



Prajnya 16 Day Campaign Against Gender Violence The 2017 Report



Campaign Calendar

Day and Date	Activity
1. Saturday, 25/11	2017 Gender Violence in India Report goes live. http://www.prajnya.in Shake off the Silence: A Dance Event 5:30 p.m., Public performance at CitiCentre Mall.
2. Sunday, 26/11	Short Takes: Men Talk Consent 4-6 pm: Madras Dance Arts, Nelson Manickam Road.
3. Monday, 27/11	Twitter chat: The Politics of Consent 12:30-2:30 pm: Follow @prajnya
4. Tuesday, 28/11	Letterbox Resistance To join, email prajnya.16days@gmail.com and sign up.
5. Wednesday, 29/11	Twitter teach-in @prajnya: Violence against Women in Politics Celebrating Women Human Rights Defenders: Debate 2-4 pm Blog Symposium on Violence against Women in Politics http://gritprajnya.wordpress.com
6. Thursday, 30/11	Consultation on Women and Work 9 am -- 6 pm
7. Friday, 1/12	Workshop on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights 10 am – 3 pm
8. Saturday, 2/12	பாடுவோம், மாற்றுவோம்: A song-writing workshop 10 am – 3 pm Discussion on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights 2 -- 4 pm
9. Sunday, 3/12	Beyond Heteronormativity: Open Mic. By invitation only. Email prajnya.16days@gmail.com
10. Monday, 4/12	Raising Sexual & Reproductive Health Awareness: Brainstorming Session 3 -- 5 pm
11. Tuesday, 5/12	Women's Lives & Social Change: A Symposium 9 am – 6 pm
12. Wednesday, 6/12	Exploring Gender Through Theatre: A Workshop
13. Thursday, 7/12	Unsafe Havens: Violence, Intimacy and Resilience:: A Panel Discussion 3 – 5 pm
14. Friday, 8/12	Just between Us: A Multi-generational Conversation on Gender Violence 11 am – 1 pm
15. Saturday, 9/12	Prajnya Women's History Roundtable Series: Presentation of research on Intimate Partner Violence 10:30 am – 12 pm
16. Sunday, 10/12	Colours of Equality: A Poster-Making Contest 10-12: Roshni Matric School, Guduvanchery (Open to interested schools. Email grit.prajnya@gmail.com) Women, war and peace: Talk and interaction. (By registration. Email prajnya.16days@gmail.com) 6:30-8 pm
	OPEN EVENTS ARE HIGHLIGHTED.

About the 16 Days of Activism

The 16 days of activism against gender violence is a worldwide campaign first initiated by the Women's Leadership Institute under Rutgers University in 1991. The campaign encompasses a good number of important dates of remembrance, including:

- November 25 - International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women
- November 29 - International Women Human Rights Defenders Day
- December 1 - World AIDS Day
- December 10 - International Human Rights Day

The campaign is recognised and carried out by various organisations across the world, as well as international bodies like UN Women, WHO, Women's Council and Oxfam. The campaign has been used broadly to raise awareness about gender-based violence, and usually involves a different event or activity each day for the period of November 25th to December 10th.

This is Prajnya's 8th campaign since 2008, and the 2nd campaign in our third cycle.

The 2017 Prajnaya Campaign

We started off this year with one agenda in mind: to pull off a flash mob. Somehow we managed it, and a host of other events as well along with. This year we focused around a broad theme of consent and violence, although the theme came together by itself; it was not planned to be so. We even managed to pull off 4 days where we had more than one event per day! We had 4 open events and 17 offline events (13 closed) and thankfully managed to pull off a good number of attendees for each event. This year, even after all the calling and follow ups, and torrential rain right before one of our largest events; we were not short of people, and for this we are thankful to all our partners, resource-people, followers and fellow activists in solidarity.

