

Mourning braveheart: Massive outpouring of grief, anger across the country

Rape victim dies, stirs India's soul

A fighter all her life

NEW DELHI/SINGAPORE: India on Saturday morning woke up to the shocking news of the death of a 23-year-old woman, who was brutally gang-raped and tortured here 13 days ago, in Singapore.

The gang-rape victim passed away after a valiant fight against death, stirring the conscience of her motherland which had erupted in protest against the brutal attack.

The physiotherapy student, who had been in critical condition ever since the incident took place on December 16, breathed her last at 2:15 am (IST) at Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore, where she was shifted on December 26.

With that the entire India, which poured its heart out to the victim and prayed for her recovery, went into mourning.

The physiotherapy student, who was raped by nearly half a dozen men and tortured in a moving bus, was to be brought to Delhi by a special flight at 2:30 am on Sunday. The government, which sent the woman to Singapore for treatment, did not disclose the details of the last rites. Informed sources said the funeral would take place in Delhi.

The girl's parents were by her side when the end came.

13 days that stopped the nation

The physiotherapy intern and her friend boarded a bus at Munaria in South Delhi on their way back from a movie. She is gang-raped and tortured while her friend is beaten inside the moving bus. They are then stripped, robbed and thrown out of the bus. Spotted by a toll plaza patrol vehicle and admitted to Safdarjung Hospital.

Friend identifies one of the accused as rapist in Tihar Jail.

As victim's condition worsens, hundreds take out candle-light march outside 10 Janpath, Sonia Gandhi's residence. Police nab fifth accused, a juvenile and the sixth accused in Aurangabad.

Protest area turns into battle zone. Clashes between police and protesters leave many injured, including Constable Subhash Chand Tomar (right).



Sonia Gandhi joins Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in promising quick justice. Victim's condition worsens.



"She remained serious. I wasn't expecting her to go so soon," Dr Yatin Mehta, who had flown with her to Singapore, remarked.

Announcing the death, the hospital bulletin noted: "We are very sad to report that the patient passed away peacefully at 4:45 am (Singapore time) on December 29, 2012. The Mount Elizabeth Hospital

team of doctors, nurses and staff join her family in mourning her loss."

The battered woman was admitted to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital on the night of December 16 in a critical condition. Doctors conducted three surgeries to remove the victim's intestines, susceptible to gangrene. She suffered cardiac arrest on December 28 after

which, in a controversial move, she was airlifted to Singapore. The woman was admitted to hospital in Singapore "in an unconscious state," Dr Yatin Mehta, Chairman, Institute of Critical Care and Anaesthesiology at Medanta Medicity, told *Deccan Herald*. Immediately on admission, brain injury was noticed and scanning was done. Dr Mehta, one of the two doc-

tors to have flown with the girl in an air ambulance, added: "Brain injury is an important cause for the death. She suffered a cardiac arrest at Safdarjung Hospital on Tuesday. This could have caused the brain injury and she also suffered from multi-organ failure."

Death, Page 9
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Sandeep Yadav

NEW DELHI: The victim of gruesome gang-rape who died in a Singapore hospital after putting up a spirited fight for 13 days never had it easy in life. A poor man, her father struggled to provide her a convent education. The victim had to struggle all her life for her education and to provide for her younger brother's education.

Born in an eastern UP village, her father, who works as a loader at the Delhi airport came to Delhi when the victim was just two-year-old. With meagre wages and responsibility of three children (according to a close family member, he earns just about Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 in a month), he had to sell part of his property in ancestral village for the girl's education.

The victim had convinced her father that she would buy double the land after she starts earning.

"When she was in class tenth she used to teach students in class seventh and eighth, so that she could help them meet the household expenses. When in class twelfth, she taught students of class tenth and when she joined

para-medics course in Dehradun, she took up a job to meet her personal and college expenses," said a close family member requesting anonymity.

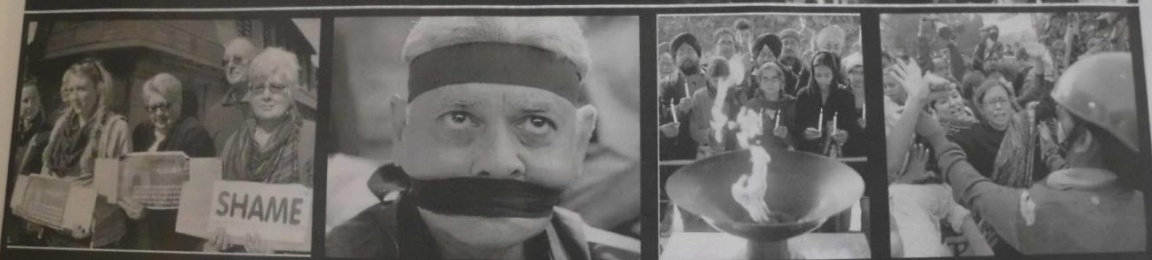
He added that he was surprised to learn about her schedule while she was studying in Dehradun and wondered how she managed to do it. "From 10 am in the morning to 5 pm she used to go to her medical college. After it got over, she went for a call centre job from 9 pm in the night to 5 am in the morning. She sounded happy and cheerful every time I spoke to her," he said.

As in life, victim fought an death also for survival. She fought her attackers with vigour rarely displayed. "She had been a fighter all her life and fought her attackers bravely. After such brutal attack, she showed exemplary spirit and survived for these many days," said the relative.

The victim had also promised her younger brother that she will pay for his entire college fee (brother is preparing for engineering college) and he should not bother about anything and only concentrate on cracking the entrance exam.

DN News Service

Mourning brave heart



Death of the victim led to countrywide outrage with protesters demanding death sentence for the accused. AFP/PTU/AP

The rape question in Indian society

Dr Meinam Binota



New Delhi, Dec 16, 2012: In the fog-soaked neon-lit Delhi streets, a police van came across a young couple lying naked just near the pavement. Naked and dishevelled, the boy incoherently mumbled in fear and chill that the heavily bleeding unconscious girl beside him had been gang-raped inside a bus. **Ulhasnagar (Thane near Mumbai), Dec 17:** A 40-year-old woman accompanied by her husband and son was groped and molested in a busy bazaar street by two persons. On being confronted, the molesters thrashed the woman's husband and son. **Chandel (Manipur), Dec 18:** A Manipuri actress while hosting an event, was molested and assaulted allegedly by a Naga militant, in front of security forces. **Kasaragod (Kerala), Dec 24:** Four men whisked off an orphan girl and gang-raped her in a vehicle before dumping her at Kumble Railway Station. An autorickshaw driver, on pretext of providing help, took her to an isolated place and along with his friends ravaged her. Police found the unconscious girl lying on a road and admitted her to a hospital.

These cases from the four points of Indian sub-continent are bound by an intangible thread woven in unconscious collective memories of a misogynist past.

The case lists of sexual assaults-verbal, physical and visual-on the 'Second Sex' that just adds to statistics, filling tomes and tomes in the court of law, rarely touches or even scratches the veneer hiding the brutal and hideous face of societal structures that covertly want women to remain subjugated and men to be rulers.

To reduce any social phenomenon to one cause is erroneous; it is always the inter-play of various factors, including social histories and traditions described in epics or scriptures of the past that shapes a social perspective.

Western literary classics like Homer's Iliad and Odyssey treat women as objects and so do several Indian epics.

Mythology as prelude

Without going into the debate of interpolations, a reading of 'Mahabharata' makes it

amply clear how men in the great epic, 'molested and raped women', under a beautiful pretext. Take a look at these episodes:

- Bhishma treating Amba, Ambika and Ambalika as commodities shifting them here and there as per his convenience and desire.

- Ambika and Ambalika give their bodies to Vyasa but not their hearts. They can't go beyond the social commands of higher authority. But Ambalika, during the second visit of Vyasa, sends her maid in her place.

- Kunti has three sons out of wedlock to prove Pandu's virility; is it forced or consented? She has no right to raise the question because asking the same will be against the social system.

These episodes vividly show that the acts were seeped in unwillingness/non-consented sexual union (which may be called rape by definition of Indian laws).

