



# Red Light Despatch

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*Column*

## My Dreams

### Men Cant Pay for the Right to Abuse

*By Shelly*

**Khidderpore, Kolkata:** I am a daughter of woman in prostitution, who is working hard day and night to offer a dignified life to her family. We are very poor and my mother has to work very hard so that we don't suffer too much. I stay with my mother and brother and sister. I am the eldest. I had studied till class VIII and couldn't afford to study any further. Now I work in petrol pump to sustain my family. Though my earning is not enough for our sustenance, but still I do not want to see my mother as a prostitute. With my mere experience I am looking forward for better pay jobs. I don't want to see any of our family members involve in flesh trade. I had seen the torture and the violence one has to tolerate for a square meal. You (clients) have come to here to satisfy your urge against money, so do it and get lost. I couldn't understand what pleasure a person derives from torturing a woman. I had seen so many customers (boys as well as men) shouting and using illicit language to girls and women.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## The Cruelty of Sex Buyers

*By Munni Khatoon*

**Forbesgunj, Bihar:** A customer who comes to the Red Light Area is of various types. But all of them want and the same thing. They all want to have sex with women like me. They are also similar in another way. They all behave badly with us. They are cruel to us and they treat us with unkindness. They beat us and hit us, use our bodies and they leave us completely broken down. They think that that they are the customer, they have paid money so they can do anything they want with the women whose body they have bought. They think that for the time that they have bought and paid money for, they should make the most of the

women whose body they have bought so they use our bodies over and over again. The time that I am with the customer and he is using my body and he is hitting me and torturing me, the only thought that plays in my head is that I want to kill myself. At that time I wish that I was dead. For the way that the customer treats us, the Government should give them a very bad punishment. Just because they have paid money they cannot use our bodies this way. Even the worst punishment will not be enough to punish them for what they are doing to us. If the Government does not give a very strict punishment for these customers then they will never stop buying women like me .

*(Continued on page .8)*

## We Need Shelter First

*By Sunita Mal*

**Khidderpore, Kolkata:** I live in the Red Light Area in Khidderpore. I don't have any other options to earn livelihood other prostitution. I don't have shelter but share one room with other girls. Before I came here, I used stay with my parents and two brothers at Shyambazar in Kolkata. I had never been to school. During my adolescent age I used to assist my mother in her household work. I was married at the age of 16 years. But unfortunately my in laws were not happy with me. They used to

beat me every day on petty issues. One day they thrashed my head to wall and punched me several times. I was very badly hurt. My neighbours rescued and took me to the doctor for first aid treatment. I had lost all my patience and decided to file a police complain against my in-laws. While I was waiting in Police Station my mother-in-law arrived in no time and convinced them that I was mentally ill. She had bribed the personnel not to take up complain.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Education is the Only Way to Break the Cycle of Inter-Generational Prostitution

*By Gerry Dallas*

**Bradford, United Kingdom:** I came to Apne Aap knowing that I wasn't going to change the world, but hoping that I could learn how to do more to change it a little. The official statistics on human trafficking for sex are difficult to collate as the perpetrators try to be as covert as possible, but we do know that millions of women and girls globally are trafficked annually, and that this horror is ashamedly ingrained into our history. Arriving in India I acknowledged that we have a long way to go to change ideas and attitudes. I wanted to know where to begin.

I arrived at Apne Aap knowing that girls are often trafficked from Nepal and small Indian villages into big cities on the promise of a job. The 'job' inevitably being repeated rape, with no sign of the monetary earnings. However, beginning work with Apne Aap I came to realise that often this was not how girls were entered into prostitution. I heard of the practice

'inter-generational prostitution'. This is a frequently occurring practice in the lowest and poorest castes of Indian society. Daughters are married off at a young age, often 12, and soon after are expected to bear a child. After the birth of this child the girl is then forced to prostitute her body and earn money for the family. She will then pass this tradition onto her daughter, and so the cycle con-

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tinues. Only by educating girls and women about their rights and the importance of education can women be empowered to make decisions about the future themselves and for their daughters.

