

WCD ministry for gender-neutral, stricter POCSO

Death penalty for two in Guj, Maha

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New Delhi: In its effort to enable the male child survivor of sexual assault to be treated on a par with girls under the ordinance for enhanced punishment for rape crimes, the ministry of women and child development is seeking amendments to the the Protection of Children Against Sexual Offences Act 2012.

The WCD ministry's official twitter handle reinforced in public domain the move to seek amendments. "The government has always strived to develop gender neutral laws," it stated and pointed that the government has "proposed amendment in the POCSO Act to seek justice for survivors of child sexual abuse". According to sources, the proposal was being readied to extend the provisions of amendments under the ordinance to the male child survivors.

On Wednesday, minister for women and child development Maneka Gandhi asserted that the male survivors of child sexual abuse must be treated as par with the girls. Extending support to a petition by a filmmaker-activist who said, "male child sexual abuse is an ignored reality in India", Gandhi said, "We are at a crucial juncture where the President has given consent for a historic ordinance for stringent punishment for perpetrators of sexual violence against girls. There shall be no tolerance of any

Two persons were sentenced to death in Maharashtra and Gujarat on Thursday in two different cases of sex crimes in which the victims were murdered. Both the crimes were committed in April 2016. While a four-year-old boy was sodomised and murdered in Bharuch district, a woman and her six-year-old son were killed in Nashik because she rejected the demand of her landlord's son for sexual favours. The Nashik district and sessions judge sentenced one Ramdas Shinde (37) to death for the murders of the woman, aged 32, and her child, calling them "cold-blooded and barbaric, falling in the category of rarest of rare crimes". In the second case, a 25-year-old labourer, Shambhu Padhiyar, was awarded death penalty for sodomising and murdering a four-year-old boy in Piludra village in Bharuch district.

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form of sexual violence against children and all criminals will be dealt with severe action," Gandhi said in response to the petition on Change.org by filmmaker Insia Dariwala.

"Boys who are sexually abused as children spend a lifetime of silence because of the stigma and shame attached to male survivors speaking out. This serious problem needs to be addressed," Gandhi added.