in the next chapter, we are recommending several measures with respect to the manner in which the statement of women and children (below 16 years) should be recorded, the place where it should be recorded and so on.

3.8.1. New section 166A of the IPC recommended. Accordingly, we recommend that a new section be introduced in the IPC in the following terms:

"166A. Whoever, being a public servant-

(a) knowingly disobeys any direction of the law prohibiting him from requiring the attendance at any place of any person for the purpose of investigation into an offence or other matter, or

(b) knowingly disobeys any other direction of the law regulating the manner in which he shall conduct such investigation, to the prejudice of any person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both."

3.9. Views of "Sakshi" for defining 'consent' considered.- Lastly, we may refer to a request of Sakshi to insert the definition of "consent" for the purpose of the aforesaid sections. We are however of the opinion that no such definition is called for at this stage, for the reason that the said expression has already been interpreted and pronounced upon by the courts in India in a good number of cases. Reference in this behalf may be made to page 700 of the Commentary on IPC by Justice Jaspal Singh (First Edition 1998) where it is stated, on the basis of the decisions of the Madras, Punjab and Nagpur High Courts, that "consent implies the exercise of a free and untrammelled right to forbid or withhold what is being consented to; it always is a voluntary and conscious acceptance of what is proposed to be done by another and concurred in by the former".

CHAPTER FOUR

Changes recommended in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973

4.1. Proposals of "Sakshi" relating to the Code of Criminal Procedure.- As stated in chapter two, the representatives of Sakshi have come forward with as many as 14 recommendations proposing amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Evidence Act. We had mentioned them in the said chapter. We shall now proceed to discuss them.

4.2. Addition of sub-sections (3) to (5) in section 160, CrPC.- The 84th Report of the Law Commission had recommended (paragraphs 3.1 to 3.15) that sub-sections (3) to (7) be added in section 160. Instead of paraphrasing the reasons given in the 84th Report in our own words, it would be appropriate to set out paragraphs 3.11 to 3.15 of that Report hereinbelow:

"IV. Interrogation of female victims of sexual offences

3.11 Reporting and Investigation.- These matters concern the arrest and detention of women in general. We now deal with certain matters peculiar to women who are victims of sexual offences. Women who have been raped are reluctant to report it, partly because of the embarrassment of discussing the details with male policemen, and partly because of the very fear of even more painful humiliation of being a witness in Court.

They get scared and become confused when, in the strange environment of the Court room, they have to conduct themselves in a manner foreign to their custom and under a restraint not conducive to clear and coherent thought or free expression.

3.12 Investigation by female police - No statutory change recommended.- A woman is often discouraged from pressing a charge of rape or other sexual offence by the fact that she usually encounters only male police and prosecution officers. It is presumably

for this reason that it has been suggested that the investigation of such offences should be done by women police officers only.

We would be happy if the questioning of female victims of sexual offences would be done by women police officers only. We are not, however, inclined to recommend a statutory provision in this regard. A mandatory provision to that effect may prove to be unworkable. The number of women police officers in rural areas is very small. Even in urban areas, unless a centralised cell (with the status of a police station) is created for investigation into sexual offences against women, such a provision may not be practicable.

We regard this difficulty as a transient one. An all-out effort for the recruitment of sufficient number of women police officers, who could be drafted for the police duties of interrogation and investigation, should be made.

3.13 Practice to be adopted in metropolitan cities.- Till then, in metropolitan cities or big cities where there are sufficient number of women police officers, a practice should be established that women police officers alone investigate sexual offences and interrogate the victim.

We are, therefore, not in favour of any statutory provision being made in this respect, subject to what we are recommending in the next paragraph.

3.14 Interrogation of child victim of rape Statutory provision recommended.- The practice as suggested above could be adopted in metropolitan areas and big cities. But there is one matter which is of importance for the whole country. It is necessary that in the case of girls below a certain age - say, below twelve years who are victims of rape, there should be a statutory provision to ensure that the girl must be interrogated only by a woman. A woman police officer would be preferable. But, if a woman police officer is not available, an alternate procedure as detailed below should be followed.

The alternate procedure that we contemplate is this. Where a woman police officer is not available, the officer in charge of the

police station should forward a list of questions to a qualified female (we shall suggest details later) who would, after recording the information as ascertained from the child victim, return the papers to the officer in charge of the police station. If necessary, further questions to be put to the child may be sent by the police to the interrogator.

For the present, this procedure may be applied to female victims below 12 years. It could later be utilised for child witnesses in general, if found practicable.

The "qualified female" whom we have in mind should be one who is a social worker belonging to a recognised social organisation. If she possesses some knowledge of law and procedure, it would be all the more useful, but that need not be a statutory requirement.

3.15 Amendment of section 160 recommended by insertion of sub-sections (3) to (7).- In view of what is stated above, we would recommend the addition of the following provision - say, as new sub-sections - in section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973:

"(3) Where, under this chapter, the statement of a girl under the age of twelve years is to be recorded, either as first information of an offence or in the course of an investigation into an offence, and the girl is a person against whom an offence under section 354, 354A or 375 of the Indian Penal Code is alleged to have been committed or attempted, the statement shall be recorded either by a female police officer or by a person authorised by such organisation interested in the welfare of women or children as is recognised in this behalf by the State Government by notification in the official gazette.

(4) Where the case is one to which the provisions of sub-section (3) apply, and a female police officer is not available, the officer in charge of the police station shall, in order to facilitate the recording of the statement, forward to the person referred to in that sub-section a written request setting out the points on which information is required to be elicited from the girl.

(5) The person to whom such a written request is forwarded shall, after recording the statement of the girl, transmit the record to the officer in charge of the police station.

(6) where the statement recorded by such person as forwarded under sub-section (5) appears in any respect to require clarification or amplification, the officer in charge of the police station shall return the papers to the person by whom it was forwarded, with a request for clarification or amplification on specified matters; and such person shall thereupon record the further statement of the girl in conformity with the request and return the papers to the officer in charge of the police station.

(7) The statement of the girl recorded and forwarded under sub-sections (3) to (6) shall, for the purpose of the law relating to the admissibility in evidence of statements made by any person, be deemed to be a statement recorded by a police officer.""

4.2.1. The representatives of Sakshi supported the said recommendation and wanted us to reiterate the same.

4.2.2. The 154th Report of the Law Commission dealt with the above recommendation in paragraphs 6.5 to 6.9. After setting out the aforesaid sub-sections in para 6.5, the 154th Report makes the following comments and recommendation in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.9 of chapter XVIII:

"6.6 The origin of this suggestion in its embryonic form can be traced to the Law Commission's Reports on "Rape and Allied Offences" and "Women in Custody".

