

Save Indian Families (SIF), an association of harassed husbands, has taken up an anti-dowry movement to create awareness on ending the menace of dowry and also the misuse of the Dowry Prevention Act.

They will launch a website which is likely to be functional in a month's time.

Virag Dhulia, member of SIF, told Deccan Chronicle: "gifts given during wedding to daughters becomes "dowry" once a small problem crops up in the family. Later, this is used as a weapon to blackmail the husband's family under the Dowry Prohibition Act. This is what is happening now." "We will work to prevent giving and taking dowry through the website and let action be taken against actual culprits (the husbands who really take dowry) in the beginning itself. We can save innocents this way by urging parents of brides to make it clear by writing in a notarised list so that misuse can be avoided," he said.

"In the website, we have given an opportunity to girls to come forward and submit a complaint. Any concerned citizen or social worker can also register a complaint. We will contact the dowry prevention officer concerned and see that the Act is properly implemented and stop the menace," he added.

"We are also fighting expensive marriages," said Anil Ghorki, another Save Indian Families member. The Union home ministry has accepted the fact that 498a is being misused in the meeting which was called for its review on September 17," he said.

"So we are half way through in fighting to bring amendments in 498a, to make it non-cognisable and bailable and make domestic violence gender neutral. To discuss our future plans and intensify our movement, SIF is holding a two-day national level conference at Goa, from September 27," he added.

Kumar V. Jahgirdhar, president of CRISP (Child Rights Initiative for Shared Parenting) also said that members of CRISP will participate in the meet to discuss the strategies to make child custody laws gender neutral.