



## Alarming Crime Rate in Sri Lanka

June - December 2005 was the most violent period for the Sri Lankan society. Too many political assassinations, ceasefire violations, election violence and various other criminal activities shook the entire nation. Violence in Sri Lanka has become a part of the routine in the lives of many people in Sri Lanka. Crime rate during this period worsened and the police department was in chaos with a crime rate of 3-6 murders a day.

An internationally renowned political figure of Sri Lanka, Mr Luxman Kadirgamar was assassinated in his own home. Investigations led to no trace of the assassin, it only led to pointing fingers at one another without any definite clue as to who might have done it.

With a war that had lasted almost two decades, it is not at all surprising that there are too many deserters in our society. There are more than 12,000 army deserters among us, and their weapons are available in the black market. Most of the contract killings and major burglaries were suspected to have been committed by these army deserters. Some crimes of this sort have even been proved.

Violence in the Northern and Eastern part of Sri Lanka continued with the ceasefire still in power theoretically. Towards the end of the year 5 young men were killed in the Trincomalee district, and the cause for their death still remains a mystery. First the cause for their death was informed as a grenade blast, but a further post-mortem examination revealed that the five young men were killed by gunshots. The five included 2 university students and 3 A/L students. The violence that followed these killings was equally disturbing. Protest campaigns, hartals and transport strikes in the northern and Eastern parts of the country disturbed the situation of the whole country, however it led to deeper investigations into the matter.

With the availability of the most sophisticated weapons in the black market, it has become possible that any pedestrian passing you on the road if provoked might pull a trigger at you. There have been many incidents of homicides for the flimsiest of reasons, for loosing in gambling, a drunkard's dog barking at the other dog.

There have been reports of women being raped in their own homes. And girls being raped on their way home from tuition classes late in the evening. Abnormal children are being raped by caretakers and parentless children by their guardians. No one seems to be safe anywhere.

The past six months saw a great deal of crimes in Sri Lanka. From a young man trying to chase a thief, to business magnets to journalists to politicians who have been killed in the most brutal ways using the most sophisticated weapons. The security forces have been given additional powers to handle criminals, in fact government has resumed capital punishment, yet there doesn't seem to be a way to control the rate at which crime is growing. Rape has increased, killings have increased, robbery has increased and every one lives in utter fear day after day with all possible security provided.

In the war divested areas crime rate has been even higher. A civilian is killed on his way to work, or disappears without trace. And it leads to political chaos one blaming another saying that the man was killed or abducted because he was a Tamil or Sinhalese or Muslim or EPDP or LTTE or army etc. Who committed the crime is at times of less concern than the rate at which crime is growing and the lack of effort put in by the security forces to prevent such crimes.

Why is the crime rate rising to such levels? Some say it is due to the excessive availability of weapons, some others say it is due to the movies that portray the worst crimes and give ideas, while others say it is due to immorality and lack of conscience. However, it seems that these crimes have become possible due to lack of unity amongst us and self centeredness which leads to lack of concern towards another.

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# Did you

## Honour Killing

In India honour crimes comprises of 10% of all killings, in the Northern States of Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Honour crimes occur where women or men are killed or tortured for the flimsiest of reasons, such as suspected infidelity, seeking divorce or marrying outside caste.

The realm of 'justice' for these so-called crimes can vary from a woman being gang-raped, or stripped in public, to having to prove her chastity by putting her hand in boiling oil.

In Pakistan those accused of honor killing between 1998 and 2002 involved 462 brothers, 395 husbands, and 217 other relatives.

A UNIFEM report says that in Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, Guatemala, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Pakistan, Peru and many other countries, husbands, fathers, brothers and uncles have gone unpunished after murdering their wives, sisters, daughters and nieces. It goes on to say that according to a recent UN Human Rights report more than 1000 women are killed every year in Pakistan in the name of honor. In a study of female deaths in Alexandria, Egypt, 47% of the women were killed by a relative after the women had been raped. In Jordan and Lebanon 70-75 percent of perpetrators are brothers.

The Domestic Violence Bill finally makes its point to the Law makers of Sri Lanka. After a long struggle the Domestic Violence bill has been ratified in Sri Lanka. How long is it going to take to Implement this Law!

