

WCD Ministry to give more teeth to NCW, NCPCR

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Unhappy with the functioning of the commissions, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) is working on a draft to give more teeth to the National Commission for Women (NCW) and the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) by bringing in amendments to the National Commission for Women Act 199 and the Child Rights Act.

WCD Minister Maneka

Gandhi plans to arm both the NCW and the NCPCR with powers to award compensation directly, initiate judicial probes, issue summons through the police and take action against those who don't respond while retaining its powers to recommend action which will be binding on the State Governments.

Compared with the NCPCR, presently, the women's commission has even less powers. The Ministry is amending the NCW Act to give the panel the status of a civil court with

rights — like that of the NHRC — to issue warrants if summons are ignored.

The sources said Maneka was keen on changing the trend of political appointments in both the commissions and planned to give appointees fixed tenures of three years each, with a new incumbent serving out the rest of the term and not a full one.

The Ministry has also invited suggestions from the civil society organisations on their website by July 15.

