



# RED LIGHT DISPATCH

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DELHI, KOLKATA, AND FORBESGANJ (BIHAR)

## *My Dream*

**Delhi:** My name is Prachi. I am 11 years old. I live in Delhi. I belong to the Saper community. My family is that of traditional snake charmers. Men in my family earn money through animal shows and also by playing drums at weddings and festivals. The women do not work in our community.

I study in Gyan Bharti International School. I live in a hostel in my school. The hostel is very nice. I live there with all my friends.

**My dream is to become a singer one day.**

I love to sing songs. I keep humming with myself when I work. I even sing on various functions in school. I learn songs which come on TV and then practice them. I want to perform on stage someday in front of lots of people.

## *Female Role Models*

**Kolkata:** A session was taken with the children on female role models, with reference to the biography of Kalpana Chawla. The aim of the session was to familiarise the students with the life history and achievements of any woman whom they can look up to, discuss the obstacles faced by that woman, and how she overcame them.

The session was framed around interesting events in Chawla's life that demonstrated her thinking and interest, and concepts that came up in those events were explained simultaneously. First,

we tried to speak about the concept of role models itself. However, the children had trouble understanding what that meant. So we moved on to more basic concepts. The children discussed what space means, what we can see and what we cannot see, what we know about space, and why it is important for us to know about it and send people out to space.

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## *Teacher's day Celebration by KM girls at AKC Rampur* *Pooja Kumari*

**Bihar:** My name is Pooja Kumari and I am an active member of Kishori Mandal run by Apne Aap Women Worldwide in their community center Uttri Rampur for the empowerment of adolescent girls. I am associated here from 2017 with other girls. We take part in many activities here with other girls. Many training programs are also organized by the organization for the empowerment of the girls here. We all get involved in every program and we get a lot to learn here, which has not been enough in our knowledge and confidence. For

the empowerment of the girls, we are also trained by the organization about the open forum, training for gender discrimination, training of legal information and the organization's ongoing asset card. Many other activities and cultural events are organized by the organization here such as Ganatantra Divas, Saraswati Puja, Women's Day, Girl's Day, Independence Day, Teacher's Day, Gandhi Jayanti etc.

*(Continued on page 7)*

## An open letter to Maneka Gandhi

Dear Manekaji,

Your Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 is possibly noble in its intention but, in reality, will expose millions of vulnerable and trafficked women, children, men and transgender youth to great peril.

You leave out millions of victims of sex-trafficking from the Bill's very definition, ignore universal principles of Human Rights and violate India's international legal obligations.

Thousands of victims, many of them illiterate, will have to depend on the mercy of the thana (station) officer, to interpret the words 'may be' from the Bill's Statement of Objects and register a police complaint against their traffickers.

*The majority of victims come from the most marginalised groups in our society-Dalits, Adivasis, OBCs and De-notified Tribes. They are mostly women and children and now increasingly transgender youth. They are unable to access justice because they are discriminated against by local authorities*

Your so-called comprehensive Bill is not comprehensive at all. You have referred to an older law, Section 370 I.P.C for a definition of trafficking. As you are aware, multiplicity of laws will confuse both those at risk and the existing victims. It will add one more layer of legalese and increase dependence on lawyers, police officers and the judiciary.

In any case, Section 370 I.P.C does not have a complete definition of trafficking. It does not punish the sex-buyer or end user. Most countries have realised that sex-trafficking can only be addressed by criminalising the purchase of sex while decriminalising the victims. Sweden, Norway, France, both the Irelands, and Iceland have all passed laws to this effect.

Yet your Bill does not do anything to shift the blame from the victim to the perpetrator.

Your claim that the Bill is victim-friendly, rings

hollow. In reality the Bill burdens the victim with vagueness of definition, multiplicity of laws, no punishment of the perpetrator and continued punishment of the victim.

Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, and Urmila Boola, the UN Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, have urged the Indian Parliament "to revise the Bill in accordance with human rights law."

A major concern is that the Bill gives draconian powers of surveillance, raid and rescue to a new National Anti-Trafficking Bureau in the name of investigating trafficking cases and coordinating between law enforcement agencies and NGOs.

In the absence of a definition, police and other authorities may invent any definition they like of trafficking for sexual exploitation.