Suppression, sacrifice, obedience and kindness are the lessons drilled into the psyche of womenfolk in India. The sanctification and inviolability of marriages and ideals of perfect chastity of women etc., are all written in Vedas/Upanishads and the constitution of the country.

However, the hidden laws, customary laws (particularly in North-East India), Panchayati laws (Khaps of Haryana and Punjab) are the laws that operate and influence daily lives of people in different parts of the country. These subterranean practices cannot be done away easily as visualised by the national policy and lawmakers.

In Islamic laws, marriage is a contract; it is nothing short of buying and selling a commodity. Men are the buyers and women are the commodities.

Thus, the recent reports of gang rape in Delhi or gang-rape of two Mizo girls or mo-



treating every part of female anatomy as a tantalising product.

This treatment of women as commodity is precisely what disturbs the thinking section of people (mostly women) as this is one of the key causes that has made the modern times for females no different from ancient times.

Death sentence, castration, life imprisonment and other similar demands being made by women protestors at this stage are nothing but knee-jerk reactions of an outraged female populace that has always been at the receiving end since time immemorial.

Those wanting to convert the country into a police or military state forget that the numbers of rapes and molestation committed by armed forces in Kashmir, North East and tribal areas might chill their bones and numb their minds. Amendments to laws and judicial systems may be of very little benefit to the victims. Rather they serve as adrenaline to the culprits as the punishment and penalty meted out to the guilty are disproportionate to the crime committed.

The atrocity on woman is not just confined to rape or molestation in isolation; instances of harassment at workplace, home, academic institutions are indicators that even the most urbane areas are seeped in values which are discriminatory and exploitative in nature.

The need of the hour is not draconian laws but a rethinking process starting from the family as a unit itself. Setting an agenda of this kind would definitely go a long way in reforming/restructuring our male chauvinistic and misogynist social institutions.

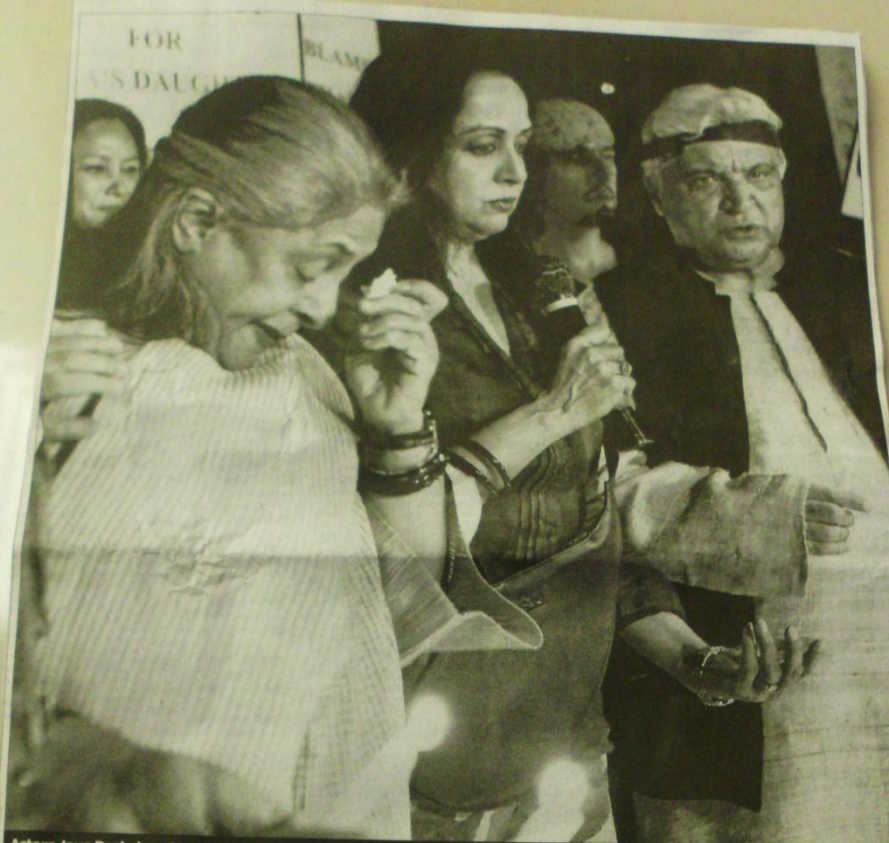
To say that rape is a crime against women is to state the obvious; a stark fact that has been known all along. Again to say that sexual assault is the most violent act of masculine authority over female body is to re-state what has been stated all along. What has not been stated but needs to be said is the encouragement (read sanction) of male (read society) treatment of woman as 'sexual object', 'commodity' by our social system. Covert or otherwise.

(The writer is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at Imphal College, Manipur University.)

lestation of Manipuri film actress by NSCN (IM) cadre in Manipur are clear manifestations of the century old social histories, customary laws of the country and an economic system that dehumanises human body for marketing purposes.

Act(s) of rape and molestation, be it Delhi or Chandel (Manipur), cannot be looked at in isolation; nor do these chilling acts have anything to do with Sheila Dixit (good/bad) governance or Ibobi's (lack of) governance.

They are living legacies of our patriarchal and masculinity-adulatory social texts and customary laws juxtaposed with mass media hammering the same anti-woman norms through bombardment of visuals



Actors Jaya Bachchan, Hema Malini and lyricist Javed Akhtar during a candle light rally to pay tribute to Delhi gang rape victim, in Mumbai on Saturday. PTI

Activists call for systemic change

NEW DELHI: While sharing their grief over the demise of the Delhi gang-rape victim, the civil society and the Left party on Saturday demanded removal of systemic flaws which make sexual assault on women possible and slammed the government for mishandling people's protest against the tragedy.

Seeking to tackle the issue from its roots, Narmada Bachao Andolan leader Medha Patkar, social activist Sister Celia, Geetha Ramakrishnan and Madhuresh said in a joint statement: "Let us resolve to not just deal with the immediate symptoms but also look at the root causes in a way that our efforts do not end with candle light vigils and slogan shouting and it will lead to systemic and fundamental changes making India a safe country for women and all those facing the brunt of these violence get

justice sooner."

Medha and others also opposed to capital punishment and demanded life imprisonment to the accused in the gang-rape case.

Joining mourners, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said: "Let us ensure that perpetrators of this and all similar crimes get exemplary punishment, that all the laws related to violence against women are reviewed and amended, that the law and order machinery and the criminal justice system is more sensitive and responsive to women, that all the systemic flaws which make such incidents possible are corrected. This is also a moment of national shame."

AAP leaders including Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, Yogendra Yadav and Gopal Rai attended the gathering at Jantar Mantar with their mouths covered with black bands.

"Some structural changes are urgently needed in the system and gender-just laws required to be strengthened. Also, the laws to deal with rape victims are not good enough," said Kavita Krishnan, Secretary of the All India Progressive Women's Association.

Meanwhile, the CPM criticised the government and the police in failing to prevent the crime and asked the government to adopt changes demanded by women's organisations.

"It is essential for the government at the Centre and in the states to put into place pending measures to prevent violence against women which have been demanded by women's organisations and the Left parties and which the government has failed to accept and implement," said the CPM Polit Bureau in a statement.

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Govt to create awareness

People's demand for making rape punishable by capital punishment may not find support in the government. The government may right now concentrate more on gender-sensitisation and providing for a safe environment to women than going for such punishments which does not conform to modern jurisprudence. The legal changes will certainly occur to make rape laws stringent, but it may not go to any extreme as far as the form of the punishment. It may include increasing minimum punishment from 7 years to 10 years.



A protestor holds a placard during a protest to mourn the death of a gang-raped student, in Mumbai on Saturday. AFP

Restrictions to continue around India Gate, Raisina Hill

Dalip Singh

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Top decision makers of the UPA government, led by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, held a brainstorming session on Saturday evening and decided to continue to restrict protesters from India Gate owing to intelligence inputs that miscreants might take advantage of the situation.

The restrictions on mass movement at the India Gate and at Raisina Hill was imposed after the police lathi-charged protesters last Sunday on the pretext that anti-social ele-

ments had gathered and were pelting stones at them.

UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi was also present in the meeting attended by senior ministers including Union Home Minister Sushilkumar Shinde, who had to abort his Maharashtra trip mid-way after hearing about the victim's demise.