World Literacy Day provided a fantastic opportunity for me to experience how Apne Aap are working to educate the women and girls who are victims of this practice. A workshop was organised for the female occupants of the village Dharampura, New Delhi. On arri-

val, myself and the other interns and staff were greeted by a barrage of smiling faces of all ages, eager to participate in the day's activities. The facilitators helped guide sessions on what literacy means to the women and girls who were participating, and what they desire for themselves. All said that they hoped for a more equal society where girls, as well as boys, were expected to go to school. I was encouraged by the reactions of the participants and I could see how with this kind of ongoing dialogue, females could become empowered to stand together to fight for their rights to an education and to choose their own destiny. What is still overwhelming, however, is how to change the attitudes of those who are reluctant to change. I now know that there are many routes to take for re-educating perpetrators and helping victims of forced prostitution, but there is a long battle ahead. Thankfully, organisations like Apne Aap have started the fight for many women worldwide.

## Without my Daughters, I Would be Able to do Nothing

*By Saroj Kumari*

**Ghumanera, Delhi:** I live in Ghumanera and I have 2 boys and 2 girls. All 4 of them go to school. My two daughters stay with me and I have sent the two sons to hostel in Rajasthan. They get a good school over there. I cannot send the girls to hostel because they have to stay home and help me at home. If they go away who will do all the house work. I am unwell I have a lot of pain in my bones and most days I have so much pain that I cannot do any housework. I have to ask my daughters to do the work.

I did not get to study. I was married off when I was 16 years old and even before that I had to drop out of school. My husband works in the farm but we are hardly able to save any money. All the money we earn is spent in just feeding ourselves. We have to manage with a lot of difficulty but we are trying. I want to give my children a good future so that they never feel that we have kept them poor. I was told by Kavita didi (community mobilizer) that there is some function over here where they would be cooking some good food and giving us. (Continued on page 4)

## "A Victimless Crime?"

*By Ruchira Gupta*

Buying sex actually increases the level of violence in society all the way around. The men who buy the women and girls express their violence in different forms because they are feeling uncomfortable with it. What it also does is it destroys the ability of men to build relationships. They want to rent a woman for half an hour, they want to rent just a body part, like breasts or a vagina. They are unable to develop social skills in order to have relationships with women that are based on friendship or collaboration. It also destroys sexual relationships between men and women because it turns into a one way affair. Men are buying domination. They just jump on the women; it's like "wham bam thank you ma'am." They're there for ten minutes. Along with that, sometimes they put cigarette butts out on the women, bottles up the vagina...so it's not even about the sexual act at all.

Men forget how erotic it can be to have a sexual relationship based on collaboration. The whole purchase of sex actually takes away the pleasure of sex, which has a long lasting impact on society as a whole inside communities, inside families, and inside individuals. While men think that they're buying pleasure they're actually buying domination.

The girls and women who are bought are sometimes forced, sometimes coerced, sometimes simply seduced or duped. These women and girls are raped repeatedly 8 to 10 times a night and they forget who they are. They are made to become dependent on drugs and alcohol, and will have a couple of children within the first two years of their time in the brothel. After that there's a period of

"seasoning" inside the brothel where they are made to believe that there is no life outside the brothel, that this is their destiny. They don't acquire any skills. They become so controlled that they cannot run away. The trajectory normally is from being a bonded slave inside a brothel to begging to death. Once they're used up completely by the brothel system for five years, six years, ten years, their bodies are completely wasted. They begin to look really old, like cardboard creatures. Men don't want to buy them, and brothel owners begin to see these women as a burden on the brothel system and throw them out. They're stuck on the street, disease ridden with a couple of children. Then they are simply scraping together existence. People kick them around or rape them on the sidewalk. And then from begging it's very fast into debt. Many of them are always hungry. Many of them are also suffering from diseases like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, or jaundice. They also suffer from malnourishment, psycho social trauma, and insomnia. Finally, they die.

