



A group of dancers from France who arrived in Madurai on Monday as part of their tour of South India to explore various dance forms while admiring the cultural richness of the country | N VAJRAVELU

Violence Against Women not Confined to India Alone, Says French Tourist

Express News Service

Madurai: Sexual violence against women is not confined to India but exists all over the world and it would be unfair to corner the subcontinent on such allegations, feels French tourist Leila Haddad who arrived in Madurai along with a team as part of their 18-day tour to India.

According to Leila, "Acts of violence against women exist in almost every country and it would be unfair

to project India as unsafe for women. I have visited North India 20 times all alone but never felt insecure", she added. In the wake of the reports on rape cases reported in India, European countries had issued a travel advisory to their citizens to avoid visiting India considering it as unsafe for women. But Leila feels otherwise. "Women are vulnerable everywhere in the world," she opined.

A dancer by profession, Leila was in the city with a

group of young women students who are on a tour to historic places. "Tourists must feel responsible and understand the culture of the country. They should adapt to the tradition of the country in their dress habits which would ensure their safety to the maximum extent," she felt.

"Adapting to Indian culture doesn't mean I lose my identity. One should learn to adjust to new situations," said Leila. According to her, most of the victims of

sexual assaults are those who go alone to isolated places without proper dressing, which would put them in trouble."

While narrating her experience in Madurai, she said, "I had a pleasant stay here and visited the Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple, Gandhi Museum and Thirumalai Naicker Mahal which was indeed a memorable experience." "I have planned to visit India again in December with more students," she added.