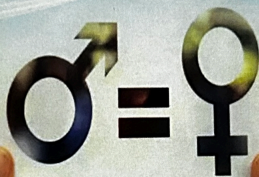


GENDER EQUALITY

**A Step Towards
Women Empowerment**



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Being A Woman and Having Your Rights Too



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■ Madhumita Chakraborty

Introduction

Rights and their violation form a complicated concept. The right of one may well be the violation of another. It is the human right of a child to be born in a healthy environment but the economic right of the factory owners to produce chemicals and its resultant pollutants, the car owner to drive his car, the paper mills to cut trees and the shopping malls to expand trade. The problem begins with there being established and recognized rights on one hand and unrecognized ones on the other. Human rights often go unrecognized. Because those violating human rights are grossly unaware of its importance or of its existence as such. And nowhere is this starker than the domestic sphere in the form of domestic violence. More often than not women are the victims of domestic violence perpetrated by mostly the male but also female members of the household.

The society's responsibility to protect and uphold its women is of foremost importance, not because women are less capable than men but because they are the harbinger of life, the ones who make social co-existence possible. Nature has made a woman physically much fragile and emotionally much softer than men so that they can successfully bear and rear an offspring. But ironically that is the reason behind their intolerable suffering at the hands of men. Abuse is mostly perpetrated against the weak for the sole reason that the weak will be unable to fight back. World over the problem of domestic violence, also known as Intimate Partner Violence, has become the topic of much debate. There was a time when women suffered in silence, both in the West and in the East, as the very topic was a taboo and the women who dared to talk about this taboo were harshly judged and condemned. That is not to say that things have radically altered in modern times, but domestic violence redressal are now more common than not.

Family is supposed to provide its members with safety and security. It's the institution one can fall back upon in times of crisis. Nothing is more horrifying and betraying than to suffer at the hands of one who is supposed to

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