The murders are unaccounted for because nobody keeps count of the women on the sidewalk outside the brothels. They don't have extended family structures. The women themselves or the other women who are living inside the brothels are so traumatized that they don't know how to keep count when their sisters are either thrown out of the brothel or **m u r d e r e d**. In prostitution the murder rates are really high, first and foremost by customers, In India many of the women in prostitution call the johns passengers because these men just simply come and ride them and then go away. These passengers very often

come and brutalize the women as well. Sometimes it's over the kind of sex that she should provide, and sometimes it's about the men refusing to pay any money at the end of the rape. He will then brutally beat up the woman by smashing her head against the wall or throwing her off the staircase. In fact, client brutality is so huge that it is impossible for women to be in this occupation without facing violence. I have talked to women in the brothel districts who are in Bombay, and in the Calcutta Red Light Areas of Sonagachi and Khidderpore area and in Delhi, and I remember a woman in Sonagachi in Calcutta, said that the bed was full of blood when her client left the room. Girls have said that their nipples were squeezed so hard to the point that they were bleeding.

I work with a group of 102 women in prostitution just outside Delhi. These women say that they actually suffer as a group at least two fractures a month, which is a high amount. I once asked them, "do you face violence?", and they said no. I was a bit surprised and I said, "How can it be that you don't face violence, aren't you ever slapped?" They said oh all the time. I said, "Any bones broken?" Yeah of course. I said, "Anyone murdered?" Yeah this girls head was chopped off and thrown behind the bushes. I said, "But that is violence." The women replied that he paid for it so why is it violence? Women internalize the violence and normalize the violence by clients because they have begun to believe that is what the client or the passenger is paying for. Even the women know that the passenger is not paying for sex but that he is paying for violence.

## The Women of the Red Light Area and Good-Hearted

By Mohammed Kalam

**Forbesgunj, Bihar:** Apne Aap Women World Wide Bihar team conducted an Iftar party celebration at Uttari Rampur Basti Vikas Kendra on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2011. "Iftar" is the auspicious meal that Muslims eat when they break their fast after sunset during the Holy month of Ramadan. It was organized and carried on by the members of WSEG (Women Self Empowerment Group) in the Red Light Area. The women decided to celebrate by preparing the food for Iftar. To organize this event women of the SEGs irrespective of caste and religion came together to celebrate. Some of the women were from the WIP/WAR (Women in Prostitution. Women at Risk) community and the rest were from the community which due to various reasons is vulnerable.

The children from the Red Light Area also actively participated in the event with their mothers and were helping in all the preparations. The elder children were helping their mothers in cutting salads and vegetables and the younger children were playing outside the centre and were excited and were in festive mood. The preparations were for all the members in the Uttari Rampur Red Light Area community and the women of SEG who were doing the preparations were a little tensed by the thought that if the expected number of people won't come then their work is going to be in vain.

By evening some people from the community started coming, but still there were very less members initially and the women got worried. The children who were still excited and playing happily were drawing the attention of the people who gathered at the centre and it was actually a big relief. By evening 6 pm, all the Apne Aap staffs reached the centre and then more of the people from the community started gathering and by 6.15. In no time, the centre was full.

As soon as the "adhan" (Islamic call to prayer) from the Mosque was heard, all those who were on fast

ended up their fast by the words "Bismillah". They ended their fast by having dates and juice. After that they had a detailed feast which included traditional food like *Mudi*, *Chuda*, *Chana ki Ghughni*, *Kachri*, *Baingni*, *Pyaoji*, *Pakode*, Chips, *Pappad* and Fruits. After that it was time for Namaz, the women did Namaz and prayed to Allah for the well being of their children, to protect from all the evils around them and to make them a good human being. They also prayed for Apne Aap's prosperity so that it can make the future of their children bright and take them out from the hell where they are now. After that they all sat together with Apne Aap team and had tea along with chit chats. The evening was turning to dark and thus all the women took their leave and got back home.

