

MADURAI

Madurai Police Commissioner says due process of law must be followed in punishing rapists



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S. Davidson Devasirvatham said schools should encourage boys and girls to participate in activities together to promote friendship

Madurai City Commissioner of **Police**, S. Davidson Devasirvatham, on Tuesday said that punishment for persons charged with rape should only take place after due process of the law.

Replying to a specific question raised by a student at an interactive session held at Thiagarajar College on Tuesday, he said that though he would advocate maximum punishment for rapists, due process of the law should be followed.

“Immediately after a complaint of rape is reported, the police will register a case and investigate it. The chargesheet would be filed within 60 days and the court would take up

the trial before punishment is pronounced by the court,” he said.

The question was asked against the backdrop of a recent incident of **four rape accused being shot dead by Telangana police** in an encounter. He recalled a few cases of rape reported in the State wherein the police had closely monitored the hearings in court and provided all security and help to the victims and ensured that the accused got stringent punishments.

Mr. Davidson said that **Madurai** city has not received any complaint of brutal rape in the last few years. “Of course, there are some 60 cases of sexual harassment registered under Protection of Children against Sexual Offences Act. These are mostly cases arising out of love affairs between boys and girls wherein the family members of boys refuse for a marriage between the young people after they elope,” he said. In many of those cases, even as the trials get under way, the family members strike some kind of compromise among themselves, he said.

Earlier, addressing the students on “Stop the violence against Women”, he said that the focus on preventing violence against women should be shifted to involving boys and men in protecting girls and women. He said proper sex education would help school boys understand girls better.

He wanted schools and colleges to encourage boys and girls to participate together in sports activities, camps and in voluntary activities like National Cadet Corps and National Social Service. This would encourage boys and girls to become friends rather than boys looking at girls with a different intention, he felt.

However, he warned boys and men that any kind of harassment of women, especially violence against women, would ruin their life and career. “The laws have become very stringent and punishment harsher,” he said. Madurai City police will take up an awareness programme among male students in schools and colleges. on respecting girls and women.

Using the SOS facility in Kavalan App and dialing the police helpline ‘100’ will fetch timely help for girls and women who fear violence from anyone, he said.

Kavitha Fenn Arunkumar, consultant psychiatrist, said both boys and girls should understand the emotional impact of falling in love and its adverse consequences. While boys should restrain themselves from forcing their desire on girls, girls should not delay in alerting their parents or authorities concerned about any incident of harassment before it escalates into violence, she said.

Vice-president of the college, Uma Kannan, state president of Soroptimist International (Madurai), Jannet Vasanthakumari, were among the participants.

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