## Missing: 50 million Indian girls

The previous Pravahini carried a news item on sex-selective abortions, this time Pravahini is greatly ashamed to carry the information of how 50 million girls are actually missing. There is an alarming gender-gap in the Indian population. In 1990 there were 25 million more males than females in India, by 2001 it rose to 35 million and scholars expect it to rise to 50 million. Recent UN and Indian study reveal that the increased frequency of female foeticide with rising levels of education - lowest among women with a fifth-grade education and highest among women with university degree.

The consequences are already unfolding: girls are being trafficked from impoverished neighboring countries like Bangladesh and Nepal or from disadvantaged or tribal areas in India and sold into marriage for the equivalent of about \$200.

A research in the Anuradhapura District revealed that of the women interviewed

40%	of them underwent Domestic Violence on a daily basis
40%	occasionally
4%	once a week and
16%	once a month

A domestic violence research in Anuradhapura revealed that in 2004

76,402	incidents of domestic violence were reported to police
57,062	were settled through 'mediation'
Only 1,006	were taken to the courts The rest went un-noticed.

# know???

One in four women experience sexual violence by an intimate partner in their life time. Based on several surveys conducted by UNIFEM around the world, half of the women who die from homicide are killed by their current or former husbands or partners. Women are killed by guns, beatings and burns among numerous other forms of abuse. A study in Sao Paulo, Brazil revealed that 13% of deaths of women of reproductive age were homicides; of which 60% were committed by victims' partners

In India there are close to 15,000 dowry deaths estimated per year, and mostly in kitchen fires designed to look like accidents. In Bangladesh there have been many incidents of acid attacks due to dowry disputes, leading often to blindness, disfigurement and death. In 2002, 315 women and girls in Bangladesh were victims of acid attacks.

**- UNIFEM Report -**

In Nepal abortion was legalized in 2004, and consequently many women who were in prison were being released. When suddenly before they were all out, in 2005 a powerful lawyer has filed a case against legalizing abortion saying the law violated the rights of the MAN!

Although the Laws that are passed in Sri Lanka cannot be nullified like in Nepal, and although women are not arrested for undergoing abortions illegally, the fact remains that Nepal legalized Abortion at least for a few months, while in Sri Lanka even a rape victim cannot very often 'legally' abort her fetus.

## Poverty affects women selectively

The Lambadi people of the Sitthoor, Ananthapoor and Kandappa hillside villages of the Andhra Pradesh are suffering in poverty due to the absence of the monsoonal rains. They were greatly depended on this rain for their cultivation, and since it never came the people had to pawn their jewelry, mortgage their properties and borrow money. At one point they were unable to pay their dues and some of them decided to commit suicide, while some others were quite determined to live. The pimps taking advantage of their position selected the beautiful women from the area and took them away from their homes promising them jobs in the urban cities. The women were made prostitutes in various famed prostitution houses in various cities like, Mumbai, Poona, Delhi and Nagpur. The women were tricked, but could not protest or escape from their position due to their family situation.

Seeing that the families of these women economically well-off the other families also started sending their daughters with these pimps, this time knowing where their daughters were being sent.

In an area called Seshali 70,000 Lambadi where people live, 350 families have forced nearly 9,000 women into prostitution. And among them 5,000 women have died of HIV/AIDS. The balance are expected to die soon, for surely most of them might be already HIV/AIDS victims.

# IS RAPE A CRIME ???

## DO RAPIST GET PUNISHED OR "VICTIMS" GET RE-VICTIMIZED?

Rape is a crime that deserves the fiercest of outrage. A woman who is raped suffers the violation not only of her body but also of her spirit and dignity. When she survives the rape she has to struggle maintain her sanity in a thick web of trauma, self-blame. Helplessness, shame and contempt expressed by the people around her. Very often in incidents of Rape, the 'victims' are re-victimized by the society with their prodding and suspicious eyes. The society is very often comfortable to blame the woman and to take the side of the male-rapist and say "she asked for it". Very often the views and judgments are prejudiced "why was she out there at that time?" "What was she doing having a drink with him? No one dare ask "why HE was out there at that time?" or "why was he out with her for a drink or ask her out for a drink?"