After two days when I went to the Red Light Area of Uttari Rampur and enquired with some of the women, (Chunni, Jamila bua, Ishrat, Malthi and Julie) about how the Iftar party was organized and what were their experience then all of them in one voice said that it was like a festival to them. They all were keen in the preparations that everything was okay like it was an event happening at their own house. Chunni said, "We had food along with such women who are not from our community and that was the most exciting as we would have never got such a chance. The people from other community have always considered us as bad people and thus they never come to our house also. But now we attended a function together." Jamila bua said, "Normally in our community if any festival happens, the men always takes the lead but this was an event which we women took a lead and we were very conscious about the perfection of the event and we proved that women can also organize an event very beautifully without the help of men. We also have a wish that from next year onwards we will extend the Iftar party for the children who are orphans are studying Urdu at the nearby mosque."

**Without my Daughters, I Would be Able to Do Nothing....** (Continued from page 2)

It is cheap and good food that they said they would cook here and something that we need to feed our children especially the daughters as they fall ill more often. The good thing about this program was that, the Didi was not just showing us how to cook but also telling us important things about food and nutrition. She told us how the vegetables that are good for blood, for eyes, for energy and many more. Over here the Didi made Dalia. I also make 'dalia' at home for my family. But it is very different form the one that they made here. They put so many things I this dalia I had ever thought of putting. They even explain that all these things are good for health. They are not even expensive. I always want to give my family good food but my main problem is money. This food they showed us here takes a little time to make but I have to take time out for it and do it for my family's sake.

My daughters help me lot. My husband and in laws want them to get married. But I am helping them study. I will fight for them and I will not let them get married ff early. They have also come with me today and they have learnt how to make all this good food. It is very important to know as they are young girls and they have to take care of their health.

By Harsh Kaushik

**Pune:** Not every day would you find Pune city engulfed in a White tide; neither would you see every other person flaunting a green wrist band reading 'Cool Men Don't Buy Sex'. But yes, it did happen; when the students of Symbiosis Centre for Management and Human Resource Development (SCMHRD), Pune dressed in white college tees got together and took to the roads, for a mission, for a cause, for a fight for those who are tabooed, forgotten and banned.

The band drive organized every year by the CSR Cell, S.H.A.P.A.T.H of SCMHRD, Pune this time found a partner in Apne Aap Women Worldwide, an NGO founded by Ms. Ruchira Gupta. The students joined hands to support the 'Cool Men Don't Buy Sex' campaign launched by Apne Aap and created awareness among the residents of Pune city about sex trafficking. As a part of the campaign, the students also carried a petition along with them that was addressed to the President of India to amend the anti trafficking law called the ITPA (Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act) to punish the real perpetrators of sex trafficking who are the pimps and the customers who buy sex. The students got the petition signed from willing residents of the city after explaining to them the necessity to change this law which currently penalizes the victims of sex trafficking who are the women.

However, the main attraction was the selling of bands to the city and collect funds to help rehabilitate those who were victims of this inhuman flesh trade. The Marketing skills of the students were put to good and practical use when they came united for a cause much bigger than themselves. The city of Pune responded well and gave full support to

S.H.A.P.A.T.H and Apne Aap and contributed by signing the petition and buying wrist bands with zeal and enthusiasm with a feeling of contributing towards a positive change in the society. During the two day event, the students braved the rains to impose their will to stand up for what should be done as responsible citizens of the nation and helping those who are deprived. Being a part of S.H.A.P.A.T.H and being there right since the very inception of the idea of Band Drive in the mind to its implementation on the ground, I not only get a sense of satisfaction brimming inside me but also a feeling of pride in being instrumental in some way towards a noble cause. My journey from apprehensions about how people of Pune would take the Band Drive to educating the people and seeing their enthusiasm on the day itself, could be best described as nothing short of exuberating, exciting and enthralling. The 4000 odd wrist bands sold by the students of SCMHRD in a span of 2 days stand testimony to this fact.

