

Domestic Violence



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Case Study 1

Aanchal Sinha, a 45-year-old woman hailing from Saharanpur, Uttar Pradesh, had been through a tumultuous journey in her life. Her first marriage had ended in a divorce, leaving her with a son from that union who lived with her. Aanchal, seeking a fresh start, found companionship through social media, with Rakesh Kumar Sinha, who hailed from Ranchi. After a brief courtship, they tied the knot in December 2010. She had a daughter from this marriage, and for a while, life seemed normal.

However, the marital bliss was short-lived. Rakesh, Aanchal's second husband, soon started subjecting her to physical and emotional abuse. His repeated insinuations on her character kept her on a leash and restricted her from talking to anyone. Aanchal endured the suffering for a while, but as the abuse escalated, she felt emotionally suffocated inside her own home.

She tried to seek help by filing a complaint at the local police station once, but eventually, a compromise was struck between the two parties. For a brief period, Rakesh seemed to have mended his ways, but soon the torment resumed. He even began spreading false accusations about Aanchal, tarnishing her reputation.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Aanchal was confined to her home for four months, with Rakesh refusing to let her leave. The abuse became increasingly severe, with physical violence and verbal abuse becoming a daily ordeal. Aanchal felt hopeless and confined.

Finally, Aanchal gathered the courage to make one desperate phone call to AALI. She pleaded for assistance in leaving her husband's home and finding a safe place for herself and her daughter.

AALI was quick to intervene and reached out to the Bariyatu police station in Ranchi, providing information about Aanchal's dire situation. The police promptly visited Aanchal's home, and after listening to her story, they brought her to the police station.

Aanchal, in a written statement, expressed her desire to leave her marital home and travel to Uttar Pradesh, where she believed she could find safety and peace.

The police explained the situation to Rakesh and reasoned with him to let Aanchal leave the marriage. After much persuasion, he relented, and Aanchal was free to go. She decided not to go ahead with any legal recourse as she simply wanted to be out of this situation at the earliest.

Today, Aanchal is living with her daughter in Uttar Pradesh, far from the torment of her abusive husband. Aanchal, once trapped in a toxic relationship, found the courage to break free and start afresh. While her journey was not without challenges, the intervention of AALI and the support of the police ultimately helped her find safety and a chance for a brighter future.

Aanchal's story serves as a reminder of the importance of recognizing and addressing domestic abuse. AALI's contribution highlights the role that organizations and law enforcement agencies play in helping survivors break free from abusive situations and start afresh.

Case Study 2

Ayesha started a new chapter of her life when, on 18th October 2014, she married Imtiyaz Alam in a traditional Muslim wedding ceremony. Her father presented a lavish dowry, including two lakh rupees, precious jewellery, and all household essentials. Ayesha, with dreams of marital bliss, ventured into her new home in Hazaribagh district, accompanied by her husband, in-laws, and her two brothers-in-law.

However, just 15 days into the marriage, Ayesha's husband unleashed a torrent of physical abuse, verbal insults, and relentless harassment. He criticized her cooking, doused her with water, and even resorted to wielding kitchen utensils as weapons. Ayesha found herself confined within the walls of her new home, with her husband watching every move of hers and monitoring her phone calls.

As the months passed, Ayesha's ordeal showed no signs of abating, prompting her to seek help. She lodged a complaint with the community committee, and after two months, a meeting was convened. The committee's decision was clear: Ayesha and her husband should move away from their respective families and start living separately.

However, as they started living separately, Ayesha's husband escalated his torment. In the midst of this turmoil, Ayesha discovered she was pregnant. Shockingly, her husband and in-laws refused to provide her with access to medical care. Fearing for her unborn child, Ayesha's father intervened and brought her back to her parental home, where she gave birth to a daughter on the 18th July 2016.

Despite the arrival of their child, the behaviour of Ayesha's husband remained unchanged. He neither provided for Ayesha nor for their daughter's needs. Ayesha managed her expenses with the meager funds she could gather during her visits to her parents. Whenever she confided in her parents about her plight, they silenced her, dreading the social stigma associated with marital discord.

Despite three committee meetings, Ayesha's husband stubbornly clung to his abusive ways. In the midst of this protracted ordeal, Ayesha often contemplated suicide, but her love for her daughter dissuaded her.

Finally, on 18th July 2019, on her daughter's birthday, Ayesha made a difficult decision; she would not return to her husband. She had three brothers, one of whom was already married, Ayesha faced further challenges,

including taunts from her sister-in-law. Even her parents remained hesitant to support her wholeheartedly, still harboring hopes for a miraculous resolution to the marital discord between Ayesha and Imtiyaz.