6.7 The Bill (NCW) has gone beyond the Law Commission's earlier recommendations in that, insisting on the presence of a female police officer. Though the presence of such female officer is useful and necessary, their absence should not lead to delay in the investigation of the offences. Sub-sections (4), (5), (6) and (7) referred to above obligates the officer incharge of the police station to forward the person to a representative of a government, recognised women's organisation and the statement recorded by such person shall be deemed to be a statement recorded by the police officer.

6.8 It may be pointed out that the 1994 Bill does not incorporate the above amendment.

6.9 We are of the opinion that section 160 be amended on the lines suggested above subject to certain modifications. The recommendation made in sub-section (4) of NCW Bill is not practicable having regard to the present condition and dearth of female police officers. It may also not be practicable for the victim or any person interested in her to approach the person mentioned in sub-section (3). Instead, we suggest that sub-section (4) may be amended to the effect that where a female police officer is not available and to contact the person mentioned in sub-section (3) is difficult, the officer in charge of the police station, for reasons to be recorded in writing, shall proceed with the recording of the statement of the victim in the presence of a relative of the victim.

Further, the age of "twelve years" be raised to "eighteen years" in conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

4.2.3. Reiteration of the recommendations made in the 154th Report.- On a consideration of all the relevant facts and the realities of life, we too are of the opinion that the procedure indicated in the sub-sections (4), (5) and (6) is too involved besides being impracticable.

Implementation of the several steps mentioned in the said sub-sections (4) to (6) would indeed result in unnecessary harassment to the victim of the offence or to the complainant, as the case may be. We are inclined to agree with the opinion expressed in para 6.9 of the 154th Report of the Law Commission in this behalf. We have however changed the language of sub-section (3) by including a woman government officer. Changes are also called for in the light of the amendments effected by Act 43 of 1983 and also in the light of the recommendations made by us in paras 3.2 and 3.5 (substitution of the offence in section 375 and the addition of section 376E).

4.2.3.1. Insertion of sub-sections (3) & (4) in section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. Accordingly, we recommend that the following two sub-sections be inserted in section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure:

"(3) Where under this chapter, the statement of a female is to be recorded either as first information of an offence or in the course of an investigation into an offence and she is a person against whom an offence under sections 354, 375, 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D, 376E or 509 of the Indian Penal Code is alleged to have been committed or attempted, the statement shall be recorded by a female police officer and in case a female police officer is not available, by a female government servant available in the vicinity and in case a female government servant is also not available, by a female authorised by an organisation interested in the welfare of women or children.

(4) Where in any case none of the alternatives mentioned in sub-section (3) can be followed for the reason that no female police officer or female government servant or a female authorised by an organisation interested in the welfare of women and children is available, the officer in charge of the police station shall, after recording the reasons in writing, proceed with the recording of the statement of such female victim in the presence of a relative of the victim."

4.3. Substitution of the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160.- Sub-section (1) of section 160 deals with the power of a police officer to require the attendance of witnesses who appear to be acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case being investigated by him. It also casts an obligation upon the person so required to attend. The proviso as it now stands, however, says that "no male person under the age of 15 years or woman shall be required to attend at any place other than the place in which such male person or woman resides". We recommend raising the age from 15 years mentioned in the said proviso to 16 years.

4.3.1. Consideration of the view of "Sakshi" regarding presence of a relative or a friend or a social worker during the investigation.- At this stage, we may deal with another suggestion put forward by Sakshi to provide that even where the statement of a male person under the age of 16 years or of a female is recorded by a police officer during the course of investigation, a relative or a friend or a social worker of the choice of such male person below 16 years or the woman, as the case may be, shall be allowed to be present throughout the period during which the statement is recorded. We are inclined to agree with this suggestion, particularly in the light of the decision of the Supreme Court in *Nandini Satpathy v. P.L. Dani* (AIR 1978 SC 1025).

4.3.2. Substitution of the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 recommended.- Accordingly, we recommend that the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 be substituted to read as below:

"Provided that no male person under the age of 16 years or woman shall be required to attend at any place other than the place in which such male person or woman resides. While recording the statement, a relative or a friend or a social worker of the choice of the person whose statement is being recorded shall be allowed to remain present. The relative, friend or social worker so allowed to be present shall not interfere with the recording of statement in any manner whatsoever."

4.4. Insertion of a new section, namely section 164A in the Code of Criminal Procedure.- The 84th Report of the

Law Commission had recommended insertion of such a provision in paragraphs 4.8 to 4.11 of chapter 4. The reasons for such a provision and the provision suggested are the following:

"III. Examination of the victim

4.8 Section 164A, CrPC (To be added).- We next deal with the victim. In many cases, the report of the medical examiner as to the examination of the female victim is also found to be somewhat cursory and does not give adequate information about the material particulars which are necessary for an adjudication as to the various ingredients of section 375. Further, it is sometimes noticed that the medical examination report is not sent promptly to the investigating officer. As a result, the possibility of tampering with the report remains.

In our opinion, the report of the examination of the victim in a case of rape should (besides containing the usual formal particulars) deal specifically with -

- (i) the age of the victim,
- (ii) the question whether the victim was previously used to sexual intercourse,
- (iii) injuries to the body of the victim,

- (iv) general mental condition of the victim, and
- (v) other material particulars in reasonable detail.

It is also necessary that the report should note the time of examination and be sent without delay to the investigating officer. It is very important that the report should state reasons for the conclusions recorded.

4.9 Need for legislative provisions.- Ordinarily, such matters are left to be dealt with by executive instructions. However, having regard to the importance of the subject, it would be proper to insert in the Code of Criminal Procedure, at an appropriate place, a provision incorporating the guidelines that we have suggested above. In the light of the practical working of the provision, further improvements could be made in the relevant provisions.

4.10 Section 164A, CrPC, recommended. Accordingly, we recommend that the following new section should be inserted in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973:

"164A. (1) Where, during the stage when an offence of rape or attempt to commit rape is under investigation, it is proposed to get the person of the woman with whom rape is alleged to have been committed or attempted, examined by a medical expert, such examination shall be conducted by a registered medical practitioner, with the consent of the woman or of some person competent to give such consent on her behalf and the woman shall be forwarded to the registered medical practitioner without delay.

(2) The registered medical practitioner to whom such woman is forwarded shall without delay examine her person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following details:

- (i) the name and address of the woman and of the person by whom she was brought,

- (ii) the age of the woman,
- (iii) whether the victim was previously used to sexual intercourse,
- (iv) marks of injuries, if any, on the person of the woman,
- (v) general mental condition of the woman, and
- (vi) other material particulars, in reasonable detail.

(3) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(4) The report shall specifically record that the consent of the woman or of some person competent to give such consent on her behalf to such examination had been obtained.

(5) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of subsection(5) of that section.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed as rendering lawful any examination without the consent of the victim or of any person competent to give such consent on her behalf."