It is learnt that there was a difference of opinion as to whether India Gate should be thrown open to people for peaceful protest on Sunday, when the girl's body is flown back to Delhi for cremation.

Sources said that some of the leaders who attended the gathering were of the view that peaceful protesters should be given access to India Gate given the fact that no untoward incidents were reported from the dharna held at Jantar Mantar, apart from other places.

By doing this, the government can convey that they encourage people's fundamental right to protest. But the Union home ministry is believed to have issued a directive to continue with the restrictions imposed in the central parts of the city.



Security personnel pass by a sand sculpture by artist Raj Kapoor at Sangam in Allahabad on Saturday, after the death of a gang-rape victim in New Delhi. AFF

Regulator issue norms for channels

NEW DELHI: After 23-year old victim of gang-rape succumbed to her injuries at a hospital in Singapore, the Broadcast Editor Association (BEA) on Saturday asked its member channels not to cover her funeral or take interview of her relatives in order to respect the dignity and privacy of the deceased.

The Editors Guild, however, did not endorse the BEA advisory, saying the funeral of the victim and other related developments must be covered by both print and electronic media as the nation had woken up to the crime against women.

The Press Council of India too did not put any restriction on media coverage of the issue.

Issuing guidelines, the BEA has also asked member channels not to take shots of transportation of the victim's body which was being brought to India by authorities.

The reporters should not be allowed to chase the funeral van in order to make shots, sought the BEA, which comprise most of the popular news channels including CNN-IBN as its members.

It said that information about arrival of the body and funeral could be reported. However, the location of the funeral must not be given to the viewers of the channels, the Association made it clear in its guidelines, circulated to the member channels.

The new channels were also asked to withdraw their outside broadcast (OB) vans from the home town of the victim. "Do not show shots of home or family (of the victim)," the BEA sought.

The association underlined that its guidelines were "exhaustive" in nature and there could be situations which was not mentioned in it. "In such cases, please follow the guiding principle of protecting the identity, dignity and privacy of the girl," it said.

Rape victim's death stirs India's soul

Death, from Page 1

The victim could not come out of complications in brain along with multi-organ failure. Dr Kelvin Loh, Chief Executive Officer, Mount Elizabeth Hospital, observed: "The patient had remained in an extremely critical condition since admission to Mount Elizabeth Hospital in the morning of December 27.

Despite all efforts by a team of eight specialists in Mount Elizabeth Hospital to keep her stable, her condition continued to deteriorate over these two days. She had suffered from severe organ failure following serious injuries to her body and brain. She was courageous in fighting for her life for so long against the odds but the trauma to her body was too severe for her to overcome."

Ever since the morning of December 17, in an unprecedented show of anger against the police and the government for lack of protection to women, students and women's organisations had been thronging the streets across the country, mainly in Delhi.

When the news of the gang-rape victim's death spread, many protesters, this time mourning, returned to the streets, not only in Delhi but also in many other cities. In an early morning move, the government made the entire India Gate area out of bounds for agitators. It also closed down all Metro stations around the area.

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Murder charges to be slapped on six accused

Murder charges, from Pg 1

"In this moment of national grief following the loss of a young and innocent life to a barbaric crime, I appeal to members of public on behalf of the Delhi Police to stay calm and maintain peace. We, in the Delhi Police, as citizens of this country are equally saddened, if not more. Our sympathy goes out to the bereaved family," Kumar said.

A three-member commission of inquiry has already been set up under former chief justice of India Jagdish Sharan Verma to probe the incident.

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Barbaric act: 23-year-old gang-rape victim died on Saturday When all humanitarian efforts came to an abrupt end

NEW DELHI: T C A Raghavan, New Delhi's envoy to Singapore, spent most of his time since Wednesday, shuttling between the High Commission of India on the city-state's Grange Road and the nearby Mount Elizabeth Hospital - coordinating efforts to help the 23-year-old gang-rape victim.

So did most of his colleagues. But the last humanitarian operation of the Ministry of External Affairs in 2012 came to a tragic end at around 2-15 am (Indian Standard Time) on Saturday, when the young woman was declared dead.

The High Commissioner and many of his colleagues were by her side at the Intensive Care Unit of the Mount Elizabeth Hospital during the final hours of her struggle for survival since Friday. They also had to coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sin-

gapore and the hospital authorities to facilitate return of her mortal remains and her family to India after her death early Saturday.

Raghavan, a 1982 batch official of the Indian Foreign Service, was with the victim's family ever since her condition took a turn for the worse in the forenoon of Friday. He, himself, interpreted and explained the medical reports to her parents and helped them communicate with the doctors.

He took her grieving parents and brothers to his residence as they went into mourning early in the morning on Saturday. He also formally conveyed to them the condolence message from Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

"Though all possible medical efforts were made to help her overcome injuries, they were unfortunately not successful in saving her," he later told me-

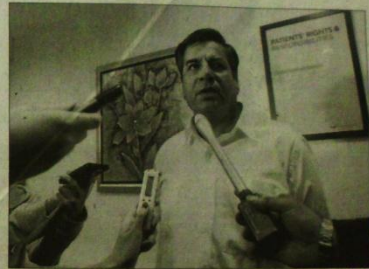
dia-persons at the High Commission. "We extend our deepest condolences to the members of the family of the girl," Raghavan, himself a father of two daughters, added, as he lamented that all efforts made by the High Commission failed to save her life.

Into action

Raghavan, who was in constant touch with Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai since Wednesday, and his colleagues then again got into action - to coordinate with hospital authorities to get the autopsy done and the death certificate issued and seek clearance from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore for the special Air India aircraft, which was chartered by the Indian government to bring back her mortal remains and her family to the country, to land at the Changi International Airport.

Once the death certificate was issued by a doctor of the Mount Elizabeth hospital, the High Commission officials took custody of her body on behalf of her family and took it to a funeral parlour at Geylang Bahru locality in Singapore. The corpse was embalmed at the funeral parlour and put in a casket, which was then carried by a Hindu hearse to the Changi International Airport.

Raghavan swung into action early Wednesday when Mathai called him and asked him to make all necessary arrangements, as the government was contemplating to shift the gang-rape victim from the Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi to the Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore. The final decision was taken later that day after ruling out other options in Germany and UK. By the time the air-ambulance carrying the victim, her family and doctors



Indian High Commissioner to Singapore, T C A Raghavan speaks to reporters at Mount Elizabeth Hospital late on Saturday in Singapore. AP

landed in Singapore, the High Commission had made arrangements with the island-country's government to issue visas for all of them on arrival. Raghavan had meetings with the Mount Elizabeth Hospital's

Chief Executive Officer Dr Kelvin Loh and requested him to set up a team of specialist doctors to take care of her immediately after her admission into the hospital.

"The team of doctors which

had accompanied her from India had fully briefed the doctors here about the injuries suffered, treatment she had undergone, so I would say she received the best possible medical attention in both countries," he said on Saturday.

The MEA last year carried out the biggest humanitarian operation in its history to evacuate about 15,400 Indians from Libya in the wake of the violent uprising against Muammar El Gadhafi's regime in Tripoli. It also succeeded this year to bring back children of an Indian couple living in Norway after the Norwegian Child Welfare Services took the kids away from their parents. Even on Saturday, it facilitated homecoming of five Indian seafarers, who were recently rescued after being held captive by Somali pirates onboard MV Iceberg for the past 32 months.

DH News Service

Sunday, December 30, 2012

DECCAN HERALD 7

Sunday Spotlight

Sexual violence Many social theorists view rape not only as an ugly crime but as a symptom of an unhealthy society

As the December 16 gang-rape of a 23-year-old paramedical student in the country's capital finds tragic closure in her painful death after nearly two weeks of struggle, Sunday Spotlight seeks answers for this symptom of a deeper malaise in society.

Kin allege delay in shifting to Singapore

Sandeep Yadav

NEW DELHI: "You don't give me one chappati when I am hungry, but try to shove food down my throat when I am dead. What's the use of such help," says Rajesh (name changed) cousin of the gang-rape victim, who breathed her last in Singapore.