Ayesha was determined to not return to her husband. Instead, she planned to utilize the dowry money and the belongings her husband received to start her own business. She sought assistance from AALI to help her stake claim to the dowry amount her father had given to Imtiyaz.

AALI stepped in to provide Ayesha with legal guidance. But Ayesha was reluctant to press any legal charges against her husband for lack of family support. AALI then suggested calling for a social mediation at this stage and sent a formal notice to her husband.

On 24th February 2020, a mediation took place at AALI's office, involving Ayesha, her husband, and committee members who accompanied her husband. They reached an agreement - Ayesha's husband would return Rs. 3,25,000 and the wedding gifts by June 2020, followed by a mutual divorce. On 24th June 2020, Ayesha and her father traveled to Hazaribagh to collect all her belongings. Following Islamic customs, Ayesha and her husband finalized their divorce. Currently, the case has been officially resolved and Ayesha and her daughter are living with Ayesha's parents.

Case Study 3

Neetu Ragni married Monu Kumar Soni on 24th June 2011, at Maa Chinmastika Temple, Rajrappa, Ramgarh, of her own free will. They wanted to be together, but Neetu's father did not support her choice even though she was an adult. Neetu's decision had no legitimacy in the eyes of her father. Both Neetu and Monu got their marriage registered at the Marriage Registration Office, Purulia (West Bengal), on 14th July 2011, under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, Section 6, and made their marriage lawful.

This was not acceptable to Neetu's father Achyuta Nand Sinha. He got a false case lodged against Monu Kumar Soni under Sections 363, 366 (A) of the IPC on account of the marriage being an inter-caste one. The Hindu religion is still divided into 'jatis' or endogamous castes, and it is advised that one marries intra-caste in order to maintain the purity of the respective caste groups. Inter-caste marriages are vehemently opposed by society, even parents generally do not support their children in such cases. Neetu was just another victim of the consequences of this unnatural division impacting lakhs of people across the country.

Monu appeared before the Chief Judicial Magistrate on 4th August 2011, and Neetu supported Monu in the court proceedings. Neetu in her statement recorded before the Chief Judicial Magistrate named Monu Kumar Soni as her husband and expressed her desire to live with him, but even after that Neetu's father forcefully took Neetu home with him. Neetu's choice was yet again disregarded by her father. The court also paid no heed to Neetu's decision.

On 19th August 2014, Monu Kumar Soni went to Neetu's house after being released on bail and demanded that Neetu should come along with him. Subsequently, Neetu's parents took her to Hajipur. One of Neetu's neighbours informed Monu that on 27th August 2014, Neetu's family members had taken her to Hajipur. On 30th August 2014, Neetu contacted Monu through a neighbour's phone and informed him that she was in Hajipur. Monu immediately went to Hajipur and brought Neetu back with him. Both started their life, away from their families, in a rented house.

Neetu began working in a private firm to manage the household expenses. Monu used to visit Neetu only during the day and spent the evenings at his parent's house. For a few days, Monu and Neetu's relationship was without any trouble, but then issues arose. Neetu felt lonely as Monu was rarely home. She didn't have any emotional and physical support, and she was all by herself. The isolated life without her family added to Neetu's grief. On 6th

August 2015, Neetu travelled to her mother's house to visit her family. She promised her husband that she would return after meeting her mother, but Neetu never returned.

In his rage, Monu contacted AALI and begged for help in getting Neetu back. According to him, Neetu was kept as a captive in her parents' house. Neetu was informed by the AALI team that they had received Monu's case application and asked her to explain her position. On receiving the notification, Neetu Ragini arrived at AALI's office along with her mother, father, and maternal uncle. She told the AALI team that she is living with her parents of her own free will, and is no longer interested in continuing her marriage with Monu. She also shared incidents of emotional abuse perpetrated by Monu during her stay in their stay together after marriage, away from their respective families. Neetu also confessed that she had made up her mind to end her marriage with Monu.

AALI supports the Right to choice and the Right to exit from a marriage. It is the decision of the two individuals involved in the marriage, therefore AALI supported Neetu throughout. Monu and Neetu applied for divorce by mutual consent, but the case was dismissed due to Monu's non-appearance in the Court. Monu was adamant that he did not wish to divorce Neetu, but the AALI team provided socio-legal counseling and informed Monu about Neetu's right to end the marriage and her feelings about their relationship. After the counseling, Monu finally agreed to a mutual divorce. AALI's team got Neetu Ragini and Monu Soni's divorce filed by mutual consent and supported them in the legal process that followed.