### (CIS) Marines Rape a Filipino

A 22 year old who had agreed for a drink with a serviceman of the United States Marines never bargained for what she underwent. After the drink she was gang-raped in the van, and later was left on the street half naked. A witness had this to say "she was carried like a pig by Caucasian men from a van, and dropped in the street with only her shirt and panties on!" She is not the only Filipino woman and she will never be the last.

Filipinos already has a high rate of rape; according to the reports of the National Police in 2004 there were 1,129 cases of rape of women and 3572 cases of rape and incest of children. Now the American soldiers are adding-up to the statistics.

Very often the women's bodies become the battle ground during times of war. A UNIFEM report states that in Rwanda approximately half a million women were raped during the 1994 genocide. In Bosnia 20,000-50,000 women were raped during five months of conflict in 1992. Some 70 percent of the casualties in recent conflict were non-combatants-most of them women and children.

Why such humiliating pain is inflicted on women, while they are already undergoing enough suffering can only be answered by the perpetrators.

### Providence Marital Exemption for Abduction and Rape

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 2005 the Ethiopian Penal Code made its amendments to its laws and removed the laws that provided marital exemption for abduction and rape. Both abduction and rape were criminal offences under the Ethiopian Penal Code, but in the event of subsequent marriage to his victim the perpetrator was exempt from criminal responsibility for these crimes. Now that the amendment has been made, no man can abduct a woman and rape her so that he can marry her, or think of escaping punishment by marrying her

### Panchayat and Rape Victim

While celebrations should go on, in this quarter of the world for such amendments in the Penal Code, Dark Age seems to remain in a rural village in India. The punishment for rape in Bihar's Banka District is entirely borne by the victim.

At a 'panchayat' a raped woman was publicly made to lick the spit of her husband who had instantly pronounced talaq (a Muslim customary way of pronouncing divorce) when the woman confessed the crime committed on her. The panchayat under the headship of a clergy that heard the case ordered the rapist to marry the woman. Since the rapist and his father did not find this convenient the rapist was asked to pay a fine of Rs. 15,000/- for ruining a woman's life. And asked the husband to pay back the Rs. 35,000/- dowry he got with her, for throwing her on the street.

Would marrying young a raped woman nullify the crime committed, or would a fine reimburse of equal the dignity she lost or can a promise a man makes at marriage to protect and provide for his wife unto death become meaningless as soon as she is raped???

### Pakistani Rape Law under the Hudood Ordinance

The Law against rape under the Hudood Ordinance is one of its own specimens. The Hudood Ordinance requires either the confession of the perpetrator or the eye-witness testimony of at least four Muslim adult males. Why would four grown-up men want to

stand around and watch a woman being raped unless they were also planning to rape her or they were simply gutless to protect her? Anyhow it is this oddity of a law that has sent Dr. Shazia and her husband without their son on exile.

Dr. Shazia was raped repeatedly in her own house on her own bed by a masked man. Whoever he was he had the back-up of the Pakistan Petroleum Cooperation, for which Shazia was working for, and the government to go Scot free. The Police and the Petroleum Cooperation made no attempt to investigate the incident when Shazia made the complaint, they simply tried to cover the incident by coaxing her to keep quiet. The petroleum and the police tried to coax her to drop the charges, when she refused to, as she had the courageous support of her husband, the government had put a stop to her efforts by getting her to sign a statement saying that she was closing the case of her own will under death threats and sending her on exile while keeping her child as a hostage in case she seeks international support.

## Date Rape Drug Rohypnol

A Woman at a Club in Mumbai was taken by 5 men, who according to hospital and police reports, gang raped before dumping her at a bus-stand. The woman was unable to remember the events of the evening, tests later confirmed the repeat rapes along with traces of Rohypnol in her blood.

Rohypnol is being widely used by rapist around the world to rape and sterilize their victims. The effects of the drug are not temporary, they are permanent. Any female who takes it will never be able to conceive. This drug is easily available, as they are available from university students doing veterinary science.

## A wife punishes her husband

A woman cuts the penis of her husband and then strangles him to death for raping their daughter.

The father had attempted sexual assault on his seventeen-year-old daughter at several occasions. And consequently the mother had to come to the rescue, and then as a last option the mother had to find refuge for her daughter in homes relatives' of when she had to go out. However, on the fateful day the mother was in the kitchen preparing dinner when she had heard her daughter screaming, and the mother had rushed with a knife in hand. And the fateful incident took place within a few seconds.