They may use the trafficking law to harass youth from Muslim, Dalit and Indigenous communities who enter into inter-caste or inter-religious marriages. They may also use it to stop female migrants from travelling in the name of protecting them from trafficking.

Gloria Steinem, the global feminist icon, says "As it stands, India's trafficking bill is dangerous. It fails to protect people who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation, and even allows for their institutionalisation, while not properly punishing those who profit from selling the bodies of others."

*Your Bill places the blame for trafficking exclusively on "poverty, illiteracy and lack of livelihood options," and not in any way, shape or form, on sex/gender/caste inequality as a significant vulnerability to being trafficked .*

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## Diary of a Social Worker *Anahita*

**Delhi:** My name is Anahita. I am a fellow with the organization. I joined Apne Aap Women Worldwide's team in July 2017. I joined after completing my postgraduate in political science from Jamia Millia Islamia. I got to know about Apne Aap's work when I volunteered with the organization at the Last Girl First Conference. I was greatly influenced by the survivor stories from all over the world. They had different stories but a common thread of exploitation and courage connecting them all. They had been exploited by a number of people but the courage they had shown was exemplary. Their stories still send shivers down my spine.

I joined the organization as an intern for two months and then was offered the position of a fellow. I was really excited to work with the organization. My initial role was to edit and proof read the submissions for Antyaaja. I also helped with organizing events and conferences with my colleagues at the Delhi office. I got an opportunity

of visiting Kolkata a little while after I joined. I was deeply impacted by the survivors I met there and by listening to their struggle.

I also spent a month in Forbesganj in Bihar. It was my first time visiting Bihar. I was there to assist in a conference in Patna. From there I went to Forbesganj. I arrived early in the morning when the whole place was fast asleep. I spent the next one month doing various things. I did community visits around Mela Ground. I took a rights workshop with the girls of Kishori Mandal. I also went to Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya in Simraha which was run by Apne Aap Women Worldwide. I spent two days at the hostel along with all the girls there. It was an eye opening experience for me.

I have learned a lot about the hardships of women and girls who are at the margins of the society and almost invisible to the naked eye. I am grateful for this learning opportunity.

### Did You Know?

#### **In India:**

- There are 2.3 million women and girls in prostitution
- A quarter of 2.3 million are under the age of 18
- There are 1,000 red-light areas

#### **Globally:**

- About 58 % of all cases of trafficking detected globally are purpose of sexual exploitation
- About 75 % of all trafficking victims detected globally are women and girls
- About 20.9 million adults and children are bought and sold for commercial exploitation
- About 1 in 10 men in the world have bought commercial sex

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In 2011, India ratified the Palermo Protocol (the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children) and therefore, has an obligation to domesticate it. The definition clearly says that human beings are trafficked for different types of exploitation, which “at a minimum includes the exploitation of the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.” Your omission of the words exploitation of the prostitution of others and sexual exploitation is in clear breach of India’s commitment to the UN.

Nothing new or extraordinary has been proposed in the Bill. The provisions for the special police officer, special court, special prosecutors are already proposed in the Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1956 but in most of the states, it is not being implemented.

You say that any gaps in the Bill will be rectified in the rules. As an experienced member of parliament, I am sure you are aware that the legislature formulates laws and the executive creates the rules within the boundaries of the Act. Surely, you understand that it is the prerogative of the legislature to define trafficking and not the executive!

If your intention is to really address the problem of trafficking, the answer lies in simply amending the two old

laws, to fix the gaps and put more pressure on the police to implement the laws. Your wisest course of action would be to send this Bill to a select committee for further consultation. Otherwise, your desperation to hurry through the Bill, bypassing the suggestions of several members of Parliament, UN experts, civil society leaders and trafficking survivors, is extremely suspicious.

In 2016, your government removed millions of children in family based-enterprises and audio-visual entertainment from the definition of child labour, by amending the Child Labour Act. The government was able to report that Child Labour had come down in India.

The National Crime Records Bureau revealed that rapes of children spiked by 82 % in the following year. These invisible children pushed out of schools and into the workforce went missing in data, but continued to exist for the perpetrators.

The same will be true for victims of sex-trafficking. They will continue to be raped for profit and their numbers will increase, but data will show that child labour and sex-trafficking have come down.

Yours earnestly,  
Ruchira Gupta

**(This letter was originally published in the National Herald on August 5, 2018))**

**Get yourself involved!**

**Be a part of the campaign!**

Click a selfie and share it with us on the Facebook Page 'Cool Men Don't Buy Sex' <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cool-Men-Dont-Buy-Sex/624526271001934>

The Cool Men Don't Buy Sex Campaign is a call to end demand for sex trafficking which highlights the role that men play in fostering the sex industry.

[Sex/624526271001934](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Cool-Men-Dont-Buy-Sex/624526271001934) with #CoolMenDontBuySex #Selfie #ApneAap.



Apne Aap's "Cool Men Don't Buy Sex" campaign was born to draw attention to the demand side of sex trafficking - the traffickers, pimps, and purchasers of sex. Apne Aap advocates for the criminalization of these individuals – they are responsible for maintaining sexual slavery and continue to exploit women and girls every day in India.

*Asset Training at ApneAap's office*  
**Manisha Kumari**

**Bihar:** My name is Manisha Kumari and I am associated with IGP class in Apne Aap Women Worldwide organization from April 2018. I am a resident of Forbesganj near about Apne Aap office and came to know here about the work of the organization which is working on the empowerment of girls and women through their tools of empowerment of 10 X 10 asset approach. When I took enrollment here, it really showed that this organization is trying so much for the empowerment of the girls. Here, along with sewing embroidery, various other programs are also run for the empowerment of girls. We all get involved in every program and we get a lot to learn here, which has not been enough in our knowledge and confidence. For the empowerment of the girls, we are also trained by the organization about the open forum, training for gender discrimination, training of legal information and the organization's ongoing asset card training and how to we achieve it. This organization also helps in providing the assets to girls and women as it is also the tools for measuring their empowerment developed by the organization.

On 20<sup>th</sup> September, an Asset training program was organized here for the girls of IGP class and it is a good opportunity for me to participate in this event. I was very excited for the event. On 11 am

the program was started by Madhu di and Praveen Sir and they told us briefly about the Asset Card and the 10 assets and how the assets effective for the empowerment of a girl and woman and how their self-reliance increase through it. They told us in detail about one discrete and also explained that the institution wants that these saris facilities be available to every girl and woman, so that they can become coherent and self-sufficient. I understand today how his organization is working for girls and women. Today, I have learn a lot here and I am feeling very consoled. I have taken the right decision after coming to this organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide and I am proud that I am now a member of this organization.

Thanks a lot to the organization to provide us this kind of trainings and space.

**Manisha Kumari**  
**IGP Class**  
**Forbesganj, Bihar**

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## *Medical Camp in Sonagachi*

**Kolkata:** Apne Aap Women Worldwide in collaboration with Rotaract Club organized a medical camp at the Sonagachi centre on September 27, 2018. The camp had many doctors who checked women and children and prescribed medicine to the children and women. They had brought a lot of medical supplies with them which the distributed for free among everyone.

The doctors conducted a general health checkup of the children. They advised the children to eat nutritious and healthy diet. The doctors also explained to the children why they should eat a lot of green vegetables.

The doctors also conducted a health and hygiene session in the centre. The session was based around the prevention of dengue and malaria. They discussed the different ways that dengue and malaria mosquitoes breed. They told the children about various ways to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes. We should not keep empty containers outside, we should clean any accumulated water, we should also clean water coolers and bird feeding bowls. Then they also discussed the symptoms of these diseases and what to do if these symptoms appear in someone. They also stressed on the importance of clean surroundings in preventing the spread of various diseases.

### *Continued from page 1*

In the process, many scientific and geographical concepts came up and were discussed- such as gravity, planets, human life, the food cycle, and the possibility of aliens, which some of the children were sure must exist. When asked if they knew about anyone who had gone to space, the children could name three- Neil Armstrong, Rakesh Sharma, and Laika the dog. It was pointed out to them that even though they remembered the names of two men and one dog, they could not name the woman who had gone to space, and whose picture was in fact hanging in their classroom.

One way in which Kalpana's fascination and curiosity was explained was by narrating how she chose her own name because she liked what it meant. The children did not know what the word 'kalpana' (imagination) meant. So we did an exercise where we closed our eyes and tried to picture impossible things, such as green flowers with legs and spectacles. First they were instructed and told what to imagine. In a second round, they were asked to take turns to construct their own images. Then we discussed Kalpana's fascination with planes, and the sky, and the children narrated their experiences of looking at planes and other interesting things. The children were also very fascinated by a video of what the world looks like from a plane.

