

YOUNG **HUMAN RIGHTS** **REPORTER** **OF THE YEAR**

One in Three

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Young Human Rights Reporter Runner Up 2013 (Upper Secondary Category)

The 16th December, 2012. New Delhi. A young female physiotherapy intern is beaten and gang-raped on a public bus, whilst attempting to head home from the cinema. She was raped savagely including with a metal instrument, to the point at which only 5% of her intestines remained. This story caused a wave of emotional response in women, men and children across the world. This particular case reinforced my disgust of the maltreatment of women across the world, and has made me aware of the frequency of gender related violence.

In India, equal voting rights for both women and men were given in 1950, despite this, around 70% of India's women are victims of domestic violence. Evidence suggest that a crime against a woman is committed every three minutes and a women is raped every 29 minutes. There are a number of reasons as to why India has such high domestic violence and rape rates often associated with the legal system and conviction rates or the pressure place upon some victims to drop charges and in some cases marry the attacker.

A 2012 report by UNICEF revealed that 57% of Indian boys and 53% of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 believe wife-beating is justified. A recent national survey also reported that a large percentage of women blame themselves for beatings by their husbands. Is this a consequence of the low status of women in India? Patriarchy is normality, a belief held by not only

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some men but women and girls. The very idea that some women believe there is a justification to beat a woman not only angers but upsets me.

But surprisingly, Sweden's rape rate is more than 30 times the number in India, Sweden has the highest incidence of reported rapes in Europe and the second highest in the world, shocking when remembering the women in 1862 (unmarried women and widows) who were allowed to vote in municipal elections, making Sweden the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote. Sweden is often regarded as having somewhat liberal views, in contrast, India is a country regarded by the West where negative attitudes towards women are expected.

Within Britain, it is easy to forget the legacy of Emeline Pankhurst or Emily Davison, who, in 1913 gave the 'ultimate sacrifice' in objection to laws against women. Women who gave their lives in order to ensure me, my sister, my mother and her mother gained legal equality with men. Yet, similar problems remain. One in four women will experience domestic violence, with an incident of violence reported every minute. Sadly, on average two women are killed by abusive (ex)partners every week.

There is something criminogenic in the patriarchal views held by men throughout the world which facilitates sexual violence against girls and women. Negative attitudes towards women have nothing to do with poor or rich countries, developed or underdeveloped, culture, colour, religion or wealth. The abuse of women still continues and has to stop.