Case Study 4

Neha, a resident of Lucknow, got married to Vivek Vaid on 16th November 2016, according to Hindu customs and traditions. Their wedding ceremony was held at a grand hotel in Lucknow, graced by the presence of their respective families and friends.

From the very outset of their marriage preparations, Vivek's parents relentlessly pressured Neha's parents for dowry and insisted on an extravagant wedding celebration at the hotel. Neha's parents wanted her to be safe and happy in her matrimonial home, while at the same time not jeopardizing this alliance, so they acquiesced to all their demands, which included gifts worth Rs.10,00,000 and covering all wedding expenses, totaling Rs.8,00,000.

Immediately after the wedding ceremony, Neha's in-laws forcibly took custody of all the jewelry and dowry money given to her by her parents, on the pretext of safekeeping.

However, troubles arose as Neha and Vivek found themselves unable to consummate their marriage on their wedding night and also during their honeymoon in Kerala. Initially, they attributed this to the crowded household, but Neha later discovered that Vivek was impotent, a fact that Vivek had hidden from Neha. Vivek also claimed that his parents were aware of his condition. Tragically, Vivek subjected Neha to physical abuse to intimidate her into silence.

Neha's parents spent beyond their means so that she would be welcome in her new home, but on the contrary, she endured physical and mental torture at the hands of her husband and in-laws. Despite Neha's parents having given a dowry much beyond their affordable means, her in-laws expressed their displeasure with the dowry amount. Moreover, Neha had to endure intrusive questions about her intimate life.

Neha and Vivek had not yet consummated their marriage, and Vivek refused to seek medical help, asserting that their union was merely a facade to fulfill societal expectations.

On 3rd December 2016, when Neha visited her family home, she did not disclose her husband's impotence to her parents, ostensibly to protect his honor. In an attempt to save her marriage, Neha continued to endure taunts from her in-laws. Neha even promised to fulfill their new demand for a house and a car in Delhi, assuring them that she would apply for a loan upon her return.

Neha made all efforts to mend their relationship, but Vivek continued to reject and mistreat Neha. When she urged him to seek medical advice, he demanded an additional Rs. 20,00,000 and threatened to end the marriage if she did not comply. Neha continued to be subjected to inappropriate questions from her mother-in-law and sister-in-law.

When Neha eventually confided in her husband about his mother and sister asking intrusive questions, Vivek reacted with anger and threatened to disfigure her face with acid. However, Neha in an unprecedented show of courage, threatened to report this abuse to the police. It was now that Vivek relented, and offered an apology and reconciliation. Nevertheless, Neha, concerned about her safety, fled to her parents' home in fear.

She finally disclosed Vivek's impotency and the physical and mental torture she faced from her in-laws to her parents. Neha's parents still considered mediating with her in-laws and even made an attempt, only to face foul language and threats from Vivek's grandmother, sister, and brother-in-law. Throughout the month of August, Neha and Vivek communicated through their respective lawyers, seeking a resolution to their marital discord, and an assessment of Neha's assets in Vivek's family's possession. However, these negotiations proved inconclusive.

On 20th October 2017, Vivek's family sent Neha a settlement notice, which she declined. In response, Neha filed an application for the dissolution of her marriage under Section 13 of the Hindu Marriage Act.

As a last resort, a man claiming to be a family friend of Vivek visited Neha's family and warned of dire consequences if they did not meet the Vaids' demands.

On 21st November 2017, Neha lodged an FIR at the Mahila Police Station in Hasanganj, citing **Sections 498A[1], 323[2], 406[3], 504[4], 506[5] of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), and Section 3[6] and 4[7] of the Dowry Prohibition Act** against Vivek and his family. Neha also initiated a case for restitution for conjugal rights under Section 9 of the Hindu Marriage Act.

Seeking legal guidance, Neha reached out to the AALI Casework Unit. The caseworker diligently noted the facts and provided appropriate legal counseling. Recognizing Neha's uncertainty regarding the status of her

[1] Cruelty by husband or relatives of husband

[2] Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt

[3] Criminal breach of trust

[4] Intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace

[5] Punishment for criminal intimidation

[6] Penalty for giving or taking dowry.

[7] Penalty for demanding dowry

cases, the caseworker recommended filing for case progress updates in the relevant court. Furthermore, if Neha decided to dissolve her marriage, it was crucial to withdraw her Section 9 Hindu Marriage Act case and file for divorce instead. Neha agreed to this strategy and promptly withdrew her Section 9 HMA case, at the same time initiating proceedings under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) and the Hindu Marriage Act for divorce.