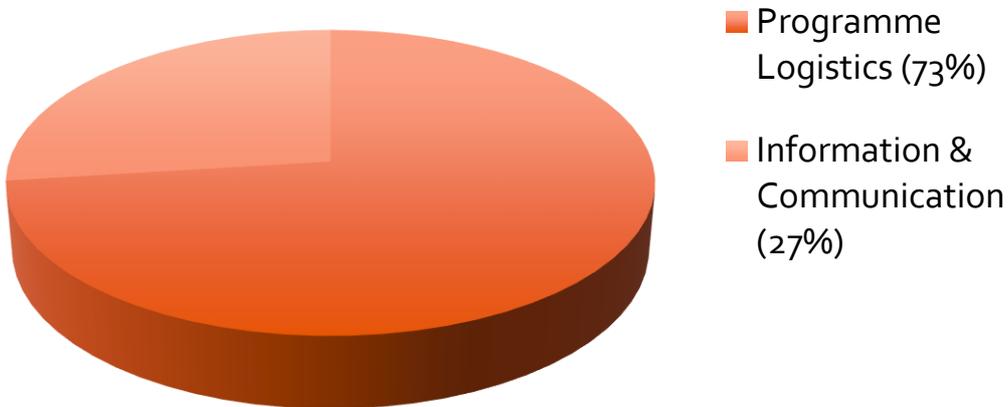
Each event this year created an impact, whether it was small or large, and we met new friends everywhere we went. This year was a success in terms of organisational collaborations: we planned events with Penn Thozhilalar Sangam, Orinam and the South India AIDS Action Programme (SIAAP). It was also beneficial in terms of knowledge and learning; we collaborated with 4 prajnyacolleges this year: Ethiraj, WCC, Madras University and the Madras School of Social Work. We invited old and loved partners like PCVC and CWDR, and we met new ones, like Warhorse. As always, the 16 days passed by in a flash; and we ended the campaign by pushing ourselves: with a day-long event that started in the morning, and a talk on gender & militarisation in the evening (which went on until the night!).

Campaign Accounts

Campaign Donations

Abhay Bhalerao
Anand Philip
Anupama Srinivasan
Nilesh Bhojani
N. Shekar
Padmini Subramaniam
Priya Raju
Radhika Umesh Bhalerao
Ragamalika Karthikeyan
Ranjitha Gunasekaran
Sarraj Narasinga Rao
Sushiela Rao
Swarna Rajagopalan
The Thoon Trust

Campaign Expenses



Programme Logistics: Rs. 84,049
(includes rental, salary, refreshments, conveyance and prizes)

Information and Communication: Rs. 31,177
(includes stationery, printing and telephone charges)

Shake Off the Silence

Day 1

We started with a flash mob to flag off the campaign this year, at Chennai Citi Centre. The flash mob was performed by girls from the English department of Women's Christian College, and started at 5.30 P.M. They danced to the songs *Jiya Re* (Jab Tak Hai Jaan), *Jimmikki Kammal* (Velipadinte Pustakam), and *Chulein Aasmaan* (Farhan Akhtar and MARD).

Watch the video [here](#).



After a hiatus, Prajnya launched the 2017 edition of the Gender Violence in India report on November 25, 2017. The report was compiled by Radhika Bhalerao, the 2017 GRIT Research Fellow. It is available online at <http://prajnya.in/storage/app/media/gvr2017.pdf>.

Short Takes: Men Talk Consent

Day 2

On the 26th of November at Madras Dance Arts, we held a short takes session (where each panelist speaks for about 10 minutes and then the floor is open to discussion) on ideas of men talking about consent. We had 3 speakers: Sandhiyan Thilagavathy who spoke on "Man in the making: The challenges and travails of adolescent masculinity"; Ganesh Kumar who spoke on "Guy Talk: What it means to me to be a man" and Vetrevel Karthikeyan who spoke on "Yes/No' mystery: So does s/he mean yes or does s/he mean no?". The discussion was moderated by journalist Peer Mohamed. After the panelists finished, the floor was opened to the audience; and the discussion revolved around issues like standing up to sexism, derogatory content on WhatsApp groups, the role of the media, and teaching children to say and to accept no.

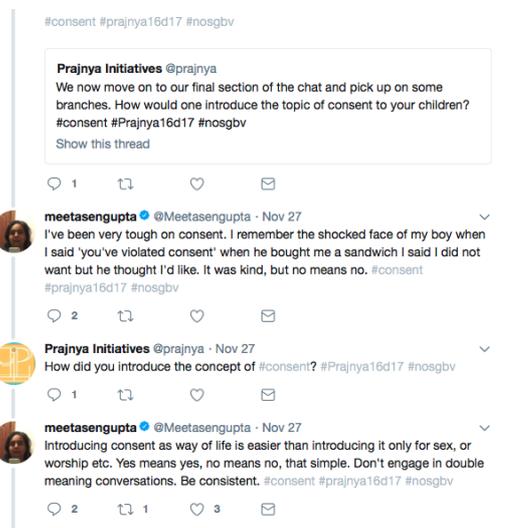


Tweet Chat: The Politics of Consent

Day 3

On the 27th of November 2017 we had a tweet chat moderated by our GRIT Research Fellow, Radhika Bhalerao, on the politics of consent. We were joined in this effort by Shilpa Phadke and various other stakeholders and experts like Meeta Sengupta, Harini Calamur, Shoba Kumar, Ragamalika Karthikeyan, Hemanth Shivakumar and others.