4.11 Medical examination of the victim of rape. In regard to the examination of the person of the accused, section 53(2) of the Code of Criminal Procedure provides that whenever the person of a female is to be examined under that section, the examination shall be made only by, or under the supervision of, a female registered medical practitioner.

The question whether a provision should be inserted to the effect that where a female victim of a sexual offence is to be examined, the medical examination shall be conducted only by a female medical practitioner has been carefully considered by us. We think that a

statutory provision is not necessary, for two reasons. In the first place, this is almost the invariable practice in India and a statutory mandate is not needed. In the second place, if a female victim does not wish to submit to examination by a male doctor, there is no legal obligation on her part to do so. For that reason also, a statutory provision is not necessary. It may be mentioned that such medical examination cannot be lawfully made without the consent of the woman or of some person competent to give consent."

4.5. Reiteration of the above proposal in the 154th Report.- The 154th Report of the Law Commission has reiterated the said proposal in paras 7.1 to 7.3 of chapter XVIII. The Commission expressed the opinion that such a provision is eminently desirable subject to the modification that medical examination be made preferably by a female medical practitioner. The Report also emphasises the importance and significance of a speedy and detailed medical examination of rape victims and speedy despatch of such report to the investigating officer.

4.5.1. Acceptance of the proposal with consequential changes.- We affirm and reiterate the aforesaid recommendations contained in the 84th and 154th Reports. However, in the light of the changes proposed by us in section 375, necessary changes by way of adaptation have to be made.

4.5.2. Insertion of section 164A in the Code of Criminal Procedure recommended.- Accordingly, we recommend that the following section 164A be inserted in the Code of Criminal Procedure:

"164A. (1) Where, during the stage when any offence under section 376, section 376A, section 376B, section 376C, section 376D or section 376E is under investigation and it is proposed to get the victim examined by a medical expert, such examination shall be conducted by a registered medical practitioner, with the consent of the victim or of some person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf. In all cases, the victim should be sent for such examination without any delay.

Provided that if the victim happens to be a female, the medical examination shall be conducted by a female medical officer, as far as possible.

(2) The registered medical practitioner to whom the victim is forwarded shall without delay examine the person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following details:

- (i) the name and address of the victim and the person by whom he/she was brought,
- (ii) the age of the victim,
- (iii) marks of injuries, if any, on the person of the victim,
- (iv) general mental condition of the victim and
- (v) other material particulars, in reasonable detail.

(3) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(4) The report shall specifically record that the consent of the victim or of some person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf to such examination had been obtained.

(5) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (5) of that section.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed as rendering lawful any examination without the consent of the victim or any person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf."

4.6. Insertion of a new section 53A in the Code of Criminal Procedure.- The 84th Report of the Law Commission had recommended the insertion of new section 53A in paras

4.5 to 4.7 of chapter 4, which reads as follows:

"II. Examination of the accused

4.5 Provision in the Code - Need for timely examination.- The Code of Criminal Procedure has, in section 53, a general provision on the subject of medical examination of the accused in all cases where such examination would afford evidence of commission of offence.

It is, however, seen that the report of the medical examination is often cursory, or is not sent in time, in cases of rape or attempt to commit rape.

In a recent Calcutta case (Narayan Dutta v. State, 1980 CrLJ 264, paras 1-2), the High Court was constrained to observe-

"It is also striking that the appellant, though arrested on that very night (9th May) was not produced before Dr. Pal (P.W. 11) who examined P.Ws. 1 and 10 on 10.5.1970."

4.6 Particulars to be entered and reasons to be given.- It is also desirable that the report should (besides containing the usual formal particulars) deal specifically with - (i) the age of the accused, (ii) injuries to the body of the accused, and (iii) other material particulars in reasonable detail. It should also note the precise time of examination. It should be sent without delay by the registered medical practitioner to the investigating officer and the latter should file it before the Magistrate empowered to take cognisance along with the documents sent with the challan under section 173(5) of the Code.

4.7 Recommendation as to section 53, CrPC.- It is very important that reasons should be given for the opinion expressed in the report. Accordingly, we recommend the insertion in section 53 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, of the following sub-sections :

"Section 53(1A), (1B), (1C) and (1D), Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 to be inserted.

(1A) When a person accused of rape or an attempt to commit rape is arrested and an examination of his person is to be made

under this section, he shall be forwarded without delay to the registered medical practitioner by whom he is to be examined.

(1B) The registered medical practitioner conducting such examination shall without delay examine such person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following particulars:

- (i) the name and address of the accused and of the person by whom he was brought,
 - (ii) the age of the accused,
 - (iii) marks of injury, if any, on the person of the accused,
- and
- (iv) other material particulars in reasonable detail.

(1C) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(1D) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall, without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (5) of that section."

4.6.1. Views of "Sakshi" considered.- The representatives of Sakshi supported the said proposal with a few additions. By means of these additions it was sought to be provided that the registered medical practitioner shall also state in his report with respect to "any traces of blood, semen and evidence of any recent sexual activity in reasonable detail". We are, however, of the opinion that the said addition suggested by Sakshi is unnecessary since the provision as suggested by the 84th Report is comprehensive enough to take in the said particulars as well. Accordingly, we affirm and reiterate the recommendation of the 84th Report, subject, however, to changes and adaptations in the light of our recommendation for substitution of section 375 of the IPC.

4.6.2. New section 53A in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 recommended.- Thus the proposed section 53A shall read as follows:

"53A. (1) When a person accused of any of the offences under sections 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or of an attempt to commit any of the said offences, is arrested and an examination of his/her person is to be made under this section, he/she shall be sent without delay to the registered medical practitioner by whom he/she is to be examined.

(2) The registered medical practitioner conducting such examination shall without delay examine such person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following particulars:

(i) the name and address of the accused and the person by whom he was brought,

(ii) the age of the accused,

(iii) marks of injury, if any, on the person of the accused, and

(iv) other material particulars in reasonable detail.

(3) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(4) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall, without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (5) of that section."

4.7. Consequential amendments in the First Schedule to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 recommended. Consequent upon the proposed amendments in sections 376 to 376D, 377 and 509 and the insertion of new section 376E in IPC, the First Schedule to the Code of

Criminal Procedure, 1973 will need to be amended and the existing entries in respect of sections 376 to 376D, 377 and 509 of the IPC will have to be substituted and entry in respect of new section 376E will have to be inserted as under:

376	Sexual assault	Imprisonment for life or imprisonment for 10 years and fine	Ditto	Non-bailable	Court of Sessions
	Sexual assault by a man on his own wife being under 16 years of age.	Imprisonment for 3 years and fine	Non-cognizable	Ditto	Ditto
	Sexual assault committed by a person in a fine position of trust or authority towards the person assaulted or by a near relative of the person assaulted.	Imprisonment for life and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto
	Sexual assault by a police officer or by a fine public servant or by a person being on the management or on the staff of a	Imprisonment for life and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto

jail, remand home or other place of custody or women's or children's institution or by a person on the management or on the staff of a hospital, taking advantage of his official position.