It is said that India is a strange country; we forgive and forget; we stand up and fight; we stand united for a cause and yet fight without any. Whatever we may be, whoever we ought to be, one thing remains certain: We live in a nation, where not all is perfect, not all is well. But deep down inside us we have a desire to excel, a dream to live in a utopian world, to create an egalitarian society. We may be mean at times, but we are basically good at heart; we may rest behind the walls of our cozy homes, but we are ready to sweat it out under the sun; we would forgo a day's salary to watch India win the World Cup; we would fight with our loved ones and yet stand together for someone completely unknown to bring about justice. We are proud of who we are, and we are ever-ready to bring about a change for the better.

**My Dreams** (Continued from page 1): They were rude and cruel. Sometimes the women were beaten by their customers also leading to health hazards. They were paying money, but that didn't imply that they owned the right to abuse. These women who are being prostituted couldn't lodge complain to police for such torture and abuse as that might reverse the case and put the woman itself to further harassments. The police are also helping the clients and harassing the women. Violence against women is the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world, I heard in a meeting few years ago. I also had heard of the law called, ITPA, a law meant to stop prostitution. But here I differ; only law couldn't help the society to stop prostitution. The women involved in this trade are mostly illiterate and do not have option to earn livelihood other way. There is a law to prevent prostitution but the law cannot change human nature. A perverted man needs proper counseling so that he realizes the pain and anguish of woman. We have doctors and hospitals for mentally ill persons. In my eyes these boys & men belong to this category. Men who come to brothels to buy sex are mentally ill. They are devastating. Though I know this isn't an easy process, it is very difficult. Hope you remember the struggle faced during campaigns to use condom. But today the common man has become aware. So following that the Government need to organize awareness campaigns and other social programs to stop violence against girls and women. I really look forward to a day when women like my mother would not have to live the lives that they do.

## Did You Know

### The Myths and Facts about Legalizing Prostitution

**Myth:**

Legalization brings the sex industry under control.

**Fact:**

Experience in various countries which have legalized prostitution has shown that by legalizing prostitution the problem actually expands. For instance, Victoria, Australia has experienced a massive expansion of the sex industry after legalization. In addition to prostitution, other forms of sexual exploitation, such as tabletop dancing, bondage and sadomasochist centers, peep shows, phone sex, and pornography have increased and have generated enormous profits for the sex industry and the State **but not** for the woman trapped in prostitution.

**Myth:** Legalization will dignify the women in prostitution.

**Fact:** Legalization does not dignify the women, but only legitimizes the sex industry.

**Myth:**

Women in prostitution will be better protected if prostitution was legalized.

**Fact:**

Studies of victims of commercial sexual exploitation show that prostitution establishments – legal or illegal – did little to protect them. A study that interviewed victims of trafficking in five countries showed that 80% of them had suffered physical violence from pimps and buyers; immaterial of whether the sex industry was legal or illegal. Usually the buyer's interests take precedence over the woman's in prostitution. Also, 'safety policies' in brothels do not protect women from harm. The sexual exploitation and violence in prostitution is viewed as sex and often tolerated as part of the so-called job.

**Myth:**

Prostituted women would be protected against infec-

**We Need Shelter First** (Continued from page 1)

To say the least, dejected I returned home. Late in the night my husband took me to Khidderpore stating that we were going to his aunt's place. He sold me for a mere amount of Rs.20,000.00. I worked as *chukri* (young girl in the Red Light Area) for around 5 years in Khidderpore. As I couldn't own any money I earned so I changed my address and now working as *adhiya* (women in the Red Light Area).

Since 2004, I had been close to Apne Aap when they were sensitizing women like me about their right to identity. With their support and assistance I got my Voter Card. I had also participated in Survivors' Conference organized by Apne Aap where women like me came to know about the law called ITPA and its Section 5 which stated that clients and landlord/landlady(s) should be held punishable before law to lower the demand for prostitution. I know if they have been set to move freely in the society they will surely push our daughters into prostitution.

Though I do not support prostitution, I am not very happy with the law as there is lack of options to earn livelihood which does not let us break out of this vicious circle of poverty and prostitution. I was pushed into flesh trade and have become a bad woman who is barred from your good society. Most of the women like us do not have proper education and thus can never earn prestigious job.

tious diseases in a legalized system.