Neha's story is one of immense courage and resilience in the face of adversity. With the support and guidance of the AALI Casework Unit, she was able to navigate the legal system and take the necessary steps to seek justice and liberation from a tumultuous marriage marred by violence and abuse. Today, Neha is living her life free from violence, and separated from this abusive relationship.

AALI's commitment to supporting individuals like Neha with legal knowledge and assistance underscores the significance of accessible legal resources in aiding those who have endured domestic abuse and violence. In Neha's case, it made a profound difference in her journey toward justice and freedom.

Case Study 5

Rajmani Devi, a 36-year-old woman, hails from a tribal community in Ranchi, Jharkhand. She has endured a tumultuous marriage of nearly nine years with her spouse, Ravi Oraon. The couple have been blessed with two daughters. Ravi Oraon was employed as a plumber, and they resided in the village of Bara Ulatu, located near the Ormanjhi police station in Ranchi itself.

The discord in their marriage started when Ravi got involved in an extramarital relationship with another woman named Poonam, who was already married and had three children of her own. Initially, Ravi concealed this affair from Rajmani, but as time passed, she became aware of the relationship. As a consequence of Rajmani coming to know about it, Ravi started subjecting Rajmani to physical abuse and ceased providing any financial support to her and their children.

To be able to make a living without Ravi's support, Rajmani took on odd jobs as a laborer. She called upon the highly regarded community members for assistance and called for a village panchayat on 20th April 2020. The panchayat in its decision asked Ravi for a written commitment to provide Rajmani with a monthly allowance of Rs. 4,000, but that was never to be.

The situation took a dire turn when Ravi called Poonam to reside along with him in the same small house where Rajmani was also staying with her children. Ravi and Poonam, acting in concert, violently assaulted Rajmani. Fearing for her safety, Rajmani sought refuge at the Ormanjhi police station. The village folks advised her to lodge a formal complaint, but regrettably, as it happens in most cases, the police refused to accept her application.

Rajmani finally reached out to a social worker named Shanti, who, in turn, got her in touch with AALI for legal support. Under AALI's guidance, Rajmani initiated legal proceedings by filing a First Information Report (FIR) at the Ormanjhi police station. The charges invoked were in accordance with **Sections 498A[1], 494[2], 323[3], and 504[4] of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).**

AALI also recommended invoking a maintenance case under **Section 125[5] of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).** Later, in the maintenance case, the court, following the presentation of testimony from Rajmani and her

[1] Husband or relative of the husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty.

[2] Marrying again during the lifetime of the husband or wife.

[3] Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt

[4] Intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace

[5] Order for maintenance of wives, children and parents.

witnesses, issued an order directing Ravi to provide a monthly sustenance allowance of Rs.4,000 for Rajmani and her two daughters, effective from 23rd March 2023.

[1] Husband or relative of the husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty.

[2] Marrying again during the lifetime of the husband or wife.

[3] Punishment for voluntarily causing hurt

[4] Intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace

[5] Order for maintenance of wives, children and parents.

Case Study 6

Rani, daughter of Ram Bharose, a resident of village Kanar, Lucknow, was married to Suresh, son of Ishwar, resident of village Ghanora, police station Mal, in the year 2003. At the time of marriage, she was only 16 years old. From this marriage, she has a daughter, aged 13 years, and a son, aged 7 years.

After a few days of marriage, her husband began to doubt her and defamed her character. He would beat her after consuming alcohol. Frustrated with the constant fights, she would go to her maternal home but would return to her in-laws' place after patch-ups. Rani hoped that with time and her efforts, her husband's attitude would change for the better. But that did not happen. During this period, they had two children as well. However, the children's mental health and their well-being was greatly affected by Suresh's constant bickering. For this reason, Rani kept her children away from her husband at her parents' house and ensured that they had access to education and a peaceful life. Once, after a fight, Suresh came to Rani's parents' house and forcibly took the children away, preventing them from going to school for a month.

On another occasion, when Rani went to her parents' house, Suresh attempted to harm her with a knife. Rani got injured in an attempt to defend herself. Suresh on the contrary made up a story accusing Rani of attempting to harm him and getting herself injured in that attempt. To make matters worse for Rani, the villagers believed Suresh's account, and Rani was considered a criminal.

Matters between Rani and Suresh took a turn for the worse when on 25th June 2017 Suresh discarded all her belongings and obtained her fake signature on a stamp paper stating her consent to live separately. Despite pleading with her husband and villagers, she was separated from her children and was not allowed to meet them.

AALI received a mail in its post box through which it got to know of Rani's case. A case worker from AALI soon got in touch with her. Rani visited the AALI office and shared her story with the case worker. The case worker informed her about the legal proceedings, including Section 125 CrPC and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005.