376A	Sexual assault by the husband upon his wife during separation.	Imprisonment for 7 years and fine (but only on the complaint of the victim)	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto
376B	Sexual intercourse by public servant with person in his custody.	Imprisonment for 10 years and fine (but no arrest shall be Made without a warrant or without an order of a Magistrate)	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto
376C	Sexual intercourse by Superintendent of jail, remand home etc.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
376D	Sexual intercourse by	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto

any member of
the management
or staff of a
hospital with
any woman in
that hospital.

376E Unlawful sexual contact. Imprisonment for 2 years, or fine or both Non-cognizable Bailable Magistrate of the First Class

Unlawful sexual contact with a young person. Imprisonment for 3 years if information relating to the commission of the offence is given to an Officer-in-charge of a Police Station by the person aggrieved by the offence or by any person related to her/him by blood, or adoption or if there is no such relative, by any public servant belonging to Cognizable Non-bailable Ditto

such class or category as may be notified by the State Government in this behalf

	Unlawful sexual contact by a person in a position of trust or authority towards a young person.	Imprisonment for 7 years and fine	Ditto	Non-bailable	Court of Session
377	Delete	Delete	Delete	Delete	Delete
509	Uttering any word or making any gesture intended to insult the modesty of a woman etc.	Simple imprisonment for 3 years and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Magistrate of the First Class

4.8. Amendment of sub-section (6) of section 198 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- Consequent upon proposed amendment of section 376 of IPC, sub-section (6) of section 198 CrPC shall be amended in the following manner:

The words "sexual intercourse" shall be substituted by the words "sexual assault" and the word "fifteen" shall be substituted by the word "sixteen".

4.9. Insertion of new section 198B of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- After section 198A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the following new section 198B shall be inserted:

"Prosecution of offences under sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 376E of the Indian Penal Code.-

No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 376E of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) except upon a police report of facts which constitute such offence or upon a complaint made by the person aggrieved by the offence or by his/her father, mother, brother, sister or by his/her father's or mother's brother or sister or, by any other person related to him/her by blood or adoption, if so permitted by the court".

4.10. Proposals for amending CrPC put forward by Sakshi with which we do not agree.- Sakshi have put forward certain other suggestions which we have set out under items 6, 7, 8 and 9 in chapter two of this report. In our opinion, the said proposals are unnecessary in view of the existing provisions and the recommendations made by us herein. It is better to leave these matters to the discretion of the court.

CHAPTER FIVE

Changes recommended in the Evidence Act, 1872

5.1. Suggestions of "Sakshi" considered.- The representatives of Sakshi have suggested three amendments to the Evidence Act, viz. (a) amendment of section 114A saying that in a prosecution for aggravated sexual assault and where sexual intercourse is proved and the question is whether it was without the consent of the complainant and the complainant states in her evidence before the court that she did not consent, the court shall presume that she did not consent; (b) clause (4) in section 155, which permits a man prosecuted for rape or an attempt to ravish, to show that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character should be deleted and (c) in section 146, a new clause, clause (4), shall be added stating that in a prosecution for sexual assault or an attempt to commit sexual assault and where the question of consent is in issue, it shall not be permissible to put any questions in the cross-examination of the complainant with respect to his/her previous sexual history, character or conduct for proving consent or the quality of consent.

5.1.1. Suggestion No.1.- So far as the first suggestion is concerned, it has evidently been made without taking note of Act 43 of 1983 which

had introduced section 114A in the Evidence Act. The section reads as follows:

"114A. Presumption as to absence of consent in certain prosecutions for rape.- In a prosecution for rape under clause (a) or clause (b) or clause (c) or clause (d) or clause (e) or clause (g) of sub-section (2) of section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860), where sexual intercourse by the accused is proved and the question is whether it was without the consent of the woman alleged to have been raped and she states in her evidence before the court that she did not consent, the court shall presume that she did not consent."

5.1.2. A reading of the above section shows that it does provide for the matter which the representatives of Sakshi wanted.

5.1.3. Recommendations on section 114A of the Evidence Act.- It is however necessary to point out that section 114A is confined only to the aggravated forms of rape mentioned under clauses (a) to (e) and (g) of sub-section(2) of section 376. It does not apply to sub-section (1) of section 376 or for that matter to sections 376A to 376D. But the representatives of Sakshi also wanted such a presumption to be raised only in respect of "aggravated sexual assault" and that is exactly what section 114A provides. No amendment is therefore called for in section 114A except some modifications - by way of adaptation - in the light of amendment proposed by us to section 375, IPC.

5.1.4. Modification of section 114A of the Evidence Act recommended.- Accordingly, we recommended that section 114A be modified to read as follows:

"114A. Presumption as to absence of consent in certain prosecutions for sexual assault.- In a prosecution for sexual assault under (a) or clause (b) or clause (c) or clause (d) or clause (e) or clause (g) of sub-section (2) of section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) where sexual intercourse by the accused is proved and the question is whether it was without the consent of the other person alleged to have been sexually assaulted and such other person states in his/her evidence before the court that he/she did not consent, the court shall presume that he/she did not consent.

Explanation: "Sexual intercourse" in this section and sections 376C and 376D shall mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 shall also be applicable."

5.1.4.1. It goes without saying that the aforesaid presumption is a rebuttable presumption of law ('shall presume') within the meaning of section 4 of the Evidence Act.

5.1.5. Consideration of the suggestion of "Sakshi" to create presumption in respect of the age of the victim.- We may in this connection refer to another suggestion of Sakshi that a similar presumption be created in respect of the age of the victim. We however do not see any necessity for such a provision since the question of age is really and ultimately a matter of evidence and be better left to the judgment of the court.

5.2.1. Suggestion No.2.- For a proper appreciation of the suggestion for amendment of section 155, it would be appropriate to set out section 155 in full (omitting the illustrations). It reads as follows:

"155. Impeaching credit of witness.- The credit of a witness may be impeached in the following ways by the adverse party, or with the consent of the court, by the party who calls him:-

(1) by the evidence of persons who testify that they, from their knowledge of the witness, believe him to be unworthy of credit;

(2) by proof that the witness has been bribed, or has accepted the offer of a bribe, or has received any other corrupt inducement to give his evidence;

(3) by proof of former statements inconsistent with any part of his evidence which is liable to be contradicted;

(4) when a man is prosecuted for rape or an attempt to ravish, it may be shown that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character.

Explanation.- A witness declaring another witness to be unworthy of credit may not, upon his examination-in-chief, give reasons for his belief, but he may be asked his reasons in cross-examination, and

the answers which he gives cannot be contradicted, though if they are false, he may afterwards be charged with giving false evidence."