Son of victim's paternal uncle, Rajesh believes that though the accused threw her out of the moving bus believing that she was dead, there were more chances of her survival if she was sent to Singapore on the second or third day of the incident. It was too late, at least by a week, by the time she was flown out, said Rajesh.

"We kept telling the authorities and doctors that she should be shifted to some better hospital abroad. But we were told that first she needs to be stabilised. However, instead of stabilising, she suffered a fatal cardiac arrest due to whatever they were up to," alleged Rajesh. He said she was as good as dead before being shifted to Singapore.

And he has reasons to think so.

During a meeting at the victim's house in Dwarka area of West Delhi, Rajesh told *Deccan Herald*, "Just before doctors said she suffered a cardiac arrest, she had made hand gesture trying to reach out to chachi. When chachi came she looked at her fondly for a few seconds following which the pupils of her eyes tilted, head rolled and hands fell apart.

"Doctor rushed and pressed her chest several times. After that she was surrounded by a team of doctors and we were all taken out of the room. For the family she had died then only," he said. Some relatives were told that she had passed away.

His claim has been corroborated by a senior Delhi Police officer. "We were expecting a declaration of her being dead on Wednesday evening," the senior officer said.

"When we heard the decision to air lift her to Singapore, we started making preparations to tackle protest-like situation," he added.

According to him, it was only after an hour that the family was taken to the office of medical superintendent of Safdarjung Hospital and given forms to fill so that their passports could be made and they could accompany her to Singapore.

"The forms were filled, pictures clicked for passport in the superintendent office. Within an hour passports were ready," Rajesh said. The victim was taken directly to Indira Gandhi International Airport while another ambulance was sent to Medanta Hospital to doze media.

Rajesh added that her hands were lying on her sides with palms open when she was being put in the ambulance. "Only the dead have hands like this," he said.

How did he learn about the death?

"Chacha called at around 1 am from Singapore and said *teri behan ab nahi rahi* (your sister is no more)," said Rajesh.

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Friend's father calls for death penalty

Father of the male friend of the rape victim has demanded that the six accused should be hanged as soon as possible.

The lawyer, a resident of Turkmanpur area of Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district, is in the capital to be with his son who was also assaulted in the attack on December 16.

"It is very unfortunate that she passed away during the treatment. Our close family and relatives feel that the accused must be hanged for the heinous crime to set an example in the country," he said.

He added that they will attend the cremation of the woman. But are yet to be contacted by the woman's family. It was revealed that the male friend has been struggling to cope with the incident and has been sick for the past few days.

Dikshit for no restrictions to India Gate demonstrations

NEW DELHI: On the day the gang-rape victim died in Singapore, Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit requested the Union Home Ministry to lift the restriction on holding peaceful protest around India Gate.

Dikshit might be voicing sentiments of the agitated people feeling crippled over movement restriction in central part of the Capital, but the chief minister and union home minister have been found to be on different pages during the 13-day ordeal that broke out since the shameful gang-rape and brutal assault on the 23-year-old paramedic in a moving bus on December 16.

According to sources, Dikshit has asked Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde to allow people to hold peaceful dharna in and around India Gate, which of late has come to symbolise with big agitation Delhites hold in the Capital.

The chief minister's request was to ease Delhi police curb, declaring out of bounds India Gate, Raisina Hill and other areas in central part of the city. Despite Dikshit's request, the Delhi police did not lower their guard owing to apprehensions that anti-social elements might exploit a large gathering of young men and women. The Congress chief minister also went in the afternoon to protest venue Jantar Mantar to publicly express her "grief" at the death of the girl. But, after lighting a candle she had to return in huff after protestors heckled her.

Some questioned why the chief minister came now as she did not turn up in the initial days of the protest despite agitators wanting a political intervention.

Senior BJP leader and eminent lawyer Arun Jaitely hinted at government playing the role of opposition as well when he remarked that "various wings of the regime should not adopt an adversarial position".

DH News Service

Humanity disgraced

Wearing skirts to school causes rape: BJP MLA

JAIPUR, DHNS: While the nation is plunged in grief and outrage over the death of the twenty three-year-old gang-rape victim in Delhi, a BJP MLA in Rajasthan has waded in with his opinion, saying the mini skirts the girls wear as part of school uniform should be banned.

Banwari Lal Singhal, a BJP MLA from Alwar city, in his

letter to the state chief secretary, demanded that girl students be made to wear salwar suits or shirts and trousers as uniform like in government schools to avoid chances of their being subjected to sexual harassment.

He said girls above standard X are grown up and wearing mini-skirts, which is common practice in private schools in

the state, is attracting lewd remarks from boys.

salwar suits or shirts and trousers, according to the MLA, will also be an appropriate winter clothing in the state that experiences extremely cold temperatures.

"It has been found that the girls with skirts are being subjected to lewd from mischievous elements while walking

their way to school or wait for school buses at various points in the city," Singhal pointed out.

He also argued that skirts are not part of Indian culture.

"It should be prohibited keeping in view the rise of social crimes against women. The school should have pant-shirts or salwar suits as uniforms for girl students," Singhal said in the letter.

In shame

Victim took tuitions to fund her education

» The Delhi "braveheart" who died Saturday came from a humble family originally from Uttar Pradesh and took tuitions to pay for her school and college fees, report agencies from New Delhi.

Born into a family from Ballia, the young woman, family friends said, was hard working and desired to forge ahead in life. Sources close to the family said they moved to the national capital a quarter century ago. It settled in a middle-class

neighbourhood in southwest Delhi where she was born 23 years ago. The girl's father, seeing her brilliance in academics, took loans to finance her higher studies. After her education, she went to Dehradun to train as a physiotherapist. She returned to Delhi and started as an intern in a private hospital in north Delhi. As she was the eldest in the family, her family was convinced that her success in academics would inspire her two younger brothers too.

Spl public prosecutor named

» Senior lawyer Dyankrishnan will be the Special Public Prosecutor in the case of brutal gang-rape of a 23-year-old girl in a moving bus, reports PTI from New Delhi.

Dyankrishnan, eminent lawyer and a counsel in Delhi High Court, has himself volunteered to do it free of cost, a Delhi Police statement said here. He will be

assisted by two juniors. Investigators said they will file the charge sheet in the court on January three. Police have slapped murder charges as well as Sections 201 (destruction of evidence), 365 (kidnapping or abducting), 376 (2)(g) (gang rape), 377 (unnatural offences), 394 (hurting in committing robbery) and 34 (common intention) of IPC.

Lessons to be learnt: S'pore

» There are lessons to be learnt from the death of the Indian woman who was savagely gang-raped and tortured in a Delhi bus, a media report quoted a minister as saying, report agencies from Singapore.

Women are still treated as "inferior beings" in many societies, wrote Minister of State for Social and Family Development Halimah Yacob on her Facebook page Saturday, a day when the

woman died in a Singapore hospital after battling for life for 13 days. She gave the example of a Malaysian friend, the head of gender equality in a trade union organisation, who told off male trade unionists who made sexist jokes against women, reported Straits Times.

It was all about respect, she said. "People may think that this is just a small matter...over time, all the small things add up."

Bedi offers to train police

» Former IPS officer Kiran Bedi on Saturday offered to be an honorary trainer for the personnel of Delhi Police in crime prevention, reports PTI from New Delhi. "I have offered to be an honorary trainer for Delhi Police, officers in particular, in crime

prevention...I guarantee scene will change in 90 days," she tweeted.

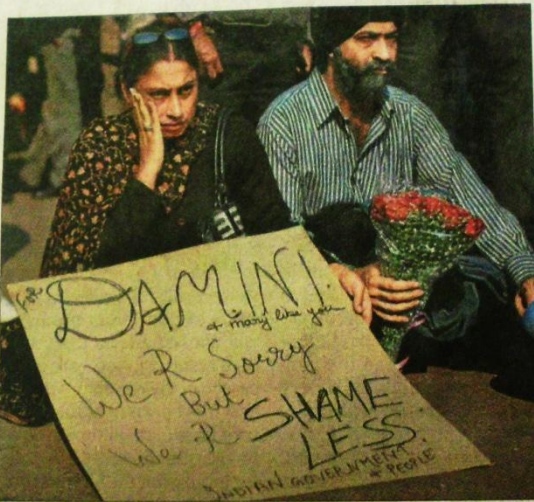
Delhi Police had received flak for not being able to prevent the gangrape of a 23-year-old girl in a moving bus in south Delhi on December 16 night.