A notice was immediately sent to Suresh on 22nd August 2017 to engage with the AALI office, but he did not respond. The caseworker then

accompanied Rani to the police station and helped her file an FIR against her husband on 23rd September 2017 at Mahila Police Station under Sections 323, 504, and 506 of the Indian Penal Code. The police officer demanded money from her to call her husband for mediation and warned that if she failed to pay the amount, then her case would not be investigated properly. The AALI team protested against this action of the police and complained to the SHO (Station House Officer). Later the investigation officer recorded statements separately from both the parties and subsequently closed the case with a final report.

Rani was extremely worried about her daughter as she used to be quite unwell and wanted to take care of her. Rani lodged a complaint with Child Line on 10th January 2018 to gain custody of her children. The complaint was transferred to the Child Welfare Committee on the same day. The committee decided to hand over Rani's daughter to her, but Suresh made the girl disappear. AALI intervened again to support Rani in filing an FIR against Suresh on 13th May 2018 at Mal police station under **Sections 498A[1], 323[2], 336[3], 352[4], 506[5] Indian Penal Code and 3 and 4[6] the Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961.**

Rani's second FIR at Mal Police Station bore results soon. Suresh appeared at the Child Welfare Committee with their daughter on the 8th June 2018. On 3rd July 2018, the court ordered Rani's husband to pay Rs.500 to the daughter within 1 to 5 days and to support her education. Rani would bear other expenses.

The mediation for Rani's 498A case began in court on 4th July 2018 and the case is at the stage of trial.

AALI, also suggested to Rani that she should file a case for maintenance and invoke the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (PWDVA) to seek relief. She agreed to this course of action, and currently, both of her cases are at the ex-parte stage.

Presently, Rani has emerged as a proud proprietor of her own boutique, signifying her newfound financial independence, and enabling her to provide for herself and her family. AALI has played a pivotal role in her transition from merely a survivor of domestic violence to a mother who has reclaimed her rights. AALI's swift response to Rani's situation brought to their attention through a mailed letter, serves as an exemplar of their steadfast dedication to the cause of supporting marginalized women. This unwavering commitment underscores the positive influence that organizations like AALI can wield, ultimately contributing to the realization of a more just and equitable society.

[1] Cruelty by the husband or his relatives.

[2] Act endangering life or personal safety of others

[3] Punishment for assault or criminal force otherwise than on grave provocation

[4] Intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of the peace

[5] Punishment for Criminal Intimidation

[6] Penalty for demand of dowry

Case Study 7

Ripu Devi, a 35-year-old woman, married Sunil Paswan alias Mohraon on 27th January 2003 in Peska, Jharkhand. The couple moved to Tiril, Ranchi, to stay in a rented house, where Sunil was engaged in a private job. Soon after the marriage, her husband Sunil and her in-laws started subjecting Ripu to brutal beatings, physical assault, and mental torture.

The torture and assault reached a point where Ripu suffered a miscarriage because of the internal injuries inflicted upon her by her husband's repeated physical assaults. Ripu had to visit the hospital a number of times to get herself treated. Finally, she reached the breaking point. She could not take the violence any longer. Fed up with her husband's constant harassment and assault, she lodged a complaint at the Mahila Thana in Ranchi. Ripu did not want to register an F.I.R. initially. She wanted mediation from the Police. The Police are not authorized to mediate, so the Police advised Ripu to take the case to the court. But Ripu did not have the courage to take that step.

On 8th March 2020, at the time of Holi, Ripu Devi along with her husband Sunil Paswan, went to her in-laws' place in Peska (Garhwa). Instead of welcoming their son and daughter-in-law, Sunil's father thrashed Ripu and drove her out of the house. Ripu Devi and her husband Sunil came back to Ranchi, where Sunil left Ripu at her maternal home. For this entire duration, Sunil was in Ranchi as he was employed there. During COVID, when a lockdown was imposed in the country, Sunil left for his village, Peska. During the lockdown, Ripu was at her maternal place. One day, all of a sudden, she learned from the villagers that Sunil had married another woman.

Ripu reported this illegal second marriage to the Meral police station, Garhwa. However, the Meral Police did not register Ripu's complaint and advised her to file a case in the Ranchi district. Ripu then went to the Kokar police station in Ranchi, but she was met with disappointment from the Kokar Police too. When Ripu did not get any help from anywhere, she finally approached AALI for legal help in her case. On 11th April 2020, AALI contacted the in charge of Meral police station, Garhwa over the phone, told them about the case, and advised them to take action and register an FIR. It was only after much persuasion, that the Police agreed to work on the case and told the AALI team that Ripu could file an FIR at Meral police station or Ranchi wherever it suits her, and action would be taken accordingly. The AALI team explained to the Meral police station in charge that if the incident happened in Garhwa, then it would be easy to proceed in the case and process it further. Therefore, the AALI team suggested Ripu to file the F.I.R. in writing to the Meral police station through a registry.

