

# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

## AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

2018 | Day 2



### MAA... WHERE ARE YOU?

Alia\* is the 8-year-old daughter of a prostituted woman from the Falkland Road red-light area. She attends Prerana's Night Care Centre (NCC) regularly. Her mother is quite a responsible mother. During the dance practice at the NCC our social worker noticed that Alia wasn't participating in the dance practice, so she reached to Alia and struck a conversation.

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Hi Alia! Why aren't you participating in the dance practice Alia?

Namaste *Didi*\*! (\*sister) I am not in a mood!...I am...quite disturbed.

**ALIA**

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Hmmm! Want to talk about it?

The police caught *Maa* (mother), and no one knows where she is.

**ALIA**

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Caught your mother? Why? What was she doing? Where and when was she picked up?

The police stormed into our house (the children living in the red-light area mostly live in the brothels with their mother and call it their home) where we live and took away all the other women including *Maa*. *Didi*, everyday after school I go home to meet *Maa*, change my clothes and then come to the NCC. But today, as I came back from school, I saw some commotion right outside our house. A police van was waiting outside. A whole lot of policemen had entered our building. I ran to my house. *Maa* looked extremely worried and rushed me to hide below the bed to evade any attention of the police of the raiding party.

**ALIA**

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Contd...

The police kept hurling abuses on the women and pushing them around as if they were cattle. I saw two policemen dragging the women around by their hair. They kept asking how many of them were Bangladeshis. They demanded that all the women should show their Aadhar cards and prove that they are Indians.

When women couldn't show their Aadhar card I heard the police shouting, "*Case banav re, case banav, Tyaa sagalya Bangladeshi Aahet* (Make a case man, they all are Bangladeshis!)"

A woman police constable spotted me hiding under the bed and asked me to come out while shouting, "*Milali milali. Minor porgi milali* (Got her. Got her. Got a minor girl)"

Maa noticed that and realizing the dangerous misunderstanding screamed loudly. She told them that I was her daughter. The woman police constable was not in a mood to listen to anyone. She screamed, "*Saali rand, apne khud ki ladki se bhi danda karwati hai* (Bloody slut! Making money by selling your own daughter in the flesh trade!!)"

My mother pleaded with her, telling her and other policemen that I regularly attend school and that I am enrolled in Prerana's Night Care Centre for protection. She then showed the police my Prerana Identity Card. Seeing this the police calmed down, picked me up and were going to drop me at Prerana's NCC.

I anxiously waited at the corner of the road watching many women being pushed into the police van, my mother included. The police had big sticks in their hand and they were pushing the women with those sticks. One woman tried to run away, but she was hit very hard with the stick. **Didi, Maa is not a criminal. Why did the police take her away?**

A *didi* from Prerana's NCC told me that I could not stay in Prerana's NCC since it is not a 24-hour shelter. I was sent to a *Chillar Home* (Children's Home). However, at that place there was no provision for me to go to school. I did not like staying in the *Chillar Home*. I missed my mother. Finally I got to meet my mother after a lot of uncertainty.

Now I don't know when I'll be able to see Maa again. I fear that they will now take me to the Child Welfare Committee (CWC). The CWC will place me in a *Chillar Home* again. I hate that place. I will miss my school. I am sad *didi, mera kisi bhi chiz me man nai lagta hai* (I am disturbed and unable to focus on anything). My Maa is all that I have. I want my Maa back, I want to be with her. Maa is on medication which she is not supposed to miss even for a day...maybe she is HIV positive. I don't know where she is now and who will give her the medicines.

ALIA



For more information to end trafficking visit [fighttrafficking.org](http://fighttrafficking.org)