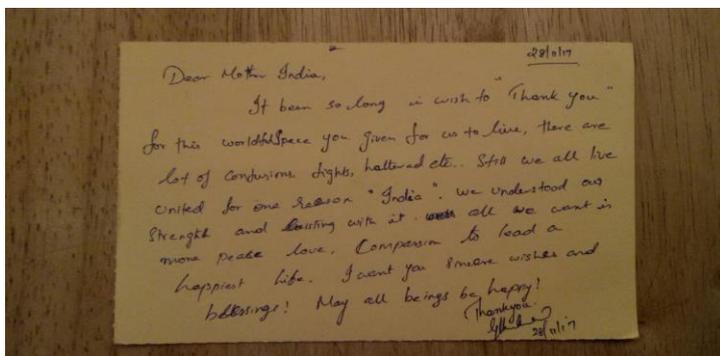
View the entire tweet chat [here](#).



Letterbox Resistance

Day 4

On the 28th of November, we set out to write letters against gender violence, and encourage people to do the same, in 3 cafes. We hit Cafe Coffee Day first, where we were asked to not interact with the customers (we did it anyway), then went to Tea Trails, Ashok Nagar, and then finally Forum Vijaya Mall. The letters that people wrote ranged from asking their family members to take a stand, to writing a letter in solidarity for a family member or friend who had experienced gender violence, to writing to policymakers to take substantive action.



Debate: Celebrating Women's Rights Defenders

Day 5

On the 29th of November, we conducted a debate in collaboration with the Human Rights department of Ethiraj college, on women's rights defenders and whether a day of remembrance should be initiated. The topic given was: "Women who are human rights defenders deserve special recognition, support and solidarity." Arguments were to be structured in six parts, designating roles for each speaker:

1. A general argument for or against
2. Even human rights work is gendered
3. Gender violence is a human rights violation
4. Women activists are invisible because of their gender
5. Women activists are vulnerable because of their gender
6. Violence against women in politics and conflict is a way of targeting the opposite side.

The debate was judged by Shoba Kumar, Archana Seker and Radhika Bhalerao.



Consultation on Women & Work

Day 6

In collaboration with Penn Thozhilalar Sangam and Sujata Mody, we conducted a day long consultation on Women & Work, where we brought together female workers from different sectors to talk about the challenges faced by women across different backgrounds. We had garment industry workers, white collar workers, filmmakers, journalists, activists, lawyers and academicians. The keynote speech was delivered by Dr. Kalpana Karunakaran. The participants were divided into 3 groups for the first session, where they were asked to share their experiences of working as women in their fields. After lunch, the participants were asked to compile their observations and present their findings. They were then divided into groups to identify common problems, and represent these issues on paper. A representative of each group was then asked to present these issues. We then compiled these results, and then the group as a whole discussed these issues and developed an agenda to work on, which is planned for release.



Workshop: Sexual and Reproductive Health at MMM Nursing College and at the Asian College of Journalism

Days 7 & 8

On the 1st of December Dr. Shyamala Natraj of the South India AIDS Action Programme (SIAAP) conducted two workshops at MMM Nursing College on sexual and reproductive rights and health. She started off by introducing an example in relation to dengue, and used the metaphor to teach the students about the importance of SRHR. The workshop then moved into a discussion, from which an agenda emerged on how to better further sexual health; as follows

1. Screening before engagement and marriage.
2. Improved femidoms
3. Pre marital counselling
4. Open conversation
5. Sex education in school
6. Periodic community counselling
7. Compulsory STI screening before marriage by the government
8. Parents' education
9. Pre marital counselling
10. Distribution of female condoms

The next workshop, also conducted by Dr. Shyamala Natraj, was at Asian College of Journalism. This workshop started off with everyone sharing experiences and relating issues they had with regard to personal sexual health, and then moved into Dr. Natraj talking about concerns like how women had very few and very uncomfortable means of contraception and protection. At the end of the session, the participants promised to take this issue forward, as journalists.