5.2.2. Section 155 sets out the manner in which the credit of a witness may be impeached. Clause (4) specifically deals with prosecution for rape. In such a prosecution, the Act permits the man prosecuted for rape (or an attempt to ravish) to show that the prosecutrix was of generally immoral character. We are of the opinion that this clause ought to be deleted. We see no relevance or reasonable connection between offence of sexual assault (mentioned under sections 375 to 376E) and the general immoral character of the victim. No one can claim to have a right to have forced sexual intercourse with a woman even if she is generally of an immoral character. In this context, we may refer to the pertinent observations of the Supreme Court in *State of Punjab v. Gurmit Singh* (AIR 1996 SC 1393) which are to the following effect:

"15. We must express our strong disapproval of the approach of the trial Court and its casting a stigma on the character of the prosecutrix. The observations lack sobriety expected of a Judge.

Such like stigmas have the potential of not only discouraging an even otherwise reluctant victim of sexual assault to bring forth complaint for trial of criminals, thereby making the society to suffer by letting the criminal escape even a trial. The Courts are expected to use self-restraint while recording such findings which have larger repercussions so far as the future of the victim of the sex crime is concerned and even wider implications on the society as a whole - where the victim of crime is discouraged - the criminal encouraged and in turn crime gets rewarded. Even in cases, unlike the present case, where there is some acceptable material on the record to show that the victim was habituated to sexual intercourse, no such inference like the victim being a girl of "loose moral character" is permissible to be drawn from that circumstance alone. Even if the prosecutrix, in a given case, has been promiscuous in her sexual behaviour earlier, she has a right to refuse to submit herself to sexual intercourse to anyone and everyone because she is not a vulnerable object or prey for being sexually assaulted by anyone and everyone. No stigma, like the one as cast in the present case should be cast against such a witness by the Courts, for after all it is the accused and not the victim of sex crime who is on trial in the Court."

5.2.3. Deletion of clause (4) of section 155 of the Evidence Act recommended.- Reference may also be made in this context to the 84th Report of the Law Commission which, inter alia, deals with this aspect. In chapter 7 of the Report under item "V. Past Sexual History" the Commission had emphasised the desirability of amending clause (4) in section 155 (to make such questions permissible only to the extent of her previous sexual relationship with the accused but otherwise to bar any questions regarding the prosecutrix's general immoral character or previous sexual experience) as well as addition of a new clause, clause (4) in section 146. Indeed the Commission had recommended insertion of a new section, section 53A in the Act. It is not necessary to set out the entire reasoning given in the 84th Report in support of amendment of clause (4) in section 155 inasmuch as the purport of such amendment is now incorporated by us in section 146. In that view, clause (4) in section 155 becomes untenable. We therefore recommend deletion of clause (4) of section 155.

5.3.1. Suggestion No.3.- So far as the addition of a new clause, namely, clause (4) in section 146 is concerned, the 84th Report of the Law Commission had suggested the following addition:

"(4) In a prosecution for rape or attempt to commit rape, where the question of consent to sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse is at issue, it shall not be permissible to adduce evidence or to put questions in the cross-examination of the prosecutrix as to her general immoral character, or as to her previous sexual experience with any person other than the accused for proving such consent or the quality of consent."

5.3.2. The 84th Report of the Law Commission had further recommended the addition of a new section, section 53A, to the following effect:

"53A. In a prosecution for rape or attempt to commit rape, where the question of consent to sexual intercourse or attempted sexual intercourse is at issue, evidence of the character of the prosecutrix or of her previous sexual experience with any person other than the accused shall not be relevant on the issue of such consent or the quality of consent."

5.3.3. Obviously, section 53A was recommended to be inserted for the reason that section 146 is confined to questions that may be put in cross-examination and is therefore of a limited operation, whereas section 53A is much wider and bars such evidence to be adduced in any manner whatsoever.

5.3.4. Reiteration of the recommendations made in the 84th Report and reference to the New South Wales Law Reform Commission's recommendations.- We are in agreement with the above recommendations contained in the 84th Report of the Law Commission and do herewith reiterate them. In this context, however, we may refer to a set of recommendations proposed by the New South Wales Law Reform Commission to amend section 409B of the Crimes Act, 1900 (New South Wales). Sub-section (2) of section 409B of the New South Wales Act provides that "in prescribed sexual offence proceedings, evidence relating to the sexual reputation of the complainant is inadmissible".

Sub-section (3) makes evidence of any sexual experience or lack of sexual experience of the complainant equally inadmissible except in certain specified situations. The New South Wales Law Commission has proposed retaining the existing sub-section (2) as clause (a) of sub-section (2) and to add a new clause, clause (b) in sub-section (2). It has also proposed addition of sub-sections (3) to (11). We do not however propose to set out all the said proposed sub-sections, except sub-section (2), which reads as follows:

"(2)(a) In proceedings to which this section applies, evidence relating to the sexual reputation of the complainant is inadmissible.

(b) Notwithstanding sub-section (2)(a), evidence about any sexual experience or sexual activity, or lack of experience or activity, of the complainant shall not be inadmissible merely because it also relates to the sexual reputation of the complainant."

5.3.5. For ready reference, we are enclosing both section 409B as it now stands as well as the recommendation for its amendment as suggested by the New South Wales Law Reform Commission. (The recommendation was made in November 1998.) (Annexure-F)

5.3.6. We do not think that we need to draw any inspiration from the highly involved and intricate provisions suggested by the New South Wales Law Reform Commission by way of clause (b) of sub-section (2) or by way of sub-sections (3) to (7) of S.209-B. The provision as suggested herein are sufficient. It is, of course, for the government to decide whether any provisions on the lines of the suggestions made by the New South Wales Law Commission should be made.

5.3.7. In the light of changes proposed by us in section 375, the language of section 53A and of clause (4) in section 146, recommended in the 84th Report of the Law Commission, have to be modified and adapted.

5.3.8. Consequential amendments recommended in proposed section 53A and proposed clause (4) of section 146 of the Evidence Act.- Accordingly, we recommend that the following amendments be made in the Evidence Act:

5.3.8.1. After section 53, the following section be inserted:

"53A. In a prosecution for an offence under section 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or for attempt to commit any such offence, where the question of consent is in issue, evidence of the character of the victim or of his/her previous sexual experience with any person shall not be relevant on the issue of such consent or the quality of consent."

5.3.8.2. In section 146 of the Evidence Act, the following clause shall be added after clause (3):

"(4) In a prosecution for an offence under section 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or for attempt to commit any such offence, where the question of consent is in issue, it shall not be permissible to adduce evidence or to put questions in the cross-examination of the victim as to his/her general immoral character, or as to his/her previous sexual experience with any person for proving such consent or the quality of consent."