Violence to violence is not the best way to overcome problems, and can never be encouraged. However, a mother's desperation to save her child could at times blind her vision to see the limits!

## Take a moment to say Thank You....

A wo/man has not accomplished anything great if s/he is not remembered after her/his death. A wo/man cannot be truly appreciated if s/he had not provided support or assistance to those in need of it at the time they really needed it.

The solitary joy a wo/man could have in life is when s/he knows that at least a single penny of hers/his reached the needy at the right time. When the Tsunami struck the South and South East Asia thousands of people were killed and left helpless. Those who survived the tidal wave struggled to put pieces together to go on with their lives. They were in need of ample courage and plenty of support; no one could have helped them at a better occasion.

Helping another demands a lot of courage and conscience. We take this opportunity to thank those who had this nature to help the Tsunami victims who were suffering in camps and struggling to rebuild their lives.

Our appreciation is extended to

- Mona A. Parikh
- Karen Henschen
- Ingeborg Wirtky
- Stefan Sokoll
- Mr. T. Jeremiah
- Ms. M. Jeremiah
- Mr. Scott Pesedivise
- Ms. A. E. Heather Stave
- Ms. S. Den Drijver
- Alexander Schroeter
- Hanna Henschen
- Werner Roose
- Juergen Viogt
- WERC Staff
- Mr. De Heer R. Kanaganayagam
- Uli and Christiane Henschen
- Usehi and Walter Rieekenbry
- Uci and Christiane Zuendee

## Congratulations...

We take this opportunity to express our well-wishes and heartiest congratulations to Justice Shiranee Tilekewardhana and Nirmali Samaratunga. We are indeed proud of the achievements of both.

Justice Shiranee Tilekewardhana is the first woman President in the Court of Appeal. She was also the first Woman State Counsel, High Court Judge and Court of Appeal Judge.

Nirmali Samaratunga is the first female to head a premier Chamber of Commerce in Sri Lanka. She holds a high position in The Mackwood Empire, plays an important role in the field of business and export.



# WOMEN WE

## ROSA PARKS

Rosa Parks, a lady who dominated the headlines of the newspapers worldwide in the 1950's. She is the one who revealed the vileness under the grandeur of the American culture. After decades of protest and revolution the 'Blacks' of America gained their freedom and dignity, and Rosa Parks is considered as one of the few who laid the foundation for this great revolution that brought light into the lives of the 'Blacks' in America.

She was born into an average 'Black' family in 1913 and underwent all types of marginalization that 'Blacks' underwent at that time. She was an average 'Black' woman who belonged to the marginal culture, until in 1955 when she was arrested. That is when she was brought to the limelight in the International arena.

In America it was a time of Racism, 'Blacks' were treated like pigs, public transport had separate seats and compartments for the 'Blacks'. Hotels had separate rooms and cups in which coffee was served for the 'Blacks' which was not used by a 'White' person. Grocers had a separate queue for Blacks and Whites, theaters had a separate room in which the blacks had to sit. (They were the 'untouchables' in the 'great White' society)

One day Rosa Parks was traveling in a bus to go to work. A 'white' man got in to the bus, came up to her and told her to get up. Rosa Parks had no reason to get up. She asked "Why should I? I have paid for my ticket". The man could not digest the fact that a 'Black' woman had not only refused to get up and give him the seat but had also the audacity to talk back at him. Thus, he reported to a policeman traveling in the same bus, and the policeman arrested her on the spot. Rosa asked the policeman why she was being arrested, and the policeman answered "I don't know, but I suppose what you did was unlawful". Such an irresponsible answer was due to the lack of uniformity of the legislation, the laws varied from State to State especially if the situation was concerned with the 'Blacks'.

Rosa was kept in remand for a day and was produced in the court the next day. Four days later the

verdict was given as guilty, and Rosa Parks was commanded to pay \$14 as compensation for her misbehavior.

The news spread around the State of Alabama, where most 'Blacks' lived and created a great upheaval. The 'Black' youth united under the leadership of a young man, and declared that they were not going to travel in a public bus until justice was done. In America most people had their own vehicle to travel, the ones who could not afford to do so were the 'Blacks' and the public transport buses depended mainly on them for income. This protest was not for a few days, it lasted 381 days. For 381 days thousands of 'Blacks' refused to travel in buses, and the State of Alabama could not ignore the standstill the state had come to.

