

Women Commission's new proposal faces flak from NGO

Says Live-In Amendment Puts Women In Poor Light

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: After voicing their protest against the domestic violence and anti-dowry Act, NGOs have targeted the National Commission for Women (NCW)'s proposal to provide alimony in live-in relationships.

The Commission had proposed an amendment to section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) which includes widening the definition of "wife" to include a long-term relationship.

Criticising the move, Mothers and Sisters Initiative (MASI) and All India Forgotten Women (AIFW) on Monday said the NCW had no statistics to prove its contention that a majority of women were being denied alimony. In a reply to AIFW's RTI application, the NCW



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admitted that it had no data on divorce or maintenance given or even on live-in relationships.

"These laws are in essence wife-protection laws that assume wives are honest victims and would never jeopardise their own family by false claims of abuse," a memorandum submitted by MASI said.

The lack of data and trans-

parency in NCW has also been commented upon by the Central Information Commission (CIC) that rapped NCW for not providing information under RTI.

The NGOs also accused the Commission and the ministry of women and child development of drafting laws without due diligence. "Judges must be involved in the law-making process so that legal goof-ups that are seen in the anti-dowry law and the domestic violence Act are avoided. We have also asked the ministry to make gender neutral laws so that the course of justice can take place," said Sandeep Bhartia, president, Gender Human Rights Society.

Activists have also demanded that people filing false cases should be severely punished for misusing the judicial process.