However, when Ripu went to the Post office for the registry, she was informed that due to COVID, only medicines could be posted and a registry was not possible. The lockdown posed many difficulties for the AALI team, they were not able to meet Ripu, and even the police officers were not actively available on the phone. After one month into the lockdown, on 19th May 2020, the case was registered under **Section 498 (A)[1], 494[2]/34[3] of the Indian Penal Code** at Kokar Police Station, Ranchi.

After the F.I.R. was lodged, Ripu changed her mind. She did not want to proceed with the case against her husband and withdrew her FIR. Currently, Ripu is living at her in-laws' house in Garhwa.

The narrative of Ripu's experiences serves as a powerful testament to the profound challenges that confront women when they lack support from their own families. Throughout this trying ordeal, AALI played a pivotal role in providing counseling and assistance, but the absence of any support from the family weighed heavily on Ripu's decision-making process compelling her to return to the same abusive relationship, despite the best efforts of the organization. This poignant example underscores the critical importance of a strong support system and highlights the complex decision-making situations that women often face in the absence of such support.

[1] Cruelty by the husband and his relatives

[2] Marrying again during lifetime of husband or wife

[3] Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention

Case Study 8

Shayara Praveen, a 32-year-old woman belonging to the Other Backward Castes category, a resident of Ranchi, Jharkhand, and a devout Muslim, struggled to make ends meet by working as a domestic help. Shayara had already been through a turbulent marriage once, with one Mohammad Faraaz, and also had three children through this alliance.

Her first marriage had been marred by violence and abuse, leading to divorce. Shayara had decided to move on and provide a stable life for her children by working hard and making a living to raise them. It was during this phase of her life that she crossed paths with another man whose name was also Mohammad Faraaz, a 30-year-old plumber from the same town.

This second Faraaz in Shayara's life was persistent in his pursuit of her, professing his love and promising to take care of her and her three children. Shayara was initially skeptical due to her past experiences, but Faraaz's determination wore her resistance down. He assured Shayara that he would not only marry her but also take responsibility of her children, providing for their needs.

Shayara, yearning for a better life for herself and her children, finally decided to marry Faraaz in accordance with Islamic customs on 11th January 2017. They had one child together, soon after their marriage, and for a brief period, everything seemed harmonious in their relationship.

However, the idyllic picture soon shattered. Faraaz's behavior started deteriorating, and he began subjecting Shayara and her children (from her previous marriage) to physical abuse and harassment. Whenever Shayara's parents tried to visit her, Faraaz would hurl insults and deny them access to their daughter.

As the abuse continued to escalate, Shayara finally decided to seek help. She reached out to AALI for legal support. AALI advised Shayara to file a maintenance case under **Section 125[1] of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)** to secure financial support for herself and her children.

With AALI's support, Shayara filed the maintenance case against Faraaz. The court proceedings were tense, with both parties providing their testimony. After considering the evidence presented, the court issued an order on 27th March 2023, directing Faraaz to provide financial support of ₹3,000 per month for Shayara and her youngest child's upkeep.

[1] Order for maintenance of wives, children and parents.

While Shayara had the option to pursue criminal charges against Faraaz for his abusive behavior, she chose not to take that route. Her primary goal was to ensure the well-being of her children and secure financial support, rather than seeking retribution.

However, Shayara faced some challenges during the legal process. Faraaz and his lawyers frequently delayed court appearances, causing the case to drag on for an extended period. Additionally, despite the court's order, Faraaz failed to provide any financial assistance for interim maintenance, leaving Shayara struggling to make ends meet. The case was far from over, as an execution file would be initiated 90 days after the court's decision to ensure that Faraaz adhered to the maintenance order. Shayara was determined to persevere and provide a stable and secure future for herself and her children, even if it meant navigating a challenging legal battle. Shayara's story serves as a reminder of the resilience and determination of individuals like her, who, in the face of adversity, seek legal recourse to secure their rights and provide a better life for their children.

Case Study 9

Shweta Malik, daughter of Ratanlal Khurana, and a resident of Rewa, embarked on her marital journey when she married Manish Kumar Malik, son of Subhash Chandra Malik, resident of Lucknow, on 5th December 2006. Through their wedlock, they gave birth to a son named Kanav.

