

Seeking to End Violence Against Women

by Janet Jagan

The media has come in for some deserved criticism recently regarding the treatment of rape victims. The body known as Guyanese Women in Development (GUIWID) has issued a statement deploring the manner in which some media groups have been reporting on rapes and murders of women. GUIWID has used the phrase that in a particular case, the "media is raping her integrity." The women's group was referring to the case of a young woman who was gang-raped and murdered. The media had said "... the teenager was also consuming alcoholic beverages. She was swinging with guys with a mini-bus."

GUYWID correctly asserted that "no amount of excuses can justify this heinous crime against a young girl who still had her entire life ahead..."

This type of reaction



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courts, where lawyers seek to defend their clients for every kind of attack on women, mainly sexual attacks, as the fault of the woman: They go into the victim's past to show that she was a "loose" woman who had many sexual relations, or that she was a prostitute, or that she encouraged the sexual attack, etc.

The media is now moving into this type of slander of women, and in reality, it slanders all women. Non-consensual sex whether on a virgin, a prostitute, a woman who has had many sexual partners, or what have you, is rape. In plain language, a sexual assault that

are just too many assaults on women – whether they be brutal sexual assaults, physical assaults, mainly by husbands, lovers, parents, etc or verbal assaults, which like the other forms of brutality against women, can cause great distress and illness.

Fortunately, in the

and discussed, to end the cycle of abuse against women.

Domestic violence is perhaps one of the most difficult abuses of women to end. Day in, day out, there are cases of wife-beating reported to police. In most cases, very little is done to

ous problem. Women and girls who have been sexually abused are not treated with sympathy in many societies. Many are scorned and not accepted. Often they are treated as if they were the guilty ones.

I remember, many years ago, going to Bangla-

grossly abused women and help them in rehabilitation.

This is a stark example, but in mind forms, this is what happens in our villages and neighbourhoods when it becomes known that a girl was raped. Her chances of marriage are gone, her chances to live a normal life are ended. That is why so many instances of rape are not reported. One hurt leads to many more.

That is why we need a whole new approach on how to deal with domestic violence and sexual abuses of women. That is why Minister Manickchand needs full support for her initiative to end such abuses – to Break the Cycle ... to, Take Control.

In this noble mission to make life safe for women, to give women all the opportunities to take charge of their lives and seek and fulfill their goals in life, it is necessary for understanding and a genuine effort to change the old ways. And this includes everyone, as well as the media, the police, the courts, the lawyers and

The problems surrounding all the various forms of abuse against women, from domestic violence, to rape, to trafficking of women, to forced labour which still exists in other countries and the attitudes of people. The latter is a serious problem. Women and girls who have been sexually abused are not treated with sympathy in many societies. Many are scorned and not accepted. Often they are treated as if they were the guilty ones.

last few decades, and more so in this very period in which we live, women have taken the cudgels in their own hands to stop this harsh tyranny, mainly by men, by husbands, companions, fathers, brothers, strangers, etc. The Minister of Human Services and Social Security,

stop the abuse. And very often, acts of domestic violence end in severe injuries or death.

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desh to attend a Conference. I was shown the plight of thousands of women who have been raped and kept as sex slaves by the Pakistani army when it occupied the country. After the war, the victims tried to go home, but their husbands, even their mothers,

(Gail Davis)

Probably want to increase your attitude and mood high

It was noted that the Arawak tribe

the State