Since thousands of 'Blacks' refused to travel by buses they never went to work, and this greatly affected the government and private sectors. The economy was greatly affected, and could never go un-noticed.

Such a well-organized and well planned protest was staged with the consultation of Rosa Parks by non other than the great 'Black' leader who had one great dream, Martin Luther King.

While this great protest was going-on Rosa Parks continued to appeal at every court, although court after court declared her behavior as unacceptable she continued her protest in her own way with one steady mission. Thousands of threats, hundreds of physical attacks may have destroyed the peace in her life but they could never disrupt her vision of gaining the equal position for the 'Blacks' with the 'Whites'.

The support rendered by the 'Blacks' of Alabama is indescribable, until the American High Court declared that, what was done to Rosa Parks was unjust, in 1956, they continued their protest.

If Rosa Parks had bore the pain inflicted by the mistreatment towards her, like all the other women, the pain each and every 'Black' had been going through may have taken another decade to come to light. It is after this protest that the Civil Rights Laws were rewritten in a manner to protect the 'Blacks'. The

# NEED TO SALUTE

'Blacks' were recognized as a distinctive part of the society and its economy. Rosa Parks is actually respected as "mother of Civil Rights".

This great lady decided to rest on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October 2005, at the age of 92. When she went to her eternal sleep, all the African Americans had to say only this "It is because she refused to get up then that we are able to stand up for our rights and walk with dignity now!"

## THILLAIYADI VALLIYAMMAI

Indians were brought to places like Johannesburg promising a better future, having promised that they could own the lands they lived in if they worked for five years. However, the Indians lived in eternal slavery in the estates they worked in. Valliyammai's parents had a shop in one of these estates.

The South African laws during the colonial period refused to recognize the Indian traditional marriages. The 'Whites' who ruled South Africa said that a marriage can be recognized only if it is done in the South African tradition would it be a valid marriage. This made the marriages performed in the Indian tradition illegitimate and unacceptable. Thus, Valliyammai's mother became the unwedded illicit partner and made the child illegitimate.

This was considered a great embarrassment by the Indian women. And the Indians united under the leadership of then Mohanadas Gandhi now Mahatma Gandhi, and the group consisted of 16 women, among them was Janaki, mother of Valliyammai, and Valliyammai a sixteen-year-old.

In the protest to demand recognition for the Indian traditional marriages and legitimize the relationships, a sixteen-year-old unwedded Valliyammai took part. She told Mahatma Gandhi that she was happy even to die in the process of protesting the laws that disrespect our women and our traditions.

In the process Valliyammai was arrested along with her mother. In prison Valliyammai became seriously sick, the authorities fearing an upheaval if the girl died in prison released her. Since the mother was in prison it was Mahatma Gandhi and his friend Bolk

who took care of her. A few days after she was released she died at the age of sixteen.

Her courage and commitment was glorified by Mahatma Gandhi in his writings and is praised even now in the history texts in schools.

## THE MIRACLE WORKER AND THE IMPOSSIBLE CHILD

*"The public must learn that the Blind man is neither genius nor a freak nor an idiot. He has a mind that can be educated, a hand which can be trained, ambitions which it is right for him to strive to realize, and it is the duty of the public to help him make the best of himself so that he can win Light through work"*

**-Helen Keller-**

Helen Keller is a renown American author and lecturer, blind and deaf from an undiagnosed illness at the age of two. She graduated from Radcliff in 1904 with honors. She was the first deaf-blind person to have ever enrolled at an institution of higher learning, when she entered Radcliff College. While studying here she wrote her first book "The story of My Life". After this Helen wrote her next book named "The world I live in", revealing for the first time how she saw the world.

Helen later became a member of the Socialist party of Massachusetts. In 1913 "Out of the Dark" was published. This was a series of essays on Socialism.

Helen traveled with her companion around America, Europe and Asia on lecture tours. Although she could not speak clearly her companion interpreted her sounds to the enthralled audience. She made extensive fund raising tours with her companion for the American Foundation for the Blind. She not only collected money, but also campaigned tirelessly to alleviate the living and working conditions of blind people, who at that time were generally badly educated and living in asylums without any hope for their future. Her endeavors were a major factor in changing these conditions.