CHAPTER SIX

Miscellaneous Suggestions of Sakshi

6.1. The representatives of Sakshi have made three other suggestions which we have set out under items 11, 12 and 13 in chapter two of this Report. So far as suggestion under item 11 is concerned, we may refer to section 273 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which requires that "except as otherwise expressly provided, all vidence taken in the course of the trial or other proceeding, shall be taken in the presence of the accused or when his personal attendance is dispensed with, in the presence of his pleader". We do not think that this general principle, founded upon natural justice, should be done away with altogether in trials and enquiries concerning sexual offences. In an appropriate case, it may be open to the prosecution to request the court to provide a screen in such a manner that the victim does not see the accused, while at the same time providing an opportunity to the accused to listen to the testimony of the victim and give appropriate instructions to his advocate for an effective cross-examination. However, with a view to allay any apprehensions on this score, a proviso can be added to section 273 of the Criminal Procedure Code to the following effect:

"Provided that where the evidence of a person below sixteen years who is alleged to have been subjected to sexual assault or any other sexual offence, is to be recorded, the court may, take appropriate measures to ensure that such person is not confronted by the accused while at the same time ensuring the right of cross-examination of the accused".

The proviso can be placed above the Explanation to the Section.

6.2. The suggestion mentioned under item 12 is, in our opinion, impractical; it is not possible to accede to the said request. The same comment holds good with respect to the proposal under item 13. We are therefore unable to make any recommendation for the present in terms of or on the basis of the aforesaid requests of Sakshi.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION

7.1. On the basis of the discussions contained in the preceding chapters, the Commission is of the considered opinion that the following amendments need to be carried out in the Indian Penal Code, 1860; the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 and the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

7.2. Changes recommended in the Indian Penal Code, 1860

7.2.1. Substitution of existing section 375 of the IPC recommended.-
The existing section 375 be substituted by the following:

"375. Sexual Assault: Sexual assault means -

(a) penetrating the vagina (which term shall include the labia majora), the anus or urethra of any person with -

- i) any part of the body of another person or
- ii) an object manipulated by another person except where such penetration is carried out for proper hygienic or medical purposes;

(b) manipulating any part of the body of another person so as to cause penetration of the vagina (which term shall include the labia majora), the anus or the urethra of the offender by any part of the other person's body;

(c) introducing any part of the penis of a person into the mouth of another person;

(d) engaging in cunnilingus or fellatio; or

(e) continuing sexual assault as defined in clauses (a) to (d) above in circumstances falling under any of the six following descriptions:

First- Against the other person's will.

Secondly- Without the other person's consent.

Thirdly- With the other person's consent when such consent has been obtained by putting such other person or any person in whom such other person is interested, in fear of death or hurt.

Fourthly- Where the other person is a female, with her consent, when the man knows that he is not the husband of such other person and that her consent is given because she believes that the offender is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married.

Fifthly- With the consent of the other person, when, at the time of giving such consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by the offender personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, the other person is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which such other person gives consent.

Sixthly- With or without the other person's consent, when such other person is under sixteen years of age.

Explanation: Penetration to any extent is penetration for the purposes of this section.

Exception: Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under sixteen years of age, is not sexual assault."Further we are not satisfied that the Exception should be deleted.

(paragraphs 3.1.2 and 3.1.2.1, supra)

7.2.2. Recasting of section 376 of the IPC recommended.- Section 376 shall be recast as follows:

"376. Punishment for sexual assault - (1) Whoever, except in the cases provided for by sub-section (2), commits sexual assault shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than seven years but which may be for life or for a term which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine unless the person subjected to sexual assault is his own wife and is not under sixteen years of age, in which case, he shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

If the sexual assault is committed by a person in a position of trust or authority towards the person assaulted or by a near relative of the person assaulted, he/she shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may extend to life imprisonment and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than minimum punishment prescribed in this sub-section.

(2) Whoever,-

(a) being a police officer commits sexual assault-

(i) within the limits of the police station to which he is appointed; or

(ii) in the premises of any station house whether or not situated in the police station to which he is appointed; or

(iii) on a person in his custody or in the custody of a police officer subordinate to him; or

(b) being a public servant, takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on a person in his custody as such public servant or in the custody of a public servant subordinate to him; or

(c) being on the management or on the staff of a jail, remand home or other place of custody established by or under any law for the time being in force or of a women's or children's institution takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on any inmate of such jail, remand home, place or institution; or

(d) being on the management or on the staff of a hospital, takes advantage of his official position and commits sexual assault on a person in that hospital; or

(e) commits sexual assault on a woman knowing her to be pregnant; or

(f) commits sexual assault on a person when such person is under sixteen years of age; or

(g) commits gang sexual assault,

shall be punished with rigorous imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than ten years but which may be for life and shall also be liable to fine :

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment of either description for a term of less than ten years.

Explanation 1.- Where a person is subjected to sexual assault by one or more in a group of persons acting in furtherance of their common intention, each of the persons shall be deemed to have committed gang sexual assault within the meaning of this sub-section.

Explanation 2.- "Women's or children's institution" means an institution, whether called an orphanage or a home for neglected women or children or a widows' home or an institution called by any other name, which is established and maintained for the reception and care of women or children.

Explanation 3.- "Hospital" means the precincts of the hospital and includes the precincts of any institution for the reception and treatment of persons during convalescence or of persons requiring medical attention or rehabilitation."

(paragraph 3.2.3, supra)

7.2.3. Modification in section 376A of the IPC recommended.- Section 376A shall read as follows: "376A. Sexual assault by the husband upon his wife during separation.- Whoever commits sexual assault upon his wife, who is living separately from him under a decree of separation or under any custom or usage, without her consent, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than two years and which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine."

(paragraph 3.3.1, supra)

7.2.4. Amendment of sections 376B, 376C and 376D.- We recommend enhancement of punishment - with a minimum punishment of not less than five years. We have also added an Explanation which will govern all these three sections. The Explanation defines "sexual intercourse" to mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 will however apply even in the case of sexual intercourse as defined by the Explanation to this section.

Accordingly, the modified sections 376B, 376C and 376D of the IPC shall read as follows:

"376B. Sexual intercourse by public servant with person in his custody.- Whoever, being a public servant, takes advantage of his/her official position and induces or seduces any person, who is in his/her custody as such public servant or in the custody of a public servant subordinate to him, to have sexual intercourse with him/her, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation: "Sexual intercourse" in this section and sections 376C and 376D shall mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 shall also be applicable."

