

*Gender Sensitization Against  
Sexual Harassment  
Jawaharlal Nehru University*

*Annual Report*

*2008 – 2009*

## *Members of the Committee*

Mondira Dutta	Chairperson
V.Sujata	JNUTA Representative
Chintamani Mahapatra	Faculty Representative
Sunitha Reddy/ Sangeeta Dasgupta	Warden Representative
Harish Naraindas /Sunil Kumar	Warden Representative
H K Moodgal	JNUOA Representative
Abha Yadav	JNUOA Representative
Rajkumar	JNUSA Representative
Pallavi Deka	JNUSU Representative
Akanksha Kumar	Student Representative
Sharda Vishwanathan	Student Representative
Kalyani Menon Sen	NGO Representative - Jagori

## *Office Assistance*

**Neelam** (Computer Assistant) (Part time)

**Jaya** (Office Attendant)

## **Acknowledgements**

It has been a learning experience for me during my tenure in GSCASH from Dec 2007 to Dec 2008. I came across different types of cases which were mind boggling and frustrating as well. Maintaining equality, justice and confidentiality in the present days of RTI, did pose serious hurdles in running the GSCASH. It has not been easy. Had it not been for constant inputs and help received from especially the former Chairpersons, it would not have been possible to function for the whole year.

I particularly wish to acknowledge the contribution of Prof Rupa Manjari Ghosh who has been a constant source of encouragement. She was always there to assist me through thick and thin with whatever and whenever I needed her. I wish to put on record my deep appreciation for Dr Sneha Sudha Komath who came running to help us despite her not being well. I am grateful to Dr Ayesha Kidwai, Prof Anuradha Chenoy and many others who helped me in the understanding of the functioning of GSCASH.

I am grateful to the JNU teaching community who reposed complete faith in me and elected me to this position. I am especially thankful to the then President Prof Kamal Mitra Chenoy and his entire team in assisting me with my problems from time to time.

I am indeed lucky to have real dedicated and committed team members such as Dr V Sujatha, Mr H M K Moodgal, Prof Harish Narain Das, Ms Abha Yadav, and all the other members for their constant enthusiasm and interest in solving cases and giving useful suggestions from time to time. At times they would be working from morning 8 am till midnight without a complaint. I am also thankful to the NGO representatives of Jagori – Ms Kalyani Menon Sen and Ms Kalpana Vishwanathan who steered us through many a difficult situation. Our student representatives were the spirit behind the whole functioning. Akanksha, Pallavi and Sharda simply reached out to the masses and could get us the right feedback. They have sacrificed many a classes and academic time for making their presence felt in GSCASH.

My sincere thanks and appreciation for all those who came forward to participate in the street play including Lokesh Jain – the Director of the play. I was overwhelmed with the kind of reception received and the kind of discussion that ensued in generating the necessary awareness among the JNU community.

Last but not the least I am most thankful to Jaya our most devoted attendant who has been a great help with her three years of experience in GSCASH. Whenever we have been overworked she smilingly comes with a hot cup of tea to refresh us. She certainly is an asset to GSCASH.

Mondira Dutta

## **Introduction**

The GSCASH was constituted by JNU on the Supreme Court guidelines of Vishakha vs. State of Rajasthan case in 1997. Honbl'e Supreme Court had laid down the guidelines for the prevention and deterrence of sexual harassment at workplace. Following the recommendation of the Supreme Court, the Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment was constituted in 1999 by the Jawaharlal Nehru University to implement these guidelines.

The primary functions of GSCASH include a redressal of complaints of sexual harassment through a formal process of screening of complaints and conducting enquiries. Secondly GSCASH tries to create awareness about the role of gender in our lives with the aim to address the issue of Gender sensitization and sexual harassment in order to safe guard and expand the culture of gender sensitivity, equality and tolerance on the campus.