Cops keep hawk's eye on protesters

NEW DELHI: Thousands of protesters, including representatives of various political parties, gathered at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi to express grief and solidarity with the gang-raped victim, who was also brutally assaulted by six men on December 16 causing severe injuries that eventually led to her death on Saturday morning.

Hearing the news of victim's death, police officers were deployed at Jantar Mantar even as all arterial roads leading to India Gate and the President's House were barricaded. The Delhi Police announced in the morning that people can protest peacefully at Jantar Mantar and Ramlila Grounds.

Around 5,000 police personnel were deployed in New Delhi area, completely blocking India Gate after putting up three-layers of security barricades and diverting traffic movement to other roads. "A total of 41 companies of force were in place including 21 para-



A gathering to mourn the death of the rape victim in New Delhi on Saturday. AP

military forces. At various places, water cannon vehicles were placed and police carrying tear shell guns were on their toes. Many senior officers, including special cell of Delhi Police, were deployed at Jantar

Mantar," said senior police officers.

Law enforcers also announced at Jantar Mantar to keep watch on anti-social elements and report about them. "Some miscreants have

sneaked into the protest site consuming alcohol and may create trouble. If found, people should report the matter to the security officers," announced a police officer.

Students, activists and political party representatives gathered at the venue and shouted slogans of "we want justice and freedom" throughout the day. Supporters of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led by Arvind Kejriwal reached Jantar Mantar around 11 am.

"We have not come here to demand anything from government but to pay homage and respect to someone. She was not merely a victim but also an epitome of bravery and courage. It is a day for nation to grieve," said AAP leader Yogendra Yadav.

Members from the youth wings of Congress, BJP and the Left were also there carrying their banners and shouting slogans. Many students objected to the political parties bringing banners to the protest site and pleaded with them not to politi-

cise the issue. "We have come here for a cause and today (Saturday) to express our solidarity to the victim. Why you people are politicising the issue," asked Amrit Negi, who came along with his friends to Jantar Mantar.

Till afternoon, the crowd was not more than 500 but with passage of time, around 1,500 people gathered to demand harsher punishment for the six accused.

Few of them were sitting quietly but some demanded justice and were lashing out at the government for "their negligence and total mismanagement of the society and depleting law and order situation".

"We mourn her death, we will fight patriarchy," and "Enough is enough!" read the placards.

In the evening, protesters carried out a candle march for a few metres till Parliament Street police station peacefully and then returned to Jantar Mantar.

DH News Service

'Delhi was never safe for women'

Susan Visvanathan

The rape and death of the young woman returning from an evening out with a close friend, was one of the most horrific events our city has faced. She had known a supportive milieu, where she was respected and loved by parents and siblings. She believed her career and perhaps the prospect of a partnership, would make life all that more meaningful. I can imagine a young woman like that, thinking that the bus services in the national capital would be safe, geared as we are towards modernity, freedom for all, occupations which are no longer open to men alone and promising most of all, free access to work and leisure for the women who enter the 21st century with optimism.

Today, the city of Delhi faces these contradictory impulses of modernisation and lumpenisation, which uses orthodoxy as its alibi, with alarm. The anonymity of the city (where crime is rampant, where road rage and alcoholism are more frequent than we would like to admit to ourselves) and the stentorian tones of a false orthodoxy which says that women should not be out working or at the movies or shopping at late hours are fatally combined. Part of the problem lies in the ethos of the city of Delhi, which always alienated women from the normalcy of occupational drives.

The city carried with it the tones of an ancient legend: "Duryodhana will mutilate Draupadi". It was not a corpse, it was a woman, who though she had been ripped apart, knew that she had to speak, to write, to make eye contact, to call for her friend who had tried to protect her from the lewdness of six drunken men.

What the protests mean

It is to her spirit that the city of Delhi has been moved by, in endless protest, thousands marching, speaking and fending off tear gas and water cannons. Delhi was never safe for women, and a new generation demands that the world take note.

Life sentences for rapists on a fast track judicial court is one of their minimalist demands, not as deterrent, but as a collective sentiment expressing the grief of the common people against crimes such as wife-burning, acid attacks and rape. There are people like me who believe that wife-murder statistics did reduce, when death sentences were given to the mothers-in-law and the husbands when proved guilty. One can have different opinions about the value and

ethics of capital punishment or maoist guerrilla warfare. Yet, only with this case in mind, can we tackle the rapes of women by soldiers in the war zones of our country. Rape is the way by which men tell women that they cannot work late hours, enjoy leisure time activities or demand the right to be citizens in their own country.

Rape is the instrument by which men tell women that they are lesser beings and their fate is to be decided by the rule of phallus. Severest penalty for those who rape and murder is as necessary for restoring order, as are war crimes councils when death is doled out without mercy in times of crises. Anomie is the word sociologists give to normlessness. The Police and Border Security Forces and the Army must be as subject to transparency and rule of order, as are the laws



The sociological reasons for crimes against women, including rape, are varied, from petty jealousies bruising male egos, lack of proper public transport in interior villages that make their travel from home to school or work and back that much more vulnerable, resenting women's individual freedom and space as more of them join the workforce in BPOs', call centers and even smaller service-sector jobs in big cities, to caste overtones" **Social analyst**

imposed on killers and rapists who stalk the fields, roads and staircases of apartment blocks, looking for prey. "Take responsibility" for the desperate indexes for rape, in India, is what the protestors are asking the Police to do, which alone can make Delhi and the rest of the country women-friendly.

(The writer is a Professor of Sociology at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.)

Murder charges to be slapped on six accused

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police have added fresh charge of murder against five men arrested and a juvenile detained over the December 16 gang-rape following the victim's death. Chargesheet in the case is likely to be filed next week, the police said on Saturday.

According to Dharmender Kumar, special commissioner of police (law and order), the victim's body was handed over to family after post-mortem conducted by a medical team in Singapore.

"The post-mortem report will be made available to us at the earliest. We have added section 302 of the Indian Penal Code to the case and hope to file the chargesheet by January 3," Kumar said.

Ram Singh, Pawan Gupta, Vinay Sharma, Mukesh Singh, Akshay and the juvenile, residents of Ravi Dass Camp at RK Puram sector 3, have been nabbed in the case. They already face charges under sec-



tions 201 (destruction of evidence), 365 (kidnapping), 376-2G (gang-rape), 377 (unnatural offences) and 394 (hurting in committing robbery) of the IPC.

Kumar added that High Court lawyer Dyan Krishnan will be special public prosecutor and will carry out a day-to-day prosecution to ensure that trial is finished in short time.

"Krishnan volunteered to conduct trial in a fast-track court free of cost and will be assisted by two juniors. He has been appointed and it will be our endeavour to ensure harshest punishment to culprits," he added.

Even after a fast-tracked hearing in the trial court, the case in all probability will also end up being heard in higher courts.

If convicted of murder, the accused face punishment ranging from life term to death if the crime is seen as the rarest of the rare kind. One of the accused, if determined to be a juvenile, will however not sent to the prison even if he is found guilty. Maximum sentence for a minor is three years of confinement at a centre for juvenile offenders.

The police have appealed to public to stay calm and maintain peace during anti-gang rape protests.

» **Murder charge, Page 9**

She contracted new infections at Safdarjung

NEW DELHI: She fought bravely for two weeks, but doctors always knew that her chances were very slim.

The brutal assault by six men with a rusty iron rod damaged her abdomen so severely that the doctors at Safdarjung Hospital in the capital had to remove almost the entire small intestine (23 feet long) in multiple surgeries last week. Small intestine is required for food absorption and digestion.

Bereft of the vital organ, the 23-year-old physiotherapy student was put on total parental

nutrition (TPN), an artificial formula containing glucose, amino acids, lipids, vitamins and dietary minerals. It is administered through vein access in a limb.

Though patients can survive on TPN for several years, in her case infections spread fast and wide inside the abdomen and ultimately overwhelmed the patient. Doctors fought with several antibiotics for 13 days, but were pushed backward by recurring bouts of infection.