We discussed the obstacles that were faced by Chawla, such as her parents' poverty, girls not being expected to go to school, women discouraged from joining certain

fields like engineering, and being the only woman at her engineering college. The children seemed to start to get a little discouraged when they heard all these and all the dangers that astronauts face. However, soon someone pointed out that Kalpana could do it simply by working hard. We discussed the girls' ambitions, and one of them seemed to have decided to become an engineer because of hearing Chawla's story. It was pointed out to them that hard work is what matters irrespective of the profession they choose. The class was made of six girls and two very young boys. When asked what they thought about the obstacles faced by Chawla and if any of those objections were justified, they all seemed to disagree strongly. There was a strong consensus on the fact that women can accomplish anything, much like Chawla.

Finally, we discussed other women in the kids' personal lives whom they would consider role models. Many of the girls named each other, and hopefully it encouraged the children to appreciate the women in their lives. They were encouraged to not base their appreciation on physical appearances. While there were a few difficulties in understanding some of the concepts, the children gave mostly positive feedback, and requested to find out similar stories about the other women whose pictures are hung in their classroom.

**Amisha Gupta**  
**Age 14**

**Class viii**

**Lajpat balika vidyalaya**

## *Open Mic Session on Teacher's Day* *Madhu Kumari*

**Bihar:** My name is Madhu Kumari and I am an IGP trainer in Apne App Women Worldwide organization. I have associated here in 2016 and now continue my work here with the adolescent girls for their empowering. I have been given the responsibility of making girls self-made and empowering them by teaching sewing embroidery work here. I have taught stitching embroidery to 60 girls here so far and some of them have started sewing work in their house by buying a sewing machine. This method of teaching stitching is a good medium for girl's empowerment. Through this, girls are being empowered to teach sewing embroidery and earning some money and standing on their feet. This is also a good example of women's empowerment in society.

Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya is also a residential school for the empowerment of girls and their safe housing and education run by the organization in Simraha near about our office Forbesganj and I have been appointed for two days a week to teach the girls by the organization. I used to go for two

days a week and used to teach girls as well as for their empowerment.

An open forum event was organized on 5th September on the occasion of Teachers Day. They all approx 50 girls participated in the event. This program was conducted by me and Nurani Di here for the girls. It was an open platform and we all had the freedom to speak it. First of all, Madhu di told the detail about teacher's day through to us and why we be celebrate teacher day on this date. Nurani Di told the girls about Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan and also told that we celebrate his birthday as teacher day. The girls were also presented in poetry, singing, dance etc.

**Madhu Kumari**  
**IGP Trainer**  
**Forbesganj, Bihar**

### *Continued from page 1*

On this day, on 5th September, we have also planned of celebrating Teacher's Day. We started preparing for it a week ago. For this, we all shared money with each other. We had cleaned up and decorate our center 1 day ago. We had purchased a photo of Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, the first teacher, from the market for this occasion. We had already prepared a schedule of this program with the help of Sanju Di and Meena Di. On this day all the girls had reached the center at 10 o'clock. The photograph of Dr. Radhakrishnan was placed on a table and a floral garland was cast on it. First of all, we put flowers on their photo. After that Sanju di told us in detail about them. We girls shared their experiences about their lives. We also recited songs and poems on this occasion.

This entire program lasted about three hours. At the conclusion of the program, sweets were shared among us by the organization.

Thanks to the organization Apne Aap Women Worldwide for organizing such programs for us and to cooperate with us. Thanks a lot.

## Poems

### One Day at a Pet Shop

One day at a pet shop,  
I met a man selling bricks,  
For money he wanted to swap,  
But I really wanted some yardsticks.

"Got any yardsticks?" asked I.  
"For that's how I'll spend my money."  
"No yardsticks here!" said the guy.  
He seemed to find it quite funny.

"We've got some lovely frames,  
I'll give you a very fine price."  
"I'd rather have some olympian games."  
The man blinked rapidly thrice.  
Like others, he thought I was odd,  
Some say I'm a bit tall.  
Still he gave me a courteous nod,  
As if he thought I was plenty cool.

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## Red Light Dispatch

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