Paaduvom, Maatruvom

Day 8

On the 2nd of December, in collaboration with the girls being hosted at the Centre for Women's Development and Research, we hosted a song writing workshop to create songs for the gender equality movement, in Tamil. The participants were given 3 topics: violence against women and children, equality, and freedom. They were given instructions on how to write lyrics, and were separated into groups. Vedanth Bharadwaj joined us to help set the songs to tune. He worked with the girls to transform their words into song lyrics and taught them to find the music within those lyrics.



“வன்முறை ஒழிக்க போராட்டம்
பெண் விடுதலை காக்க போராட்டம்
ஆயுதம் ஏந்தாத போராட்டம்
வெற்றியை அளித்த போராட்டம்”

A struggle to end violence
A struggle to protect the freedom of women
A struggle without weapons
A struggle that will succeed.

By S. Nivedha, S. Devi Sri, G. Sangavi,
V. Archana, S. Sneha, M. Bhavani,
N. Geetha, S. Vindhya

Beyond Heteronormativity

Day 9

On November 3rd 2017, we hosted our 9th event in collaboration with the Orinam collective, an open mic and discussion on defeating stereotypes and finding safety in solidarity, for a small group of LGBTQ+ identified individuals and allies. We started off with the open mic, where each person spoke or performed for about 2 minutes, ranging from poetry to personal narratives. We then moved into the discussion where we spoke about various issues relating to violence directed at people who identify with a non-normative gender or sexuality, legal aspects, creating safe spaces, and the trivial use of certain phrases that irk, hurt and invalidate people's gender/sexuality identities. We concluded on a happy note, by expressing solidarity and promising to stand together; and in the hope of creating more such safe spaces.

For more information on the Orinam collective, click [here](#).

Brainstorming Session: Raising Awareness on SRHR

Day 10

SIAAP and Prajnya hosted a brainstorming session to discuss the results of the two workshops, and invited various stakeholders to contribute their opinions to develop an agenda to better sexual health reform. The roundtable of experts included Dr. Shyamala Natraj, Dr. Swarna Rajagopalan, Dr. Amudha Hari, Zubeda Hamid, Tuba Raqshan, Radhika Bhalerao, Sudaroli, Prof. Shirly Dolly, Renuka Bala, Daisy David, Archana Venkatesh, Sudaroli and other stakeholders. The session started off with Dr. Natraj giving an introduction on how she entered the field of SRHR, and then moved into discussing the state of female contraception, sexual health and awareness of SRHR in India. The roundtable was then opened for discussion, where the experts talked about their experience on working with SRHR and what could be done to better the situation.



Symposium: Women's Lives & Social Change

Day 11

On Day 10, we collaborated with the Women's Department of Madras University to organise a day long symposium on Women's Lives and Social Change, which included 4 panel discussions, and presentations of the department's research scholars' work.

Dr. P. Duraisamy, Vice-Chancellor University of Madras, inaugurated the symposium and Dr. Yasodha Shanmugasundaram, Former Vice-Chancellor, Mother Teresa Women's University, delivered the keynote address. The Prajnaya directory 'Women Taking Action' was released at this session.

Dr. R. Manivannan (Professor & Head, Politics and Public Administration), Dr. R. Azhagarasan (Associate Professor, Department of English) and Dr. M. Priyamvada (Assistant Professor, Department of Criminology) spoke on "What women do, what academics study." "The art of writing women's lives and work" was the subject of the presentations by Dr. Padma Mckertich (Assistant Professor, English, Stella Maris College) and Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh, Director, Ranga Mandira School of Performing Arts. The third panel of the day, "Women, violence and social change," featured Ms. Fatima Burnad, Society for Rural Education and Development, Vellore; Ms. Salma, poet and politician, and Ms. Kavitha Muralidharan, journalist. The final session featured two Chennai activists sharing their journeys and reflections on what had been achieved and what remains, Ms. Renuka Bala, Centre for women's Development and Research (CWDR), and Ms. Prasanna Gettu, International Centre for Crime Prevention and Victim Care (PCVC).



Exploring Gender through Theatre

Day 12

On the 6th of December, we collaborated with the Marappachi Trust to conduct a theatre workshop with elements of gender, for the third year students of B.A English at Women's Christian College. It was conducted by Mangai Arasu, and aided by Srijith Sundaram.

Mangai started off the workshop with some introductory exercises to break the ice. She then moved into theatre games like the shadow game, where one person has to shadow another; and even gave it a twist by asking the latter to follow the former, similar to how a harasser would follow a victim. After each game she would ask the participants to share how they felt, thus initiating healthy dialogue on the same.