In fact, towards the later

part of her stay at the hospital, she picked up a hospital-acquired infection. Sources said she was infected by acinobacter, a key source of infection in debilitating patients in the hospital. Since this bug survives on dry surfaces for up to 20 days, they pose a high risk of spread and contamination in hospitals, potentially putting immune-compromised and other patients at risk for drug-resistant infections that are often fatal and expensive to treat. Though doctors are not clarifying at the moment, if this

hospital-acquired infection was one of the key reasons for the government to shift her to Singapore, the new infection certainly made her treatment more complicated as she was already fighting several other infections that came from the iron rod. In her second week at the Safdarjung intensive care unit, the girl also developed what is medically known as disseminated intravascular coagulation, which leads to development of tiny clots inside blood vessels and carries the risk of bleeding from other

sites.

Her heart, lungs and kidney, however, were normal. Safdarjung Medical Superintendent B D Athani on Saturday said she had a swelling in the brain too. "The patient had remained in an extremely critical condition since admission to Mount Elizabeth Hospital on the morning of December 27 (Singapore time). Her condition continued to deteriorate over these two days." Kelvin Loh, the CEO of the Singapore hospital said in a statement.

DH News Service

In 30 years, only one death sentence for rape and murder

Saibal Gupta

KOLKATA, DHNS: While the entire nation is seething in anger demanding death penalty for the culprits who gang-raped the 23-year-old girl in New Delhi, instances of death sentence in rape and murder cases are scarce.

In the last three decades, only Dhananjoy Chatterjee was sentenced to death for rape and murder of a teenager in a residential apartment in Kolkata in 2004.

Chatterjee was convicted of raping and murdering 14-year-old Hetal Parekh on March 15, 1990 and was hanged on his birthday by the then ruling Left Front government despite protests from social and human rights organisations who are against capital punishment.

Chatterjee, a lift operator in the building where Hetal Parekh and her family lived, raped and killed the girl when she returned home to an empty flat from school.

The Alipore Sessions Court awarded Dhananjoy Chatterjee life imprisonment for rape and death sentence for murder,

In the last three decades, only Dhananjoy Chatterjee was sentenced to death for rape and murder of a teenager.

termining the case as one of "the rarest of rare cases".

The sentence was upheld both by the High Court and the Supreme Court, and the Governor of West Bengal rejected the mercy plea filed by the convict's relatives.

Subsequently, based on the views of the state government, it was also rejected by the then President A P J Abdul Kalam and Chatterjee was hanged at Alipore Central jail on August 14, 2004.

Human Rights Activist Kirti Roy who fought against capital punishment of Dhananjoy Chatterjee still believes that death sentence is not the solution to reduce incidents of rape. Speaking to *Deccan Herald*, Roy

said: "In the seven days, post Chatterjee's hanging there had been 13 instances of rape in West Bengal including one where some police personnel (GRP) were involved. So the theory that death punishment would act as a deterrent failed. Moreover, countries all over the world have realised that penal theory has failed miserably so they all are gradually prohibiting capital punishment."

"If I was the judge, I would have asked the culprits to stay with the victim's family throughout their lives and serve them. This will make them realise every moment about the loss they have inflicted on the family."

Although most of the lawyers denied to comment, considering the sensitivity of the case, eminent lawyer Arunava Ghosh said: "I am against death penalty. If rape is punished with death then the offenders after raping a woman, in an effort to wipe out evidence, would surely kill her. Today murder is punished with death and if rape is also punished with death, then there is all likelihood that the rapists would kill their victims."

Dark underbelly of so called modern society

Like charity, safety of women does not always begin at home. That being the stark reality, the reasons, sociological or otherwise, for crimes against women are varied. Here's an overview of the ground situation in some of our major cities:

"Aamchi Mumbai" and women

Mumbai may have been a safe city for women, notwithstanding its infamous red-light areas and street-hookers who lurk in shadows every night and 'gropers' who sink in crowded trains, buses and streets preying on unsuspecting women and leaving them angry, helpless and embarrassed.

The image of this trading town as a woman-friendly city is incongruous with the predatory reality that stalks the streets. The official figures of crime against women even though a trickle of what happens in alleys and behind closed doors, indicates that 2011-12 registered 207 cases of rapes, 552 molestation cases and 509 of outraging of modesty. The official records showing 15

per cent rise in rape cases and 14 per cent rise in molestation cases glosses over the traumatic gravity and emotional scars of the victims.

Cases in point

■ Dec 9, 2012: A 62-year-old woman staying alone in the swanky Powai locality was raped by a family friend in her house. The acquaintance, a high-profile airline executive, on pretext of dropping letters came to her place and left the house after raping her; for two days the woman in fear of shame and stigma closeted herself in the house before telling the police.

■ Dec 24: A BJP worker from the posh Malabar Hill area in south Mumbai, was taken into custody

for passing lewd remarks at a fisher woman in a market. On being rebuffed, he thrashed her husband.

■ Dec 25: Under a flyover, a 45-year-old man was caught by pedestrians after they spotted him trying to sexually assault a 25-year-old mentally-challenged woman.

■ Dec 26: A woman constable filed an FIR against an Air India employee, who on being stopped in the busy Dadar TT area, tried to fondle her by touching her grinningly where her nameplate was pinned.

■ Dec 26: A gymnastics teacher in a school in Mumbai's central suburb was taken into custody after it was found that he used to fondle the private parts of girl students.

The other side of Bangalore

As the national capital reels under the shame that it is no longer safe for women, Bangalore also cannot claim to be safe and secure for women. Take the recent case of two Bhanu sisters travelling in a government-run bus being harassed, physically abused and allegedly molested by a BMTCL bus conductor with the driver in tow in broad daylight. The most shocking part of the incident isn't the aggressiveness and attitude of the BMTCL employees, but the indifference of the co-passengers of the bus. As the driver stopped the bus mid-way and asked the two women to get off even after they bought a ticket, none opposed or went to their rescue, leaving the women to the mercy of the two men.

Like Delhi, the city has its own share of rape victims. A second year law student of the National Law School of India was gang-raped by eight men in the woods of the Jnanabharathi campus on October 13 last. The initial reaction of the police varied from character assassination of the victim to even denying that there was a rape. However, they later arrested eight wood cutters for the crime.



Punitha (inset), a schoolgirl, was murdered when she resisted a rape bid by a local goon in Tuticorin district. PHOTO: VASIKARAN

From hosting Asia's first women's police station...

For Tamil Nadu, which pioneered in setting up the first all-women police station in entire Asia under J Jayalalitha's first tenure as Chief Minister in early 1990s to correct gender-bias in investigation and swiftly respond with a healing touch to sexual crimes against women, a slew of recent outrageous attacks on women has come as a shocker.

Vinodhini, a 23-year-old B.Tech graduate from Karaikal in neighbouring Puducherry and working in Chennai, barely a few weeks back lost her vision in both eyes and suffered 40 per cent grievous burns, after a construction worker, whose romantic overtures she had shrugged off, threw acid on her face at Karaikal when she had gone home.

Displaying extraordinary courage in the face of such adversity, she was shifted to the Burns Ward of Kilpaik Medical College in Chennai where she is still battling for her life though out of danger by now. Her assailant Suresh, was "simply obsessed with her", said Police investigating the case. He decided to "take revenge on her" after

the girl's family had filed a police complaint against Suresh.

The latest murderous attack on Punitha, a 13-year-old hapless 7th Class girl returning from school in a village in Tuticorin district, was equally brutal. She bravely resisted a "rape bid" by a local goon, whose name was given by Police as Subbiah, but only to be strangled to death by him using her 'dupatta'.

And in quick succession, at least three other cases of attempts to violently outrage the modesty of young, teenage girls have been reported, one from Nagapattinam district and two others of Dalit girls in Gudalore district. As political pressure mounted for sterner action against sexual offenders, in the wake of the Delhi rape tragedy, Punitha's pursuer Subbiah was arrested under the Goonda Act, which entails straight detention for one year.

One crucial facet is that more cases of crimes against women get to be reported openly now than in the past, which itself is a sign of women's empowerment to boldly take on such anti-social elements.

