

Mothers-in-law complain that the country's heavily skewed legislations help filing of false case

# Saas, bahu and the bane of biased

**Vineeta Pandey**, New Delhi

On the eve of Women's Equality Day, women are pitted against women in India, demanding equal rights. Tired of facing false dowry and domestic violence charges, harassed mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are now up in arms against government organisations for being heavily biased in favour of daughters-in-law.

Women NGOs representing the harassed mothers-in-law and sisters-in law have accused the National Commission for Women (NCW) and ministry of women and child development for not

listening to their grievances and quoting wrong statistics to push through biased laws.

Two NGOs — Mothers And Sisters Initiative (MASI) and All India Forgotten Women — used the Right To Information (RTI) Act to establish their point. The move came against the backdrop of a statement made by NCW chairperson Girija Vyas who had said that in 70% of divorce cases, adultery is used to discredit the women and deny them maintenance rights. Vyas had made the statement while pursuing an amendment in Section 125 of CrPc which deals which mainte-



■ In-laws at war over the law

nance for women. However, when the NGOs sought copy of records on the basis of which Vyas made such a statement through an RTI application, the NCW replied it had "no record

which shows in 70% of maintenance cases under CrPc 125, adultery has been alleged and proved misused" by husbands.

Crying foul, these groups have sought the prime minister's intervention, demanding gender-neutral laws and amendments through which misuse of dowry prohibition and domestic violence laws could be prevented.

"Politicians like women and child development minister Renuka Chowdhury and Girija Vyas are using such sensitive issues to fuel their political agenda. They make irresponsible statements which cannot be sub-



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