"376C. Sexual intercourse by superintendent of jail, remand home, etc.- Whoever, being the superintendent or manager of a jail, remand home or other place of custody established by or under any law for the time being in force or of a women's or children's institution takes advantage of his/her official position and induces or seduces any inmate of such jail, remand home, place or institution to have sexual intercourse with him/her, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation 1.- "Superintendent" in relation to a jail, remand home or other place of custody or a women's or children's institution includes a person holding any other office in such jail, remand home, place or institution by virtue of which he/she can exercise any authority or control over its inmates.

Explanation 2.- The expression "women's or children's institution" shall have the same meaning as in Explanation 2 to sub-section (2) of section 376.

376D. Sexual intercourse by any member of the management or staff of a hospital with any woman in that hospital.- Whoever, being on the management of a hospital or being on the staff of a hospital takes advantage of his/her position and has sexual intercourse with any person in that hospital, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of sexual assault, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than five years and which may extend to ten years and shall also be liable to fine.

Provided that the court may, for adequate and special reasons to be mentioned in the judgment, impose a sentence of imprisonment for a term of less than five years.

Explanation.- The expression "hospital" shall have the same meaning as in Explanation 3 to sub-section (2) of section 376."

(paragraphs 3.4 & 3.4.1, supra)

7.2.5. Insertion of new section 376E recommended.- A new section, namely, section 376E be inserted in the IPC in the following terms:

"376E. Unlawful sexual contact.- (1) Whoever, with sexual intent, touches, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of another person, not being the spouse of such person, without the consent of such other person, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years or with fine or with both.

(2) Whoever, with sexual intent, invites, counsels or incites a young person to touch, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object, the body of any person, including the body of the person who so invites, counsels or incites, or touches, with sexual intent, directly or indirectly, with a part of the body or with an object any part of the body of a young person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine.

(3) Whoever being in a position of trust or authority towards a young person or is a person with whom the young person is in a relationship of dependency, touches, directly or indirectly, with sexual intent, with a part of the body or with an object, any part of the body of such young person, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.

Explanation: "Young person" in this sub-section and sub-section (2) means a person below the age of sixteen years."
(paragraphs 3.5 & 3.5.1, supra)

7.2.6. Deletion of section 377.- Section 377, IPC deserves to be deleted in the light of the changes effected by us in section 375 to 376E. We leave persons having carnal intercourse with any animal, to their just deserts.
(paragraph 3.6, supra)

7.2.7. Amendment of section 509, IPC.- We recommend that the existing section 509 be amended as follows:

"509. Word, gesture or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman:

Whoever, intending to insult the modesty of any woman, utters any word, makes any sound or gesture, or exhibits any object intending that such word or sound shall be heard, or that such gesture or object shall be seen, by such woman, or intrudes upon the privacy of such woman, shall be punished with simple imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine."

(paragraph 3.7, supra)

7.2.8. New section 166A, IPC recommended.- We recommend that a new section 166A be introduced in the IPC in the following terms:

"166A. Whoever, being a public servant-

(a) knowingly disobeys any direction of the law prohibiting him from requiring the attendance at any place of any person for the purpose of investigation into an offence or other matter, or

(b) knowingly disobeys any other direction of the law regulating the manner in which he shall conduct such investigation, to the prejudice of any person, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both."

(paragraphs 3.8 & 3.8.1, supra)

7.2.9. No definition of the expression "consent" is called for at this stage.

(paragraph 3.9, supra)

7.3. Changes recommended in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973

7.3.1. Insertion of sub-sections (3) and (4) in section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- We recommend that the following two sub-sections be inserted in section 160 of the Code of Criminal Procedure:

"(3) Where under this chapter, the statement of a female is to be recorded either as first information of an offence or in the course of an investigation into an offence and she is a person against whom an offence under sections 354, 375, 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D, 376E or 509 of the Indian Penal Code is alleged to have been committed or attempted, the statement shall be recorded by a female police officer and in case a female police officer is not available, by a female government servant available in the vicinity and in case a female government servant is also not available, by a female authorised by an organisation interested in the welfare of women or children.

(4) Where in any case none of the alternatives mentioned in sub-section (3) can be followed for the reason that no female police officer or female government servant or a female authorised by an organisation

interested in the welfare of women and children is available, the officer in charge of the police station shall, after recording the reasons in writing, proceed with the recording of the statement of such female victim in the presence of a relative of the victim."

(paragraphs 4.2.3 & 4.2.3.1, supra)

7.3.2. Modification of the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160.- We recommend raising the age mentioned in the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 from fifteen years to sixteen years.

(paragraph 4.3, supra)

7.3.3. Substitution of the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 recommended.- We recommend that in addition to the above modification, the proviso to sub-section (1) of section 160 be substituted to read as follows:

"Provided that no male person under the age of 16 years or woman shall be required to attend at any place other than the place in which such male person or woman resides. While recording the statement, a relative or a friend or a social worker of the choice of the person whose statement is being recorded shall be allowed to remain present. The relative, friend or social worker so allowed to be present shall not interfere with the recording of statement in any manner whatsoever."

(paragraphs 4.3.1 & 4.3.2, supra)

7.3.4. Insertion of a new section, namely, section 164A in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- We recommend that the following section 164A be inserted in the Code of Criminal Procedure:

"164A. (1) Where, during the stage when any offence under section 376, section 376A, section 376B, section 376C, section 376D or section 376E is under investigation and it is proposed to get the victim examined by a medical expert, such examination shall be conducted by a registered medical practitioner, with the consent of the victim or of some person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf. In all cases, the victim should be sent for such examination without any delay.

Provided that if the victim happens to be a female, the medical examination shall be conducted by a female medical officer, as far as possible.

(2) The registered medical practitioner to whom the victim is forwarded shall without delay examine the person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following details:

- (i) the name and address of the victim and the person by whom he/she was brought,
- (ii) the age of the victim,
- (iii) marks of injuries, if any, on the person of the victim,
- (iv) general mental condition of the victim and
- (v) other material particulars, in reasonable detail.

(3) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(4) The report shall specifically record that the consent of the victim or of some person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf to such examination had been obtained.

(5) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (5) of that section.

(6) Nothing in this section shall be construed as rendering lawful any examination without the consent of the victim or any person competent to give such consent on his/her behalf."

(paragraphs 4.5.1 and 4.5.2, supra)

7.3.5. Insertion of new section 53A in the Code of Criminal Procedure recommended.- The proposed section 53A shall read as follows:

"53A. (1) When a person accused of any of the offences under sections 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or of an attempt to

commit any of the said offences, is arrested and an examination of his/her person is to be made under this section, he/she shall be sent without delay to the registered medical practitioner by whom he/she is to be examined.

(2) The registered medical practitioner conducting such examination shall without delay examine such person and prepare a report specifically recording the result of his examination and giving the following particulars:

(i) the name and address of the accused and the person by whom he was brought,

(ii) the age of the accused,

(iii) marks of injury, if any, on the person of the accused,
and

(iv) other material particulars in reasonable detail.