The present report has been presented in three sections:

- I. Activities and Programmes**
- II. Cases and RTIs**
- III. Challenges Faced**
- IV. Recommendations**

## **I. Activities & Programmes**

The activities and programmes during 2007- 2008 are given below:

<b>S.No.</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1	Meeting and Discussion with Volunteers	3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 2008	Around 30 people attended the volunteers meet and suggestions were received from the students regarding activities of GSCASH
2	Meeting and Discussion with all Hostel Presidents	27 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2008	A meeting with hostel presidents was organized as a precautionary measure in order to avoid any unprecedented incidents which had occurred earlier during the hostel night of Mahi and Mandavi held in 2007 and the protests that followed. The Presidents were asked about the programme and events that they would like to organize in the coming year.
3	Women's Day Celebration	7th March 2008	A two day program on the occasion of International Women's Day was held and attended by a large section of the student community. The first day included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Screening of "Born into Brothel" (Dir: Zala)</li><li>▪ Panel Discussion: "Social Status of Kinners and Gender sensitization"</li></ul>

		8th March 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening of "Matribhumi" (Dir: Manish Jha)</li> </ul> <hr/> <p>The second day had the following programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Screening of "Hari Bhari" (Dir: Shyam Benegal)</li> <li>▪ Screening of "Khamosh Paani" (Dir: Sabhiha Sumar)</li> <li>▪ International Women's Day March: Upholding Womens' Rights and Gender Equality</li> </ul>
4	Holi Poster	21 <sup>st</sup> March 2008	Like every year posters on the occasion of Holi was prepared and put up all over the campus as a precautionary measure. The poster carried one liner messages and greetings on the occasion of Holi as an attempt to generate an impact on the student community.
5	Pamphlet for the freshers at the time of admissions	July 2008	The pamphlet introduced GSCASH with emergency security numbers. This was done to spread awareness about the institution, its functioning and to make it more accessible especially for the freshers.
6	Public meetings cum Freshers Welcome	3-5 September 2008	Three public meetings cum freshers' welcome were organized in which senior professors and former members of GSCASH delivered talks.
7	Street Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 17<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008</li> <li>▪ 18<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008</li> <li>▪ 19<sup>th</sup> Oct 2008</li> </ul>	<p>A street play entitled ('Chhod Na Yar') was organized. Students of JNU were the artists. The play was based on the basis of problems related to Sexual harassment, domestic violence and eve teasing. The script of the play was designed after several rounds of discussion amongst the student community.</p> <p>In all there were six episodes, two per day. Each performance was followed by a discussion.</p> <p>These plays were an instant success.</p>
8	Presentation of Annual Report	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2008	The meeting was preceded by felicitating the former chairpersons, Appreciation of artists for the street play and suggestion of recommendation.

- **Meeting and Discussion with Volunteers**

The very first activity was to search for volunteers and a meeting was held to discuss the various ways of strengthening the hands of GSCASH. Around 30 people attended the volunteers meet and suggestions were received from the students regarding activities of GSCASH.

- **Meeting and Discussion with all Hostel Presidents**

A meeting with hostel presidents was organized as a precautionary measure in order to avoid any unprecedented incidents. The Presidents were briefed about the cultural night of Mahi and Mandavi hostel held in the year 2007 and the protests that followed. The Presidents were asked about the programme and events that they would like to organize in the coming year.

The objective was to avoid programmes which may be gender insensitive in nature. The Presidents were encouraged to organize programme in their respective hostels for creating gender awareness and this could be done in collaboration with GSCASH.

It was also decided to write to the Dean Students Welfare about the hostel nights as a precautionary measure so that the programme meant for fun and recreation remain so for all members of the community. The Presidents were then asked to give suggestions and any help that they might require from GSCASH.

Prof Chintamani Mahapatra, Faculty Member, GSCASH, suggested that from next year onwards there should be a small programme on Gender Sensitization in the cultural nights of the hostel itself. The Chairperson Dr. Mondira Dutta proposed that street plays on gender sensitization be organized by the hostel Presidents along with GSCASH. This is one of the means to reach the student community at large.

- **International Women’s Day Celebration**

GSCASH functions on campus not only to address issues of sexual harassment but also covers the essential task of gender sensitization. Therefore the committee decided to have a two day long programme on the occasion of International women’s day in which four movies related to Gender issues were screened on campus. The screenings were well attended and there was an enthusiastic response especially from the student community.

