

Date rape pills - the new party drug to snare women

Party divas beware! Next time you decide to hang out at a classy lounge, bar, or discotheque, don't just gulp down the drink proffered by your 'friend'. It could be mixed with a lethal 'date rape pill'.

The 'date rape' drugs, mixed discreetly with drinks, are meant to deaden the senses of the drinker, making them unable to ward off sexual assault.

The drugs make a woman lose her discretionary ability and she falls victim to sexual exploitation, with or without her knowledge.

'A woman loses her ability to make appropriate decisions within a few minutes of gulping down a drink spiked with a date rape pill. She remains active and responsive physically but is not aware of what is happening with her. She becomes a slave to other's directions so long as the drug acts in her system,' a police official told IANS.

'The victims remain unaware of the fact that they have been sexually assaulted. If they do remember something and report the matter to the police, the case falls flat in the court due to lack of evidence and the victim's' poor memory,' he added.

Recounting such an incident in Gurgaon, the official said a woman employed with a multinational company suspected that a colleague might have sexually assaulted her during a party. However, she did not pursue the matter since she was not sure of the facts and feared defamation.

However, there are no official figures for cases involving the use of date rape drugs.

Date rape drugs are odourless, colourless and tasteless pills. These drugs commonly have sedative, hypnotic and amnesiac affects.

An official of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) said: 'The most common date rape drug used everywhere is rohypnol or roofies. It is legal in [Europe](#) and Mexico, and prescribed for sleep problems or as anaesthesia. The other two drugs are gamma hydroxybutyric acid or GHB and Ketamine, used for veterinary purposes.

'Such drugs are usually unavailable under their genuine names in the open market, but can be obtained by their street names by shelling out extra money.'

Police say a few years ago the use of such drugs was restricted to those who were involved in cheating passengers in trains and buses by spiking their drinks, but now college students and young working people are using it to sexually exploit women.

Deputy Commissioner of Delhi Police (Narcotics Cell) A.S. Cheema told IANS that such cases are often reported from suburbs of the national capital, where bars, pubs and other party joints have mushroomed in recent years.

He said chances of such incidents become higher when a woman parties with a casual acquaintance.

'Women are unsafe in the company of casual acquaintances. They must not accept drinks until or unless they have complete faith in someone. Accepting drinks from strangers is an absolute no,' Cheema said.

'Woman should never leave their drinks unattended, even if they are going to washrooms. Always try to have a friend who does not drink along with you to ensure you are safe while consuming alcohol,' he added.

Officials said Internet chatting and social networking sites are proving to be platforms for rapists to hunt their victims.

'Avoid accepting drinks when you are on a date with someone you hardly know. If it is unavoidable then choose to take it from a closed container and ask someone to open in front of you,' Cheema said.

He added that if you think you have fallen prey to the drugs then report the matter immediately to the police and get the investigation started as the drugs leave the body quickly.

The drug leaves the body within 72 hours and cannot be traced in a urine or blood test.

Cheema said: 'Generally people don't report the matter as either they are unaware of the assault or are shy. They must report the matter to police to prevent the assaulters from harming other women.'

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