Con. on page 08

## WOMEN WE NEED TO SALUTE

*Cont. from page 07*

Until 1961 when she suffered the first of a series of strokes, and retired from her public life, she continued her tours with a single aim of changing the condition of the disabled in America and around the world. In 1964 she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award. A year later she was elected to the Women's hall of France at the New York World's Fair.

In 1968 Helen died in her sleep, and was cremated in Connecticut. The urn containing her ashes was later deposited next to her companion who made her.

Who is this companion who made Helen Keller? Anne Sullivan, who herself had lost the majority of her sight at the age of five due to some illness. She was to be called later as the 'Miracle Worker' by the neighbors of the Keller family and Helen's parents themselves. She was brought up in a poor house, and graduated from the Perkins Institute for the Blind.

Anne was to come into Helen's life as a 'teacher' she then later became Helen's companion and happiness.

When Anne came to teach Helen Keller, Helen was an impossible child due to her helpless position and her complex. Neither the parents nor the teachers who had come before Anne had been able to control Helen or teach her anything. No one ever expected her to change or learn anything. But what the people of the time called 'miracle' occurred, and Helen changed for good and started learning at a higher speed.

Anne had to invent various techniques to teach Helen, and make her understand what she learnt. It was not long before Anne was teaching Helen to read, first with raised letters and later with Braille, and to write with both ordinary and Braille typewriters.

Anne continuously encouraged Helen to persevere in her endeavors to learn, and write. She encour-

aged Helen to go to College and struggled hard with her in College. The huge amount of work involved at Radcliff led to deterioration in Anne's eyesight. But Anne never lagged behind; she never failed to stand by Helen.

When Helen started lecturing it was Anne who interpreted her language to the audience. Anne traveled around the world with Helen and supported her in all her efforts. Until of course when she fell ill in 1922 and was left unable to speak above a whisper.

In 1936 Anne died leaving behind a sad Helen, who was always a little girl for Anne. As for Anne, Helen changed her life, and for Helen, Anne changed her life.

Helen paid her tribute to Anne in her book 'Teacher'. The original copy of this book was destroyed in a fire that destroyed Helen's home in 1948, and then Helen had to write the book again and was able to publish it only in 1955.