(3) The report shall state precisely the reasons for each conclusion arrived at.

(4) The exact time of commencement and completion of the examination shall also be noted in the report, and the registered medical practitioner shall, without delay, forward the report to the investigating officer, who shall forward it to the Magistrate referred to in section 173 as part of the documents referred to in clause (a) of sub-section (5) of that section."

(paragraph 4.6.2, supra)

7.3.6. Consequential amendments in the First Schedule to the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 recommended.-

Consequent upon the proposed amendments in the IPC, the existing entries in respect of sections 376 to 376D, 377 and 509 will have to be substituted and entry in respect of new section 376E, IPC will have to be inserted as under:

376	Sexual assault	Imprisonment for life or imprisonment for 10 years and fine	Ditto	Non-bailable	Court of Sessions
	Sexual assault by a man on his own wife being under 16 years of age.	Imprisonment for 3 years and fine	Non-cognizable	Ditto	Ditto
	Sexual assault committed by a person in a position of trust or authority towards the person assaulted or by a near relative of the person assaulted.	Imprisonment for life and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto
	Sexual assault by a police officer or by a public servant or by a person being on the management or on the staff of a jail, remand home or other place of custody or women's or children's institution or by a person on	Imprisonment for life and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto

the management
or on the staff
of a hospital,
taking advantage
of his official
position.

376A	Sexual assault by the husband upon his wife during separation.	Imprisonment for 7 years and fine(but only on the complaint of the victim)	Cogni- zable	Non- bailable	Ditto
376B	Sexual intercourse by public servant with person in his custody	Imprisonment for 10 years and fine(but no arrest shall be made without a warrant or without an order of a Magistrate)	Cogni- zable	Non- bailable	Ditto
376C	Sexual intercourse by Superintendent of jail, remand home etc.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
376D	Sexual intercourse by any member of the management or staff of a hospital with any woman in that hospital.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto

376E	Unlawful sexual contact.	Imprisonment for 2 years, or fine or both	Non-cognizable	Bailable	Magistrate of the FirstClass
	Unlawful sexual contact with a young person.	Imprisonment for 3 years if information relating to the commission of the offence is given to an Officer-in-charge of a Police Station by the person aggrieved by the offence or by any person related to her/him by blood, or adoption or if there is no such relative, by any public servant belonging to such class or category as may be notified by the State Government in this behalf	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Ditto

	Unlawful sexual contact by a person in a position of trust or authority towards a young person.	Imprisonment for 7 years and fine	Ditto	Non-bailable	Court of Session
377	Delete	Delete	Delete	Delete	Delete
509	Uttering any word or making any gesture intended to insult the modesty of a woman etc.	Simple imprisonment for 3 years and fine	Cognizable	Non-bailable	Magistrate of the First Class

(paragraph 4.7, supra)

7.3.7. Amendment of sub-section (6) of section 198 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- Consequent upon proposed amendment of section 376 of IPC, sub-section (6) of section 198 CrPC shall be amended in the following manner:

The words "sexual intercourse" shall be substituted by the words "sexual assault" and the word "fifteen" shall be substituted by the word "sixteen".

(paragraph 4.8, supra)

7.3.8. Insertion of new section 198B of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- After section 198A of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, the following new section 198B shall be inserted:

"Prosecution of offences under sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 376E of the Indian Penal Code No court shall take cognizance of an offence punishable under sub-sections (2) and (3) of section 376E of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) except upon a police report of facts which constitute such offence or upon a complaint made by the

person aggrieved by the offence or by his/her father, mother, brother, sister or by his/her father's or mother's brother or sister or, by any other person related to him/her by blood or adoption, if so permitted by the court".

(paragraph 4.9, supra)

7.3.9. Amendment of section 273, Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973.- A proviso to the following effect be added under section 273 above the Explanation clause therein:

"Provided that where the evidence of a person below sixteen years who is alleged to have been subjected to sexual assault or any other sexual offence, is to be recorded, the court may, take appropriate measures to ensure that such person is not confronted by the accused while at the same time ensuring the right of cross-examination of the accused".

(paragraph 6.1, supra)

7.4. Changes recommended in the Indian Evidence Act, 1872

7.4.1. Modification of section 114A of the Evidence Act recommended.- We recommend that section 114A be modified to read as follows:

"114A. Presumption as to absence of consent in certain prosecutions for sexual assault.- In a prosecution for sexual assault under (a) or clause (b) or clause (c) or clause (d) or clause (e) or clause (g) of sub-section (2) of section 376 of the Indian Penal Code (45 of 1860) where sexual intercourse by the accused is proved and the question is whether it was without the consent of the other person alleged to have been sexually assaulted and such other person states in his/her evidence before the court that he/she did not consent, the court shall presume that he/she did not consent.

Explanation: "Sexual intercourse" in this section and sections 376C and 376D shall mean any of the acts mentioned in clauses (a) to (e) of section 375. Explanation to section 375 shall also be applicable."

(paragraph 5.1.4, supra)

It goes without saying that the aforesaid presumption is a rebuttable presumption of law ("shall presume") within the meaning of section 4 of the Evidence Act.

(paragraph 5.1.4.1, supra)

7.4.2. Deletion of clause (4) of section 155 of the Evidence Act.- We recommend deletion of clause (4) of section 155 of the Evidence Act.

(paragraphs 5.2.2 and 5.2.3, supra)

7.4.3. Amendments recommended in proposed section 53A, Evidence Act.- We recommend that after section 53, the following section be inserted:

"53A. In a prosecution for an offence under section 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or for attempt to commit any such offence, where the question of consent is in issue, evidence of the character of the victim or of his/her previous sexual experience with any person shall not be relevant on the issue of such consent or the quality of consent."

(paragraph 5.3.8.1, supra)

7.4.4. Insertion of clause (4) in section 146 of the Evidence Act recommended.- In section 146 of the Evidence Act, the following clause shall be added after clause (3):

"(4) In a prosecution for an offence under section 376, 376A, 376B, 376C, 376D or 376E or for attempt to commit any such offence, where the question of consent is in issue, it shall not be permissible to adduce evidence or to put questions in the cross-examination of the victim as to his/her general immoral character, or as to his/her previous sexual experience with any person for proving such consent or the quality of consent."

(paragraph 5.3.8.2, supra)

We recommend accordingly and urge the Government to initiate steps to amend all the three Acts, namely, the Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act on the lines suggested by us.

**(MR.JUSTICE B.P. JEEVAN REDDY)(RETD)
CHAIRMAN**

**(MS.JUSTICE LEILA SETH)(RETD)(DR.N.M. GHATATE)(DR.SUBHASH
C.JAIN)
MEMBER MEMBER MEMBER
SECRETARY**

Dated: 13.03.2000