At the outset of her marriage, Shweta's in-laws displayed remarkable magnanimity and modern thinking by refraining from making any demands for dowry. However, as she settled into her new family, her husband's behavior took an unexpected turn. The once-loving connection between them began to wither, and physical intimacy became a distant memory. Simultaneously, Shweta grappled with her in-laws' unwelcoming demeanor. The emotional chasm between her and her husband persisted for two long years.

It was during this time that her father-in-law exerted undue pressure, compelling Shweta to establish a physical relationship with her husband. Eventually, they acquiesced. Three years into their marriage, the couple celebrated the arrival of their son, Kanav. Regrettably, this joyous occasion did not mend the rift between them. Shweta found herself subjected to mental anguish while residing with her in-laws. In light of her family's precarious financial circumstances, she diligently pursued a career as a teacher at a private school. Her earnings, however, were confiscated by her father-in-law, a contentious issue she staunchly opposed. Her husband's indifference to her struggles left her heartbroken, while the grandparents took her son under their fold, forcibly keeping him distant from his mother Shweta, a circumstance that weighed heavily on her heart.

The turning point arrived on 9th March 2018, when Shweta decided to take her ailing son for a stroll in a nearby park. Upon their return, both her parents-in-law unleashed a barrage of reproach, berating her for this decision. Shockingly, even her husband sided with his family in this matter. Faced with this unbearable mistreatment at her in-laws' home, Shweta made the painful choice to seek refuge with her sister.

Shweta courageously sought support by visiting the AALI office, where she confided with a case worker, sharing the intricate details of her tumultuous journey. The caseworker provided Shweta with legal information regarding **Section 125[1] of the CrPC** and the Protection of Women from Domestic

[1] Order for maintenance of wives, children and parents.

Violence Act, 2005, offering her the option to pursue legal action. However, Shweta's heartfelt desire was to reconcile with her husband and be reunited with her beloved son, rather than taking the path of litigation.

On 20th March 2018, AALI promptly dispatched a notice to Shweta's husband. Subsequently, a mediation session took place within the AALI office premises. During this session, a mutual understanding was reached, stipulating that Shweta's father-in-law would refrain from using inappropriate language. Additionally, her son would have the opportunity to spend time with her, without any compulsion.

Following a visit to Shweta's residence, the case worker conveyed the heartening news that Shweta was now thriving in her in-laws' home, and her troubles appeared to be behind her. This was one instance where with AALI's intervention and counselling, Shweta could settle her marital discord mutually with her husband and in-laws without her having to knock at the doors of the court.

Case Study 10

Suman Pushpa Mundu, a 34-year-old woman and a teacher by occupation, was a hardworking woman who had many plans for her future. Her parents, on the other hand, had an altogether different plan for Suman.

Suman was in her 30s, an adult who had the right to make her own choices in life, including the right to marry a man of her choice. Suman's family refused to respect her wishes and choice; she was pressured to marry a person whom they had chosen for her. Suman finally had to give in, and on 6th October 2014, she got married to Nitish Bodra as per Christian customs and traditions.

Suman's marriage was doomed from day one. At the time of marriage, Nitish was without a job, and he had told Suman that he would soon take up a job. But Suman was in for a rude shock; Nitish turned out to be an alcoholic, and he had no intentions of taking up a job either. Nitish used to be under the influence of alcohol, the brunt of which had to be borne by Suman.

Before marriage, Suman worked as a teacher in a missionary school in West Bengal. She had a male friend who was a teacher in the same school. Suman was completely honest with her husband, and she did not conceal her friendship with this school colleague from him.

Suman also wanted to continue studying further, for which she had plans to take admission to a college. Nitish suspected Suman, and he used to accompany her everywhere, be it for filling out her examination forms, or for registration. Nitish did not let Suman be out of his sight for even a minute. Suman felt suffocated and was frustrated by the constant surveillance of Nitish.

One day Suman's mother fell ill, so she went to visit her mother. After reaching her house, Suman suddenly felt overwhelmed to the point where she decided not to return to her husband's house. Her mother persuaded Suman to go back to her husband, and one day she finally heeded her mother's advice. Both Suman and her mother went to her husband's house on 1st January 2015. No sooner did they reach the house, Nitish mistreated both Suman and her mother and abused them. Once again, the cycle of domestic violence with Suman started, and tired of this constant mental and physical torture, Suman left the house for a 2nd time.

Suman decided once and for all, that she could no longer stay with Nitish and immediately sought divorce. But her troubles did not come to an end even in

her own mother's house. Her brother pressured Suman to return to her in-law's house and continue her married life with Nitish. Suman had no support coming from her own family. But Suman was strong and resolute. She decided that she wouldn't let the pressure of her maternal family, or her husband, overpower her.

