



- And, the reported **harassment increased sharply** between 2004-05 and 2011-12, by nearly 10%. It is not clear whether there is an increase in harassment or a **greater willingness to talk** about it.
- Data, however, offer us little clue on where the harassment is concentrated.
- Although female residents of metro cities in 2011-12 reported more harassment in their neighbourhoods, harassment is reported in almost all areas and affects both the rich and the poor.

## What is the reason behind harassment?

- There are few studies of actual experiences of harassment, and among studies that exist, **under-reporting** remains a serious challenge.
- Day-to-day aggressions that women and girls face in their own neighbourhoods is not violence perpetrated by strangers; it is the aggression young men visit upon women who share their community.
- A recent study conducted in Meerut College, notes that many young men, especially those unemployed, seem to feel that they are **entitled to aggressively express their masculinities** through what they euphemistically call 'eve-teasing'.
- Eve-teasing is not harmless as it leads to **restrictions on women's mobility and shuts them** out of public spaces.

## What is the way forward?

- Laws against eve-teasing and sexual harassment are necessary but not sufficient to address this challenge.
- The 2017-18 Budget committed to setting up **Mahila Shakti Kendras** in

rural India.

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- Young women must be prepared to reclaim their lives from harassment and young men must be taught to take pride in a masculinity that stands in solidarity with women.

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**Source: The Indian Express**

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