**Fact:**

A legalized system of prostitution often mandates health checks and certification for the women in prostitution, **but not** the male buyers. Public health proposals mandate health checks for women to protect the male buyers and not the women in prostitution. Reducing the demand, and thus the size of the sex industry and the amount of trafficking victims, is an important step in stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS. Condom use policies are only an emergency measure to try to protect trafficking victims from contracting disease. A legalized system of prostitution often mandates health checks and certification for the women in prostitution, **but not** the male buyers. Public health proposals mandate health checks for women to protect the male buyers and not the women in prostitution. Reducing the demand, and thus the size of the sex industry and the amount of trafficking victims, is an important step in stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS. Condom use policies are only an emergency measure to try to protect trafficking victims from contracting disease.

**Myth:**

Legalization helps to end the exploitation of women who have been trafficked

**Fact:**

Legalization promotes sex trafficking. In The Netherlands, where prostitution is legal, a 1999 study showed that 80% of the women in the country's brothels were trafficked from other countries. And in Germany, 10 years after steps toward legalization of prostitution started in the 1980s, it was found that 75% of the women in sex industry were foreigners. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, 80% of the estimated 10,000 women trafficked into Germany were from the former Soviet bloc countries.

*Sankar Sen, officer of Indian Police Service, Senior Fellow at Institute of Social Sciences, and an expert in the fight against sex trafficking in India shares his thoughts on the demand aspect of sex trafficking for the Cool Men Don't Buy Sex Campaign launched by Apne Aap*

**Sankar Sen (SS):** My name is Sankar Sen. I am an officer of Indian police service, I was an officer of the Indian police service. I was a director general of the National Human Rights Commission of India and at present I am a Senior Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences.

**Question (Q):** What is your take on the Demand side of sex trafficking?

**SS:** So there is an immense demand for trafficked women and children. Not only for commercial sexual exploitations but also other wider sense of trafficking exploitation of child labour, bonded labour etc. What is happening is on the demand side is that there is demand for commercial sexual exploitation of women and children because in a large number of cases we find that very young, tender girls are being trafficked. The age is coming down. During our research we could find that there are now girls as young as 10, 11 years who are found in brothels. That is one thing that has to be kept in mind.

Second there is an enormous increase in demand because, seldom we find that though there are provision in the act, brothel are closed or sealed, action is taken against the master minds. Whatever action has been taken right now is on the women. There is the act, the Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act, (ITPA) where there is a section, called section 8

where those who are soliciting; exposing themselves they can be prosecuted. So for most of the cases that action is taken against the girls. The victims are re victimized and the main fellows responsible are not caught.

The third issue comes, as far India is concerned, there is no law or no law provision act to punish the clients. If you think about punishing the victims because of their exposure, soliciting and all, and believe that there should be some provisions to punish the girl then you are wrong. For instance, there is a prevention act in the ITPA that within a certain area, if you carry on prostitution or those who help the prostitution to be carried on, can be punished and that means it should include the clients also, but there is no provision as such. Under this clause, only the girls get punished. There is now a lot of thinking on amending the act, so that some provision is made against the clients which the law does not have at present. clause it can be done. Clients can be arrested but they never are.

In India, buying is sex is propelled by easy availability. You do not have to pay heavy amount of money to enjoy a girl. Large numbers of young girls are available. Virtually nothing is done, though people will be organizing seminars and all, still I say that very little is done. Very low priority it is given by the police, only few cases are registered. So money is there, easy availability of women is there. This is also because of the poor country that India is, large numbers of people are in distress. Women are offered some jobs for which they are taken away from their families and then forced into prostitution. There is also sometimes promise of marriage, many girls

are brought and then kept in brothels. There is also a social custom that if you have been taken to a brothel you cannot go back to the society, you lose your position in society and a tag of dishonour is fixed upon you. To provide for good rehabilitation, prevention for the women – these are all good things, socio-economical issues, they should be taught, vocational skills, socio-economical conditions will improve; but these are all long terms plans to improve the situation of these women. Immediate action is to make it very very difficult for these brothel owners, pimps and clients to operate. We have not been able to build up an opinion where the clients are also equally frowned upon. Sweden has now passed the law, where if you ask for sexual favor for payment – that is an offence. So something like that we need to think of for. Not only in India, outside also, very few women choose prostitution as their profession, they are forced into it. another.

