

RAPE LAWS IN INDIA (2008). By Dipa Dube, Lexis Nexis Butterworths, Connaught Place, New Delhi 110001. Pp. 265. Price Rs. 495/-.

RAPE IS the crudest mode of destroying women's dignity and integrity that cannot be compensated in any material terms. In rape cases, even if the offender is punished by the court of law, the trauma and humiliation to which the victim is subjected to cannot be effectively remedied. Most of the rape victims remain fearful of being harassed in courts and suffers 'social ostracism' due to the painful treatment meted out to them by the legal system. Although, the law relating to rape has undergone many changes over the years, the alarming increase of instances of rape urge for more stringent laws and multi dimensional approach to eradicate the offence. The book under review identifies and addresses some of the important issues relating to the subject.

As the title - *Rape Laws in India* reflects, the book brings out a comprehensive account of various issues pertaining to the offence of rape in the Indian legal system. Written in a lucid style, the book provides a valuable analysis of the recent trends in the law relating to the offence of rape along with the judicial pronouncements. The book is divided into six chapters and each chapter analyses different socio-legal issues of rape.

The thematic problem of rape is meticulously explained in the introductory chapter by the author. The author argues that though the payment of compensation to the victims of rape is not an adequate remedy, as it cannot compensate upon the quantum of wound inflicted on the victim, it act as a healing therapy. The author clearly points out the existence of disparity in awarding the compensation to the victims of rape in several cases by different judges and thus, emphasises on the need for certainty of law in this regard.

The second chapter titled "Rape-An Evolutionary Sketch and Conceptual Analysis" outlines the historical evolution of rape in Indian society. Rape being a social problem, one cannot sketch out the real reason for the emergence of such a social problem. The third chapter focuses on the existence and enormity of the offence of rape in different countries and also provides comparative perspectives on legal frameworks that exist in different countries. Although this chapter discusses the emerging trends in the law of rape, apparently it reproduces the views expressed in previous chapters.



In the fourth chapter titled “Judicial Discourse on Rape Laws”, the author highlighted the positive steps taken by the Indian judiciary in protecting the rights of the victims of rape by discussing certain important case laws on the topic. The chapter ends with a note that the relaxation of rules regarding consent, corroboration, character in rape laws and the recognition of the rights of rape victims have enabled women to secure their dignity and honour.

The last two chapters suggest the need for social consciousness about the increasing rate of rape in India. Overall, the author has presented the relevant issues and information very simplistically so that even a layman will appreciate the thematic arrangement of the contents in the book. The book is to be appreciated for the reason that some of the issues that are discussed have potential for further detailed research and generates curiosity to undertake such further studies. However, the book appears to be analytical in nature though it has reproduced statutory provisions in many places. It serves as an informative book on the law of rape, which would have been made better with a different approach to the topic.

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