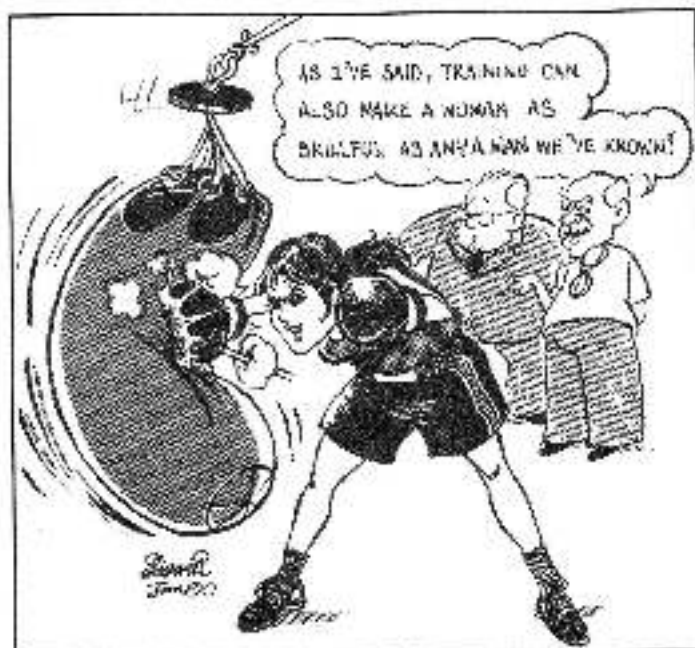
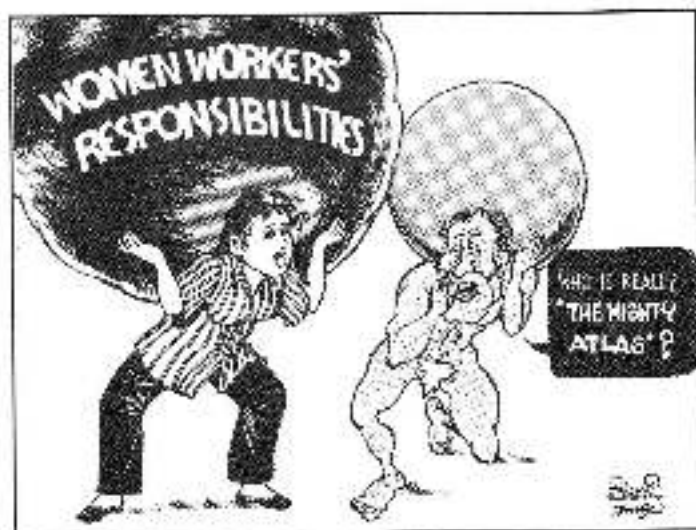
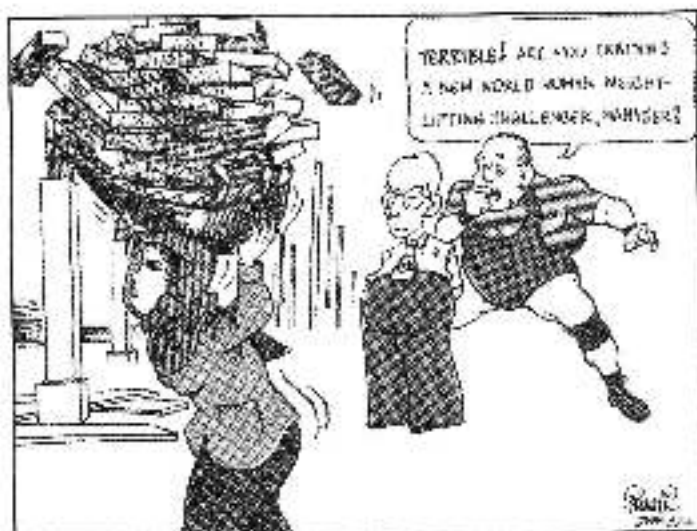
In 1957 "The Miracle Worker", a drama portraying Anne's first success in communicating with Helen was performed. In 1962 it was made into a film and the actresses playing the roles of Anne and Helen both received Oscars for their performance.

Anne was not an inspiration for only Helen. She was, is, and will be an inspiration for a lot of people. She was behind the success of a renowned figure. She herself was disabled so she knew the pain and the need of a person needing special care. She sacrificed all she had and all that she could afford to, for the success of her pupil/companion.

There is mostly someone behind everyone's success but the person at the back is most often ignored by all. Although Helen never forgot or failed to commend and tribute Anne's service most of us may have failed to see the magnitude of the soul within Anne Sullivan, so let us take this opportunity to salute the services rendered to society by both Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan.



# THINK !





# ACTIVITIES

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE - TAMIL CONFERENCE

WERC organised its biennial Tamil Conference on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2005. The theme of the conference was basically Women and the Cultural Productions. Eleven papers were to be read at the two-day conference. The papers were divided into five sessions under five themes,



- Religious Rites and Women
- Women and Literature
- Drama and their Multidimensional Themes
- "Koothu" as a form of Art and how they portray Women
- Women and Cinema

## GENDER SENSITISATION WORKSHOPS



This is a one-year project funded by **Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)**. The original plan was to begin the workshops in November, but due to Administrative reasons, political situation and the Presidential Election, there was a slight delay in starting the Gender Sensitization workshops.

The first workshop was for "Grass-root" level NGO personnel from the South. The second workshop was conducted for the Law Faculty students from the University of Colombo.

This project will continue till August with altogether seven programmes more.



# AT WERC

## TSUNAMI RELIEF

Some considerate individuals contributed a considerable amount for a children's education project for children affected by tsunami.

We have identified three groups from Seelamunai and Palayachithana in Batticaloa and Kudathanai in



*Palayadithona Beneficiaries*



*Jaffna - Kudathanai - Beneficiaries*

Jaffna for this project. 21 children from Seelamunai, 14 children from Palayadithona and 20 children from Kudathanai have been selected. CARE international Batticaloa is helping WERC distribute the money to beneficiaries in Batticaloa, and the Kudathanai church vocational training centre in helping us with the beneficiaries in Jaffna.

