

**debating 498a - Dowry law is not misused, says Vyas**  
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**debating 498a**

# *Dowry law is not misused, says Vyas*

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**Sept. 18:** Dr Girija Vyas, chairperson of the National Commission for Women, took on the Harassed Husbands' Association on Thursday, denying its allegations that women were misusing the law to foist false cases on men.

Women sometimes failed to understand the provisions of the law but did not make use of it to harass their husbands for no reason, she said.

"Sixty per cent of the 498a cases are filed out of igno-

rance by women," Ms Vyas said. Associations supporting husbands and their mothers and sisters have contended that 98 per cent of the 498a cases are the result of misuse by women filing them.

"The moment there is some harassment, the parents of the girls, immediately think of 498a, without understanding its provisions. Although the Dowry Prohibition Act of 1961 prohibits the giving or taking of dowry, it has been totally ineffective in curbing this social evil. So the NCW has recommended amending

this legislation and also the Domestic Violence Act. Once these two Acts are strengthened, the use of 498a will come down and be resorted to under extreme circumstances," she said.

Asked about changes that are likely to be suggested to 498a at the meeting of a panel of lawyers and legal experts called by the child welfare ministry on September 19, she said, "There will be no changes in the law. It is neither going to be non-cognisable nor compoundable. The law has created fear. Let it remain like that."

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