At this point in her life, Suman approached AALI; she wanted AALI's support for a divorce from her husband, Nitish Bodra. AALI provided socio-legal counseling to Suman and informed her of all the legal remedies available to her. After receiving the application from Suman, the AALI team sent a notice to Nitish so that he could present his side. After receiving the notice, Nitish Bodra, along with his mother, visited the AALI office where an agreement was made between them, in which Nitish Bodra agreed to return all of Suman's belongings and agreed to a mutual divorce.

While the decision of a mutual divorce was willfully taken by both, there were other hurdles that the AALI team and Suman had to face. In India, personal laws govern civil matters; and marriage, divorce, and property come under the purview of personal laws. Under Christian customs and traditions, one of the conditions for filing for a divorce is that the marriage should have completed a duration of 2 years. Therefore, Suman had to wait for the completion of 2 years before she could file for divorce. Throughout this waiting period, Suman was harassed not only by her in-laws but also by the Christian community. The members of her community blamed Suman for her failed marriage and ostracized her. The AALI team provided support to Suman during this difficult period and assisted her through conversations over the phone as and when needed.

Once the stipulated period was over, the AALI team filed for Suman's divorce by mutual consent and supported her in the court process. The team also accompanied Suman in retrieving her belongings from Nitish's house for safety concerns. With AALI's intervention, Suman was able to get a divorce by mutual consent, and she even got back all her belongings received by her in marriage as presents. Suman could now live a life according to her will. The courage and determination shown by Suman are an inspiration for all women and the AALI team.

Case Study 11

Aradhana Verma, an 18-year-old girl, had been facing sexual abuse by her father for a prolonged period. She revealed that there was no lock on the bathroom door, and whenever she would bathe, her father would enter the bathroom and assault her. Aradhana's sister-in-law and brother also prevented her from attending school and subjected her to physical abuse. She disclosed that her sister-in-law, Anuradha, sent her to unknown individuals who would exploit her. They also tried to fix her marriage with one of her father's friends, who was double her age but she resisted against this marriage and threatened them of suicide.

Furthermore, Aradhana's mother had lost her life due to complications arising from injuries inflicted by her father during an altercation over cooking food. Despite the severe burn injuries on her feet, Aradhana's mother continued to work tirelessly. Sadly, her mother's tuberculosis remained untreated, leading to her untimely demise.

At the age of 12, Aradhana witnessed a horrific incident involving her elder sister, Rekha Verma. Even her elder sister was sent by their sister-in-law, Anuradha, to stay with unknown individuals who subjected her to exploitation. Rekha was denied education and forced to undertake all household chores.

One fateful day, upon returning from school, Aradhana discovered that her elder sister had taken her own life by hanging. Aradhana claimed that her father had bribed the police to avoid any legal repercussions for this incident. Unable to endure the continuous abuse and fearing for her safety, Aradhana decided to escape. On 15th July 2012, she fled to Lucknow, seeking help from her family friend Sandeep, who is related to Anuradha. Aradhana revealed her ordeal and sought information about schools and hostels from Sandeep. In Lucknow, Aradhana took admission at Deen Dayal Inter College to continue her studies. She informed her family members of her whereabouts, but her brother and sister-in-law arrived on 9th January 2013, forcibly took her back to their home, and confined her.

Feeling trapped and unsafe, Aradhana reported her situation to the AALI office on 18th March 2013. The case worker provided her with legal advice and contacted the relevant police station regarding her case missing

complaint. Subsequently, she gave a statement under **Section 161[1] of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC)** to the police. The caseworker also suggested lodging an FIR against her father for the sexual abuse but she refused to take any criminal step against him as she only wants security and financial support to live her life.

On 21st March 2013, Aradhana wrote to the Uttar Pradesh Human Rights Commission and the Uttar Pradesh Women's Commission, requesting for security. Unfortunately, her requests were not initially granted.

Aradhana's legal battle began with her filing a case under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, against her father, brother and sister-in-law on 22nd March 2013 from Lucknow. She also demanded protection and interim relief under **Section 23[2]** of the Act. However, her initial pleas for protection were denied by the Judicial Magistrate.

Undeterred, Aradhana's and AALI's lawyers appealed against the denial of her requests for protection. Later, she decided to withdraw all her applications from court and initiate no legal proceedings against her family members. With the passage of time, Aradhana started working, taking tuitions for her living, and aspired to resume her education with financial support, creating a new life away from the abusive environment of her family.

[1] Section 161: Examination of witness by police

[2] