

# CII, Ficci Panels on Women's Safety Yet to Seal Suggestions

**VIKAS DHOOOT**  
NEW DELHI

Two high-profile committees set up by India Inc's leading industry chambers on women's safety, following the horrific December 16 gang rape, are yet to firm up their recommendations, which is in sharp contrast to the two government-appointed panels on the same issue, under the leadership of Justices JS Verma and Usha Mehra, that turned in their reports in a time-bound manner.

Leading industry chambers — Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Ficci) — had both constituted special committees to suggest strategies to ensure the safety of women. But nearly three months on, those ideas have not moved beyond the drawing board stage.

The Centre has already issued an ordinance ratifying several amendments to criminal laws proposed by the Justice Verma panel, which submitted its report in exactly a month, on January 23. The Justice Mehra Commission, constituted to examine various aspects of the December incident that triggered massive public outrage, submitted its report to law minister Ashwini Kumar on February 22.

Ficci had promised its task force would endeavour to develop a National Safety Policy for women, pointing out that over 31% of women in India's workforce were economically active and their 'growing insecurities' must be addressed. The CII task force on women's safety, led by Tata Communications chairman Subodh Bhargava, was to submit its report at the soonest with ideas to make the legal system 'deterrent enough' and aspects outside the law that have an 'overarching impact on attitudes and mindsets'.

The task force, that includes representatives from industry as well as the social sector, has met twice so far since it was set up on January 2. A senior CII official asso-

## Measures for Women's Safety \*

- **Advertisers must depict women more respectfully**
- **Audits to determine harassment levels in corporate offices**
- **Swifter prosecution and stiff punishment for sexual offenders**
- **Community sensitisation programmes**
- **Police training for sensitive behaviour with vulnerable sections**
- **Privately-run counselling helplines**



VALUES  
EDUCATION IN  
SCHOOLS AND  
COLLEGES

\*SOME OF THE IDEAS BEING CONSIDERED BY THE CII TASK FORCE ON WOMEN'S SAFETY

ciated with the task force said they are hoping to meet a third time in March to formalise its recommendations. The Ficci and Ficci Ladies Organisation (FLO) industry task force on safety of women has met 'three to four times' since its inception on December 24, 2012, and is expected to conclude its report by the end of April.

"It took us some time to get everyone on board and now we have received inputs from industry," said Dr Manju Kalra Prakash, Ficci's assistant secretary general and an executive director at FLO.

"We are going to outline a clear role for industry in improving women's safety as we can't leave everything to the government. Within the roles of industry and government, we are examining three sets of suggestions — recommendatory, aspirational and long-term goals," she added.