

**didyouknow?**

Protesters "presented" Mardangi Maryada and Laxmanrekha medals to people such as Abhijeet Mukherjee, Mohan Bhagwat, Asaram Bapu and Kailash Vishvavargiya.

HORROR STORIES CONTINUE

# Voices of fury at Freedom Parade

**DON'T FORGET** Protesters exhort the government to implement Justice Verma panel's suggestions

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**NEW DELHI:** Protesters asking for a safer city for women warned the government on Saturday against using its committees as merely a tactic to manage people's anger.

Kavita Krishnan, secretary of the All India Progressive Women's Association, told Hindustan Times, "The Justice Verma Committee report reflects the central concern of our movement — safeguarding the sexual autonomy of women. Why is the government distancing itself from the report? The truth is the report has made both the government and the Opposition uncomfortable."

"We will not let the powers-that-be consign the report to the cold storage and use the Justice Verma panel and its report as a mere protest-management tactic," she said.

Krishnan was part of several groups of students and teachers from Delhi University, JNU, Jamia Millia Islamia and IGNOU, besides women professionals who took out a march from the Mandi House Metro station. The kilometre-long march that started around 2.30pm traversed through various streets of central Delhi and culminated in a meeting at Jantar Mantar.

Protesters sought speedy implementation of the Justice Verma committee report which has submitted its recommendations to prevent heinous crimes against women. Anand Pradhan, of the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, said, "We will continue putting pressure on the government through protests."

Madhu Mehra, a lawyer, said, "The government constituted the Justice Verma committee but on December 24 it also introduced a Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill,



Students, teachers and professionals took part in the march on Saturday.

VIRENDRA SINGH GOSAIN / HT PHOTO

2012, in Parliament. The subject matter is same. Why is the government adopting a two-track process? What if the standing committee says something which is not in sync with the Verma committee recommendations? The bill should have gone to the Justice Verma committee in the first place."

During the "freedom parade", the protesters honoured "unknown citizens". They carried placards and banners with the names of 40 victims of rape and sexual violence. The protesters also carried placards with names of places where horrific rapes have taken place. The protesters had come on a platform through a Facebook group called Freedom Without Fear — Bekhauf Azadi — to stage the protest in the Capital on Republic Day in order to "Reclaim 'The Republic' — as the placards read.

## Bawana woman fends off rape attempt, beaten up

HT Correspondent  
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**NEW DELHI:** A 24-year-old woman was assaulted by a neighbour when she resisted his attempt to rape her in outer Delhi's Bawana on Friday evening.

According to police, the neighbour had been stalking the woman, a mother of a three-year-old child, for quite some time and had even asked her to marry him.

Soon after the incident, the woman's husband, who works for a private company, approached the Bawana police and lodged a complaint, alleging

that his neighbour had brutally thrashed her.

"The complainant said his wife had been severely injured and was being treated at a government hospital. This was after their neighbour, Ram Gopal, who is from Bihar, beat her. We have registered a case and are looking for Gopal, who had come to Delhi seeking employment," said the senior officer.

The senior officer, quoting the complaint, said the woman was walking in an isolated area when Gopal tried to force himself upon her.

"Gopal got aggressive and beat her up with a stick even

as the victim screamed for help.

The accused fled the spot after some locals heard the woman's scream and approached her. Before disappearing, Gopal threatened the woman that he would kill her if she revealed the incident to anyone," said the officer, adding they were yet to record the woman's version of the sequence of events.

The woman was helped by passersby who informed the police and also rushed her to the hospital. The police also informed her husband who managed to talk to her. Cops are conducting raids to nab the accused.

## Faridabad girl, killer spoke on phone before death

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**FARIDABAD:** The man accused of murdering an 18-year-old girl in Faridabad had spoken to her on the phone for hours in the days that preceded the crime, investigators have said.

"We are trying to find out why the phone calls were made," one of the investigators said.

The girl had gone missing on her way to tuition classes and was found murdered in a guest-house hours later. Her death had sparked large protests on National Highway 5 on Friday.

Sonu, the 30-year-old scrap dealer arrested for his alleged involvement in the crime, was remained in police custody for two days on Saturday. "He was drunk when we caught him," the investigator said.

"The girl did not want to marry the accused, something that he was evidently keen on," the investigator added. The investigators are hoping that Sonu will divulge key details of the incident in the two days.



The girl's death prompted protests in Faridabad on Friday.

The girl's family members said they had known over a year ago that the accused had been stalking her.

"We had spoken to Sonu's parents a year ago when we came to know that he was stalking her," a family member said. The family, however, did not inform the police. "We were assured by his parents that he

would not trouble us more," the family member said.

More people could have been involved in the ghastly incident, the family members felt.

The girl's post-mortem report showed that several wounds had caused her death. "This, however, does not mention if she had been raped," an officer said.

## Rape finger at father-in-law

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**NEW DELHI:** A married woman in her mid-30s has lodged a case at the north Delhi's Sarai Rohilla police station in which she accused her father-in-law, her husband and a local politician of sexually exploiting her for the past one-and-a-half years.

The mother of three, who lives separately in Inderlok, alleged that she was being raped by her father-in-law.

Even as a case of rape has been registered at the Sarai Rohilla police station on the basis of the woman's complaint, police officers said the entire matter is related to maintenance which the woman had been claiming from

her in-laws after she separated from her husband.

Police also said the woman filed the complaint because her in-laws were asking her to vacate their house which is not acceptable to her. The woman also accused a local politician in the case because he had been pressurising her on behalf of her in-laws to vacate the flat.

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