Kolkata's shame

■ Feb 4, 2012: A woman came out of a night club at Park Street, a posh area of Kolkata city, and was waiting for a cab. A man whom she had met at the club offered a lift. She accepted it and the car left the parking lot only to stop a little ahead where four-five men, allegedly friends of the driver, pushed into the vehicle and one of them raped the woman at gunpoint.

■ July 19, 2012: A woman gets abducted by an autorickshaw driver and his accomplices in a posh area in South Kolkata. She was then raped.

■ Oct 31, 2012: Police arrested a footballer of East Bengal, a premier division national football club, Jagpreet Singh and his domestic help Ravi Singh, allegedly for gang-raping a minor at an apartment in the north Kolkata suburb of Dum Dum.

The list is endless. Countless incidents keep streaming in from across West Bengal. Kolkata, until a couple of years back, considered to be a safe haven for women has now turned into a nightmare for them. According to National Crime Records Bureau, West Bengal, in 2011 recorded the second highest number of rapes after Madhya Pradesh. As many as 2,363 cases were recorded in 2011 and the number of victims was 1,671.

Kolkata may be well behind the country's rape capital Delhi and its staggering 453 incidents of rape, but the City of Joy recorded a whopping 1,161 incidents of crimes against women. The situation at ground level is more alarming.

INPUTS: Prabhat Sharan in Mumbai, M R Venkatesh in Chennai, J B S Umarath in Hyderabad, Aditya Bharadwaj in Bangalore, Saibal Gupta in Kolkata.

Andhra Pradesh, Delhi's sister city

Andhra Pradesh and Delhi share a special place in the annals of crimes against women in India in recent times, even though the state registered a slight dip in such incidents during 2012.

National Crime Records Bureau records that AP figured consistently in 2008, 2009 and 2010 as a state with highest incidents of crimes against women, at par with Delhi. A total of 76,924 incidents of crimes against women have been recorded from 2008-2010. This is the highest in India for a state and AP topped this dubious list for three consecutive years.

A total of 3,807 cases of rape, 14,511 cases of molestation, 11,633 cases of sexual harassment (eve-teasing) were recorded. On an average, at least three rapes had oc-



Pastor and victim

curred daily in AP during 2008-2010 and 100 per cent of the rapes were committed by men who were known to the victims.

Pastor exploits, torches teen

In a shocking case a few months ago, N Mounika, a 16-year-old domestic help in the house of Dasi Ajay Babu, a pastor in the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, in Nadendla town of Guntur district

succumbed to her burns at the Guntur General Hospital.

Before dying, the girl told her parents that she had been sexually exploited by the pastor for the past one year.

On the fateful day, when the pastor molested the girl again, she threatened to inform her parents. So, he beat her up till she lost consciousness. Afraid that she had died, Ajay poured kerosene on her, set her ablaze and fled. Neighbours, who heard Mounika's cries, rescued her and rushed her to hospital.

Police said the pastor's relatives forced Mounika to give a declaration to the magistrate that she had suffered burns while cooking. But the girl's parents complained to Guntur (Rural) Police and Ajay was arrested.

Dikshit for no restrictions to India Gate demonstrations

NEW DELHI: On the day the gang-rape victim died in Singapore, Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit requested the Union Home Ministry to lift the restriction on holding peaceful protest around India Gate.

Dikshit might be voicing sentiments of the agitated people feeling crippled over movement restriction in central part of the Capital, but the chief minister and union home minister have been found to be on different pages during the 13-day ordeal that broke out since the shameful gang-rape and brutal assault on the 23-year-old paramedic in a moving bus on December 16.

According to sources, Dikshit has asked Home Minister Sushil Kumar Shinde to allow people to hold peaceful dharna in and around India Gate, which of late has come to symbolise with big agitation Delhiites hold in the Capital.

The chief minister's request was to ease Delhi police curb, declaring out of bounds India Gate, Raisina Hill and other areas in central part of the city. Despite Dikshit's request, the Delhi police did not lower their guard owing to apprehensions that anti-social elements might exploit a large gathering of young men and women. The Congress chief minister also went in the afternoon to protest venue Jantar Mantar to publicly express her "grief" at the death of the girl. But, after lighting a candle she had to return in huff after protesters heckled her.

Some questioned why the chief minister came now as she did not turn up in the initial days of the protest despite agitators wanting a political intervention.

Senior BJP leader and eminent lawyer Arun Jaitley hinted at government not playing the role of opposition as well when he remarked that "various wings of the regime should not adopt an adversarial position".

DH News Service



(Top) A wreath and candles are placed on a road as people mourn the death of the gang-rape victim in New Delhi. (Right above) Police officials gesture to protesters as they stand on a pile of torn posters which they issued during a protest demanding better security for women. Protesters lying at a road during a demonstration at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Saturday. AP/APP/PTI

PM, Sonia offer condolence

NEW DELHI, DHNS: As the death of the 23-year-old gang-rape victim stirred emotions across the country, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on Saturday said he was saddened by the unfortunate incident and assured of a "constructive course of action".

"These are perfectly understandable reactions from a young India and an India that genuinely desires change. It would be a true homage to her memory if we are able to channelise these emotions into a constructive course of action," the prime minister said in a statement after the victim died at Mount Elizabeth Hospital, Singapore early on Saturday.

"The need of the hour is a dispassionate debate and inquiry into the critical changes that are required in societal attitudes. Government is examining, on priority basis, the penal provisions that exist for such crimes and measures to enhance the safety and security of women," he said.

President Pranab Mukherjee called upon the authorities to take all necessary steps to bring the perpetrators of this ghastly crime to justice. In her condolence message, Congress president Sonia Gandhi said: "The tragedy strengthens our resolve to fight with all our might and with all the powers of our laws and our administration for the safety and protection of women and to ensure swift and fitting punishment for the perpetrators of such acts."

Humanity disgraced

Wearing skirts to school causes rape: BJP MLA

JAIPUR, DHNS: While the nation is plunged in grief and outrage over the death of the twenty-three-year-old gang-rape victim in Delhi, a BJP MLA in Rajasthan has waded in with his opinion, saying the mini skirts the girls wear as part of school uniform should be banned.

Banwari Lal Singhal, a BJP MLA from Alwar city, in his

letter to the state chief secretary, demanded that girl students be made to wear salwar suits or shirts and trousers as uniform like in government schools to avoid chances of their being subjected to sexual harassment.

He said girls above standard X are grown up and wearing mini-skirts, which is common practice in private schools in

the state, is attracting lewd remarks from boys.

salwar suits or shirts and trousers, according to the MLA, will also be an appropriate winter clothing in the state that experiences extremely cold temperatures.

"It has been found that the girls with skirts are being subjected to lewd from mischievous elements while walking

their way to school or wait for school buses at various points in the city," Singhal pointed out.

He also argued that skirts are not part of Indian culture.

"It should be prohibited keeping in view the rise of social crimes against women. The school should have pant-shirts or salwar suits as uniforms for girl students," Singhal said in the letter.

Extensive injury led to death: Doctor

Victim left Safdarjung Hospital in an unconscious state and did not regain it

NEW DELHI: The Delhi gangrape victim left Safdarjung Hospital in an unconscious state and did not regain her consciousness in the next 48 hours, said one of the doctors accompanying her.

"The girl was never conscious when she was taken on-board the air ambulance. She never regained consciousness," Yatin Mehta, chairman of the Medanta Institute of Critical Care and Anaesthesiology, who accompanied the Delhi brave

heart, said. "Infection was a significant contributing factor. A major part of her intestine was removed. Since the extent of damage was very extensive and damage was so severe, it was difficult for doctors," he told *Deccan Herald*.

The 23-year-old girl was taken to Mount Elizabeth Hospital in Singapore on Wednesday night amid hopes that her condition would improve. A section of doctors later criticised the government's decision of shifting her in such a critical

condition. "She was very sick but not so sick that she could not be transferred to Singapore on a six-hour journey. There was no CT scan of the head done at Safdarjung Hospital. Once she reached Mount Elizabeth Hospital, a full body scan was done and the brain injury was detected," said Mehta.

Asked if such facilities are not available in private hospitals in India, he said, "My job was to see her well up to Singapore. I don't want to comment on this question."