## OUR INTERNS

### Anja Magiera

Anja has been a volunteer at WERC since October 2005. She is an intern from Germany. During the last four months she says that she has learned a lot about the Sri Lankan culture. She says "I have learned to cross the crowded streets of Colombo as well as to eat rice and curry with my fingers. Working as a volunteer in an Asian NGO is an experience I wouldn't like to miss. It helped me to understand how such an organisation works and how important this work is for society and its development."



Anja has been working on a project on Sexual Harassment in Public Transport – a sticker campaign – which is a most welcome project by all WERC staff

who have had their own experiences in travelling in buses.

### Lisa Overton

Lisa is a BA student from the United Kingdom doing a research internship with WERC. She undertook many tasks during her time here, including editing, researching literature and the web for quotations for the office and was the rapporteur for the SARIQ follow-up meeting.

Web designing was her own project. She edited the relevant material to be included in the website; she was also able to find WERC a private donor to fund the website.





# ACTIVITIES AT WERC

## SARI/Q – SOUTH ASIA NETWORK BUILDING AGAINST TRAFFICKING



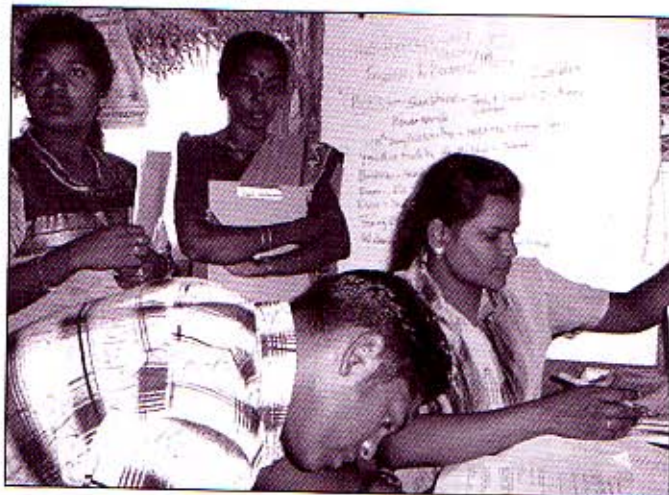
A project to implement the SAARC convention against trafficking in women and children for prostitution in the SAARC region through effective lobbying and advocacy was entrusted to WERC to be done in Sri Lanka

This project is being funded by **SARI/EQUITY**, and is being supported by **Centre For Social Research(CSR)** in New Delhi.

WERC conducted the first national level consultation with certain ministry representatives, NGO representatives, 3 CSR representatives and a SARI/Q representative, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2005

## WOMEN'S STUDIES COURSE

The three months Women's Studies Certificate Course in Tamil started in Batticaloa and Vavuniya on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2005 and would be ending in March 2006. This course is being conducted by WERC, and is being funded by **OXFAM**. It covered Women's movements, feminist theories, women & law, women & violence, women & development.



### WERC Auditorium

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- ❖ Fully air conditioned
- ❖ Public Address System complete with microphone and earphones
- ❖ Overhead projector
- ❖ Translation unit
- ❖ TV and VCR facilities
- ❖ Magi board and flip charts
- ❖ Recording facilities

A seating capacity for 50 available with conference tables and an airy and spacious dining area to accommodate the same number. Meals and tea could be supplied on request.

### LIBRARY

For your next.....

Research, Article, Book, Speech Resources

#### Books and Information on,

- ❖ Gender
- ❖ Child and Youth
- ❖ Media
- ❖ Politics
- ❖ Women's Studies
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Sociology

#### For Quick Reference

Dictionaries/Encyclopaedias, Research Reports, Thesis/Directories

#### Special Collection on Women's Writings in Sri Lanka and Documentations

News Clippings on violence, suicide, human rights, FTZ women, trafficking in women migrant workers

#### Documented Journal Articles

EPW Feminism and Psychology, Rethinking History, Monthly review, etc.

#### Audio Visuals

Documentaries and feature films on women's issues, human rights, ethnicity, etc.

- ❖ Have membership, inter-library loan facilities
- ❖ Information through telephone or fax, and computerised database for your research
- ❖ Photocopying at cost

## Women's Education and Research Centre

58, Dharmarama Road, Colombo 6.

Tel: 11 2595296

Fax: 11 2596313

E-mail: [womedre@sltnet.lk](mailto:womedre@sltnet.lk)

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