The programme was as follows:

7 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Screening of “Born into Brothel” (Dir: Zala)	Committee Room No-203, SIS	1.30p.m	In collaboration with UNMUKTA
7 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Panel Discussion: “Social Status of Kinners and Gender sensitization”	Committee Room No-203, SIS	3.00p.m.	In collaboration with HARIKRIT

7 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Screening of "Matribhumi" (Dir: Manish Jha)	KC-OAT	9.00p.m.	In collaboration with UNMUKTA
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Screening of "Hari Bhari" (Dir: Shyam Benegal)	Auditorium, SSS-I	2.00p.m.	In collaboration with UNMUKTA
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Screening of "Khamosh Paani" (Dir: Sabhiha Sumar)	Auditorium, SSS-I	4.30p.m.	In collaboration with UNMUKTA
8 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	International Women's Day March: Upholding Womens' Rights and Gender Equality	From 24X7 (Food Court)	9.30p.m.	In collaboration with JNUSU

The screening of 'Born into Brothels' - a documentary directed by Zala was organized on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008. The director had handed over the camera to the children of sex workers in a particular red light area in Kolkata to shoot. The documentary was a narration of the lives they lead despite the stigma attached to them. The attendance for this programme was good about a 100 people attended the screening. The enthusiastic response was mainly from the JNU student community.

On the same day the screening was followed by a panel discussion on the 'Social Status of Kinners and Gender sensitization'. This was organized in collaboration with an NGO called HARIKRIT, where GSCASH members and other speakers spoke. The panelists presented a thought provoking lecture and it was interesting to understand the lives of Kinners in terms of their social status in the society.

In the evening the KC open air theatre was the venue for the screening of the movie 'Matribhoomi' (directed by Manish Jha). Over a 100 people attended the screening. The movie was about the rampant practice of female foeticide. The response from the student community for this screening was also very enthusiastic.

On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2008 in SSS-I auditorium, 'Hari Bhari' and 'Khamosh Pani' were screened. This was on the occasion of women's day. It was attended by a large number of students. Both the movies dealt with women's issues, in addition the celebration of International women's day.

GSCASH also organized a March for international women's Day in collaboration with the JNU Student's' Union. A good number of students attended the March upholding women's rights and gender equality.

## ▪ **Holi Poster**

Like previous years GSCASH came out with posters on HOLI as a precautionary measure and to create awareness. The student representatives resolved that along with the Holi greetings they would also add on certain quotations. The quotations that were selected were as follows:

- **RISE AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT**
- **SILENCE IS NOT THE ANSWER TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT: PROTEST**
- **THE VICTIM IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SEXUAL HARASSMENT**
- **SPEAK OUT**

It was felt that such captions are an effective way of communicating various things to the community at large. These were chosen keeping in view the various notions and perceptions regarding sexual harassment. Very often we find that whenever individuals are sexually harassed, they blame themselves for this harassment and feel ashamed. Further they do not come forward and speak about the sexual violence or the harassment that they have faced. On the other hand they continue to tolerate such acts and remain a silent prey.

Thus this was an initiative on part of the present GSCASH committee to start the process of sensitizing the community that 'sexual harassment is an act that should not be tolerated but reported, protested whether by the victim or by any third party who is aware of such cases'. The GSCASH believes that nobody should continue to be a victim. Even the witnesses in such cases must voice out their concerns and not just be silent spectators.

One such poster is given below:

<b>GENDER SENSITISATION COMMITTEE AGAINST SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b>	
<b><u>Let the Campus be a Sexual Harassment Free Zone</u></b>	
<b>GSCASH wishes you a Happy and a safe Holi !!</b>	
-----	
<b>Complaints can be made to</b>	
<b>AKANKSHA</b> <b>9811506604</b>	<b>SHARDA</b> <b>9818271746</b>

**GSCASH and the STUDENT COMMUNITY must strive together and make the campus a SEXUAL HARASSMENT FREE ZONE!!!!**

- **Pamphlet for the Freshers at the Time of Admissions**

In anticipation of the arrival of new students who would be joining the university, the committee felt that pamphlets regarding GSCASH should be distributed to the new students at the time of admissions around the end of July. Keeping in mind the varied socio-economic backgrounds from where the students come to JNU, the committee resolved the need to sensitize the new students about GSCASH and the various activities undertaken by it. GSCASH believes,

