

# 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

## AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

2018 | Day 4



## CHARTER OF RIGHTS OF THE CHILDREN LIVING IN INSTITUTIONS

Over the last 32 years, we have worked with a number of Children's Homes besides running one of our own. In these homes we have worked with countless children living there. Through our Post Rescue Operations, we have spoken with many children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. During one of these conversations, we asked a girl who lived in a Children's Home post her rescue, to share what she'd like to change in that Home.

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Hi Anita\*, would you be comfortable sharing a few of your experiences while living in a Children's Home and if you could change things what would they be?

Oh *Didi*, you have to only ask. I have so many suggestions. But do you promise you will keep it between us? I don't want anyone to know it was me who gave all these suggestions.

**ANITA**

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Of course, I would, if that's what you want.

**SOCIAL  
WORKER**

Yes!

Okay, *Pakka na?* (Are you sure?)

**ANITA**

\*Name changed to protect identity

Contd...



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



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And so Anita began, not even pausing to look for notes or chits.



- > First of all, they need to start calling us by our names, not as 'POCSO case', 'PITA case', 'Dance Bar *waali* case', 'Bengali girl', 'Bangladeshi girl' and like that. We are not cases. We have names, they should learn to start using them.
- > *Didi*, they keep asking us to tell our story to every visitor who visits the Home. I have had to repeat the dark part of my life so many times.... and every time after I narrate it my heart bleeds, I feel sad, but there's never anyone to talk to and share my feelings with.
- > They serve us dinner at 7pm. Isn't that too early? After that we get nothing. By 10 pm we are all hungry again but we have to wait till morning to get to eat something.
- > So many times, they don't even allow us to practice our own religion. Shouldn't they allow us to practise our own religion?
- > *Didi* during winter and when it rains heavily, we don't even get warm water for bath, we take bath using chilled water. They should provide us with warm water at least during winter.
- > Every time we make a mistake or break rules, they constantly remind us about our past and our life back then. Yes, there are times we break rules. It happens but that doesn't mean they should remind us of our life in the sex trade. It hurts and is humiliating.
- > If we say 'no' to participating in any activity because we are feeling unwell, they tell us to stop doing *natak* (acting out) and then they force us to participate. Even when we aren't interested in a specific training, they force us to attend those classes, *didi* I think we should be allowed to choose the trainings we want to attend, what is the use otherwise if our heart is not in it? Of course, we need some guidance on how to choose, but we shouldn't be forced.
- > They bring up our past every time. Just because I love to dance, doesn't mean after I leave the Home, I'm going back to the dance bar. But they never allow me to participate in dance saying I'll go back to the dance bar to resume my life in the sex trade.

ANITA

*Didi I can tell you so much more, but if these basic things can't change then what's the use?*



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