**Q:** So you are the part of the campaign as we are advocating to change the legislation?

**SS:** Yes, very much. I appeared in the Commission of Parliament, said these things are wrong and the required changes etc. So that is under contemplation.

**Q:** We also wanted to ask you about the implementation because changing the law is one thing then implementation of it is another. So, apart from changing the law, will work towards changing the situation?

**SS:** Very little. Changing in the law will not help much. Unless and until these are properly implemented. Even the existing law is good enough if we implement it, something can be done in the mean time

. But as I said, all over the country very few cases are registered. Some of the most vulnerable states, like West Bengal, Bihar and all; very few cases are registered; police give very low priority to it. Unless the mind-set changes and it is regarded not only as a social problem, but also as a serious crime which violates basic human rights of women and children

**Q:** What do you think is main problem in the implementation? What else can be done?

**SS:** Create a awareness program particularly all over the country consciousness that the damage of trafficking is doing to our social institutions, to the health of women, and this punishes consequences. Number two is to figure out law enforcement, police must give proper priority to it and take action to make this difficult for those who are operating. Third, not only investigation, but vigorous prosecution, those who are prosecuted, instead of prosecuting women, we should to prosecute the master-minds and see their assets are forfeited, their property is confiscated so that they know that this is no longer very paying proposition. And last, not the least, that nothing will happen unless and until there is awareness among the political classes. Our political masters also have to feel that this is very serious issue, it has to be given a lot of attention.

**Q:** As you said that police gives very little priority. So what can be done with the police to kind of make them realize that this is a serious problem?

**SS:** See, we organize lots of programs, mainly our Institute and myself, for the education of the police officers. Many of them have not read the Act also! What are the provisions there, what can be done. Talk to the senior police officers to see that greater priority is given to it. Also encourage them to take action. So, in some of the states there has been changes. What I learnt in that day, in Andhra they are taking a number of measures to do so, they understand the problem. In Tamil Nadu also some positive steps have been taken, but in many of the states nothing has been done.

In our poor country with limited resources all these reforms will take time. But what can be immediately done to put a stop, if not to put a stop at least to reduce the problem is to save who are endangered and realistic punishment of the criminals.

### **The Red Light Customers .....**

(Continued from page 1): There will be girls and women like me who will always be sold. Without punishment, the number of customers will only keep becoming more and more and then our daughters and other young girls will be sold to keep having girls to give these customers. As time passes, selling of girls will increase and the torture that we have to go through will also increase. I am very sure that if there was no client, then there would be no prostitution. There would be no girls sold and there would be no torture. The pimps try and find weak and help-

less women and then trick them to come to the brothels and be sold to clients. They do this because of the greed of the money that they know that they will receive from the customers. If the customers are punished then they will not come to the pimps to try and buy sex. Then the trade can stop. Just like any company sells its products in the market to different customers to buy, if there is no customer or the customer does not want to buy that product then who will they sell to? They have to stop selling that product and the company will close down. When the police make a raid in the Red Light Area, they catch the girl and the women who are being prostituted. The women are the people, who should be punished, but always the women are only arrested by police and the police say that what we are doing is wrong. The police should actually catch two people, the Pimp and the Customer. These two are the really the people who are doing something wrong, not the women. These are the two people who are really responsible for this trade to flourish and to make sure that prostitution never ends. The women are being prostituted should never be caught by the police or punished for being a prostitute. These women who are being prostituted are always poor, weak, helpless and deprived which is why they ever had to get into prostitution. No woman wants to willingly sell her body. If she had any other means of livelihood she would always want to leave prostitution.



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## **Red Light Despatch**

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