**Gender Equality is not just a Women's Issue....  
It's a People's Issue!**

***GSCASH welcomes all New Students in JNU.....***

If you have a complaint of any unwelcome sexually determined behavior directly or by implication or if you have a suggestion do contact any of the following:

**GSCASH OFFICE : Room No-114, Administrative Building, JNU**

**Akanksha Kumar: 9811506604 (Student Representative)**  
**Sharda Vishwanathan: 9818271746 (Student Representative)**  
**Pallavi Deka: 9868363487 (JNUSU Representative)**

**Security office (Admin Block): 26717609**

**Security control room (North Gate): 26717640**

▪ **Public Meetings Cum Freshers Welcome**

Three Public Meetings were organized after the procedure of the new admissions had been completed. These meetings were held with the aim to introduce GSCASH and its functioning to the new students and to have a vibrant debate on the committee's functioning and the larger role it plays in society. This was done with an aim to capture the attention of both the old as well as the new students.

These meetings were attended by students and some members of the staff and faculty. The role of GSCASH within a patriarchal society was discussed and debated by the speakers and JNU Community.

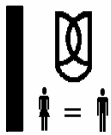
▪ **Street Play**

Each team of the GSCASH year after year has dealt with the processes of enquiry for cases filed and tried to reach out to the community in various ways. The community participation normally has the greatest impact in making any campus - a gender-sensitive one. As JNU started growing, making the community active and participatory has become one of the greatest challenges.

It is distressing to see abuse within relationships among fellow students, among other members and the community at large. The support groups are far and few. In short, within the given situation it is not easy to handle all the cases that come to the doorstep of GSCASH for justice within the stipulated time prescribed under the rules of GSCASH. In such a situation it is always better to adopt preventive measures rather than cure.

The GSCASH attempted to implement such a measure by organizing a series of street plays for 3 consecutive days. Based on past experiences, GSCASH in collaboration with the students and volunteers fixed the themes of the plays after several serious discussion and deliberation. The coordinator for the street play was **Shri Lokesh Jain**, who put in enormous effort and time in getting the students ready with conviction and passion. The committee hoped that this small endeavor will create the right impact on the target group and will send the appropriate signals for creating gender awareness and making the university campus a gender sensitive one.

The following were the dates and schedule of the street play:



## **Gender Sensitization Committee Against Sexual Harassment (GSCASH)**

**Presents**

***Chodo Na Yaar***  
**(A Street Play)**

**Directed by**

**Shri Lokesh Jain**

Date	Time	Venue
<b>17 Oct 2008</b>	<b>1:00 p.m</b>	<b>SL Lawns</b>
	<b>9:30 p.m</b>	<b>Ganga Dhabha</b>
<b>18 Oct 2008</b>	<b>6:30 p.m</b>	<b>Godavari Dhabha</b>
	<b>9:30 p.m</b>	<b>Tapti 24/7</b>
<b>19 Oct 2008</b>	<b>6:30 p.m</b>	<b>Paschimabad</b>
	<b>9:30 p.m</b>	<b>Ganga Dhabha</b>

**All are cordially invited!!!**

-Chairperson, GSCASH

- **Presentation of Annual Report**

The presentation of the annual report was done on 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008.

*8<sup>th</sup> Dec 2008*

*2:30 P.M*

*Jawaharlal Nehru University*  
*GSCASH, 2007-2008*  
*Presentation of Annual Report*

*Programme*

- *Introduction & Felicitation of Chairpersons*
- *Token of Appreciation for Artists*
- *Report Presentation*
  - *Activities & Programs (By Akanksha)*
  - *RTI & Cases (By Sharda)*
  - *Challenges Ahead (By Sujatha)*
  - *Recommendations (By Mondira)*
- *Discussion from the Floor*
- *Vote of Thanks*

The annual report was presented before the JNU community. It was attended by several former chairpersons of GSCASH and other members of the JNU community. On the basis of the discussions, there were several recommendations suggested. These have been given at the end of the report.

## **II. Cases and RTIs**

There were 13 cases in all including 4 spill over cases from the previous year. There were almost 11 RTIs that were answered. All cases have been completed. Two of the cases have recommended an enquiry.