She then divided the group into fours, and asked each group to come up with a small skit on gender equality. Another game was, the participants were given chits on issues of gendered concerns, and were asked to act as though they were for, and against it. Finally, the participants were asked to openly express their feelings and rant about how they felt when asked to conform to certain gendered standards and norms, which were unfair and unjust.

Unsafe Havens: Violence, Intimacy & Resilience

Day 13

On the 7th of December, we conducted a panel discussion on domestic violence at the Madras School of Social Work. The panel consisted of advocate Lalitha Natrajan, Swetha Shankar from PCVC, DCP Rohith Nathan and Radhika Bhalerao, Prajnya's GRIT Research fellow. Swetha Shankar was the first speaker, and talked about her work with PCVC, identifying and helping victims of domestic abuse, and the challenges PCVC faces as an organisation while dealing with such cases. Advocate Lalitha took over, and spoke about the legal mechanisms in place and why they don't always work, and the kind of problems she faced while advocating for victims. Radhika Bhalerao spoke about her research on intimate partner violence and her findings on her sample of rural and urban heterosexual partners in Maharashtra. Finally, DCP Rohith Nathan spoke about how the police deals with victims and the mechanisms in place to help them, and the challenges he faced while trying to help them. The floor was then opened to questions, and discussion with the students.



Just Between Us

Day 14

On Friday, the 8th of December, we partnered with the University Women's Association to conduct a multi-generational dialogue on gender, facilitated by Dr. Swarna Rajagopalan. The format of this was that each person was to bring a pair: someone who was a generation younger or older than them. We had pairs of aunts and nieces, mothers and daughters, and friends. Dr. Swarna started off by asking them to share one thing they did not know about each other, and then the discussion moved into the group, where we spoke about what lessons the older counterparts wanted to give the younger ones, what individual experiences each person had faced in terms of gender violence and discrimination and what had changed between generations with regard to the same.



Colours of Equality

Day 16

On the last day, December 10, we set off to Guduvanchery to conduct a poster competition at Roshni Matriculation school. The topics of the poster contest were the rights prescribed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

- You are born free and equal in rights to every other human being.
- Everyone has human rights no matter what your race, skin, colour, sex, language, religion, opinions, family background, social or economic status, birth or nationality.
- Nobody has the right to torture, harm or humiliate you.
- You have a right to be protected and treated equally by the law without discrimination of any kind.
- Each and every person who is legally old enough has the right to marry and have a family.
- Nobody should force you to get married.
- You have the right to have a healthy and comfortable life.
- Mothers and children should receive special care and help.

The children were divided into two categories: grades 5 to 8, and grades 9 to 11.



Talk on Gender & Militarisation

Day 16

Our last event for the year, Dr. Swarna spoke about gender and militarisation to an audience, brought together in collaboration with Warhorse, an educational consultancy. Her talk was divided into four parts: an introduction to gender and militarisation, voices from the field, what a gender lens revealed, and the solution (or what one can do from a non-conflict zone). The audience was rapt and had many questions at the end of the talk, so much that Dr. Swarna was held back for quite a bit of time after the formal session was over.



2017 Campaign Partners

Asian College of Journalism
Centre for Women's Development and Research
Centre for Women's Development and Research
Chennai Citi Centre
Ethiraj College
Madras Dance Arts
Madras School of Social Work
Marappachi Trust
MMM Nursing College
Mohan Foundation
Nalli Silks
Orinam Collective
Penn Thozhilalar Sangam
Roshni Matriculation School
SCARF Dementia Research Centre
South India AIDS Action Programme
Sundari Silks
University Women's Association
Warhorse
Women's Christian College
Women's Studies Department, Madras University
Writer's Cafe

Stay in touch!

During Campaign Season

Email: prajnya.16days@gmail.com

Web: www.prajnya.in/16days

Blog: www.prajnya16days.blogspot.com

Facebook: fb.com/prajnya16dayscampaign

Twitter: [@prajnya](https://twitter.com/prajnya)

Beyond Campaign Season

Email: grit.prajnya@gmail.com

Web: www.prajnya.in

Blog: gritprajnya.wordpress.com

keepingcount.wordpress.com/

Facebook: fb.com/prajnyatrust

Twitter: [@prajnya](https://twitter.com/prajnya)

Instagram: [prajnyatrust](https://www.instagram.com/prajnyatrust)