The Medanta specialist said treatment given by the Singapore hospital was same as the treatment offered to her in Safdarjung except change in one antibiotic. But even the changed medicine was from the same family of antibiotics.

After reaching Singapore, her parents were informed by doctors that it was a difficult case and chances of success were slim. They said they were satisfied with the treatment given to the girl and left the outcome to the god, said Mehta

who last saw the girl on Friday morning and returned to Delhi, a few hours before she passed away.

Mehta claimed it was wrong to say that she should not have been transferred.

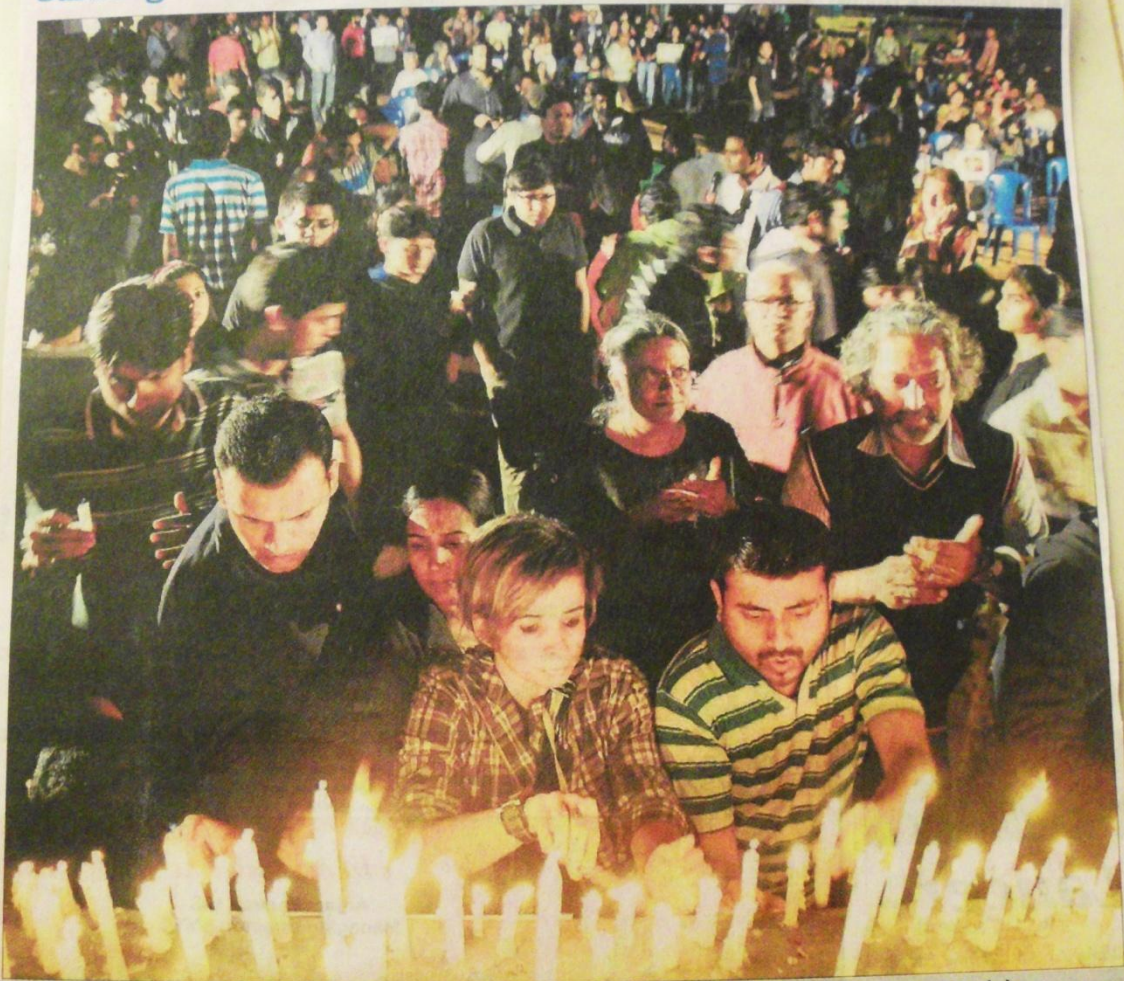
"There is no comparison between government hospitals in India and a private hospital in Singapore. I am talking about infrastructure facility and not the medical expertise at Safdarjung," he said. She was on ventilator in the Singapore hospital all along. The last medical

bulletin issued by the hospital on Friday night stated that her vital signs were deteriorating with signs of severe organ failure and she had been put on maximum artificial ventilation support.

Mehta admitted intestine transplant at this stage or near future was out of the question—a point raised by Samiran Nandi from the department of surgical gastroenterology and liver transplantation at Gangaram hospital.

DH News Service

Saluting the braveheart



Citizens stage a candlelight vigil to pay their tributes to the Delhi rape victim, at Freedom Park in Bangalore on Saturday. DH PHOTO





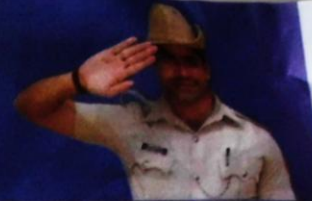
Sri Jagdish Shettar
Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka



Sri R. Ashoka
Police Training Chief Minister and
Minister for Bengaluru Transport
Government of Karnataka



Women Safety Our Top Priority!



Safety of women has always been the top priority of the Government of Karnataka and the Bengaluru Police Force. Increasing vigilance, improving safety and ensuring that women in distress receive aid within minutes are some measures taken to ensure that Bengaluru becomes a safe haven for women.

Protection Police Vigilance



Safety Justice Security

CALL

1091

24x7
Helpline
for women
in distress

Steps taken by the Government

- 24x7 Helpline to assist women in distress
- Guidelines to ensure safety and security of women
- Increased vigilance through 110 Moyasalas and 367 Chetah Squads
- High level committees comprising of Senior Officers of Home and Law Ministries to look into pending sexual harassment and assault cases to deliver speedy redressal
- Speedy Justice in all cases of atrocities against women
- Severe action against Police Officers refusing to register cases and also for showing laxity in solving cases
- Increasing number of CCTVs in public places in Bengaluru City Police Limits
- Creating awareness about sexual crimes/harassment against women through mass media

Women subjected to sexual harassment and parents of minor victims of sexual harassment should immediately register cases with the police and take legal action

Precautions to be taken by women to prevent sexual crimes

- Do not open doors to strangers or to any delivery or service personnel if you are home alone
- Install safety chains on doors and curtains on windows
- Avoid using bylanes/sidelanes or roads with less illumination
- If any vehicle is accosting you on the road, note down the license number, color and make of the vehicle for identification
- Move to a crowded location or to the nearest Police Station if you find someone following you
- Avoid wearing heavy jewellery when travelling alone
- Immediately report any instance of sexual harassment or abuse to superiors

Dial 100/1091 or nearest Police Station in case of any harassment or if you notice any suspicious people

Let us work together towards a safer city for everyone!



Issued in public interest by
**KARNATAKA STATE POLICE &
BANGALORE CITY POLICE**

Mangalore

Cops in plain clothes to patrol buses

PANAJI: Cops in plain clothes will be patrolling the public transport system in Goa while a separate 24x7 desk will be set up in all police stations across the state to help women in distress.

The decision stems from the recent outrage over the Delhi gang-rape incident.

The security review committee, which met on Friday, has decided to step up measures that will ensure safety of women in the tourist state.

"Policemen in civil clothes will travel in buses to ensure that women are not molested or meted out with rude behaviour," Superintendent of Police (North) Vijay Singh said.

Goa has a strong network of private buses which is usually overcrowded forcing women travellers to face instances of molestation.

The security review committee comprising senior police officials has also decided to set up a separate desk manned by women police officers to curb such crimes.

This desk will be open 24 hours, Singh said. The woman in charge of the desk will help victims to file complaints.

The police station in charge have been asked to monitor the functioning of the desk, the SP said. The state police have also made operational a women helpline 1091 on which they can call. "She will immediately get a help from the police," he said.

Goa has been witnessing an increase in number of rape cases. According to figures this year, more than 50 rape cases were registered as against 30 in the last calendar year.

PTI