### **Summary of Cases Registered in 2007 - 2008**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Nature of Complaint</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Complaints Screening/Enquiry</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1	Student Vs Student	2007	CSC- complainant was not on campus	Case Pending
2	Student Vs Student	2007	CSC- was conducted and completed. Enquiry Conducted and completed	Punishment implemented
3	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC- Complainants left the campus.	Case Closed
4	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC- Defendant was not on campus	Case Closed
5	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC- Defendant was not available	Case Closed
6	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC, Enquiry Completed	Recommendation Implemented
7	Student Vs Faculty	2008	CSC - completed Enquiry - Nearing completion	-----
8	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC completed	Enquiry Recommended
9	Student Vs Student	2008	CSC completed	Recommendation to be implemented
10	Faculty Vs Staff	2008	CSC completed	Enquiry Recommended
11	Student Vs Student	2008	Complainant not available	Case Closed

12	Student Vs Outsider	2008	-----	FIR lodged with Vasant Vihar Police Station
13	(Domestic Violence)	2008		GSCASH Facilitated rehabilitation

### **III. Challenges**

Most of the challenges faced in GSCASH were due to lack of staff, office assistance, facilities ill equipped and existence of mainly new members in every term. Some of the major challenges faced in the functioning of GSCASH were:

**Lack of Secretarial Assistance** - With one part time typist who was a learner, most of the work had to be done by the students or the faculty. This needed a tremendous effort and energy for the team to deliver goods efficiently and within the stipulated time. Most of the faculty members and students had to fulfill their academic responsibilities as well.

**Lack of Documentation** – Over the years, there have been a huge mass of papers, case studies and files which needs to be documented in an orderly manner. Without a proper filing of documents the future of GSCASH will remain hazy. Therefore it is essential that a section officer be inducted for better maintenance of documents.

**Obsolete Equipments** – The equipments, gadgets and technology in the office of GSCASH needs to be changed. The computer hardly works and the printer does not work for most part of the year. The depositions all need to be typed straight from the tapes and hence this becomes a big hindrance.

**Small size of the committee** – Due to a shortage of members it is very rare that the cases can be completed within the stipulated time.

**Replying to RTIs** – RTIs have taken a whole lot of our time. Most of these cases were old and finding the persons concerned was difficult. It ultimately boiled down to the Chairperson taking the responsibility of answering these without having the knowledge of its background.

**Maintaining the Confidentiality of Cases** – Since the chairperson cannot be present throughout, it is even more necessary that there be one officer in charge who could maintain records and files and see that these do not get leaked out.

**Vacancies of Members** – There are about 15 members of GSCASH. But at a particular time there are invariably three to four vacancies. It has been difficult to get the slots filled.

## **IV. Recommendations**

- a. A staff of the Section Officer level should be employed by the administration for GSCASH office to maintain and manage the smooth functioning of the office records.
- b. The Rules and Regulations of GSCASH were formulated before RTI was formulated. As such there are several grey areas within them. These need to be amended accordingly in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the women complainants. It was also proposed that a full time office assistant be provided by the authorities who would be able to take dictation and type.
- c. The number of members in GSCASH needs to be increased so as to improve the efficiency and functioning of the committee. This would also help in having two Complainant Screening Committees and Enquiry Committees simultaneously so as to complete the cases at the earliest. Keeping this in view it was suggested that provision be made for having two parallel Complainant Screening Committees as well as Enquiry Committees be introduced.
- d. An Advisory Body consisting of former GSCASH members should be constituted and attached to the GSCASH who would provide guidance and help to the members from time to time.
- e. A cell for Domestic Violence may only be constituted provided GSCASH is equipped with a permanent lawyer, academician and counselor appointed on the payrolls of the University. GSCASH may then facilitate and act as mediators in assisting victims of Domestic Violence.
- f. The administration has a copy of all the cases where Enquiry has been completed and punishments implemented. Thereby in case of any query from the administration regarding any such completed case it should be written to them to refer to their records as they are already in possession of the entire Report. All such letters will be returned back to the administrations for further processing.
- g. On deliberations with the members of the JNU community present in the meeting, it was felt that as a principle of Natural Justice the defendant and the complainant should be given a copy of each other's depositions in the future.
- h. The GSCASH committee must upgrade the manner in which the depositions are taken. It was proposed that a digital copy of their own recordings should be given to the defendants, complainants and the witnesses and it should be authenticated then and there.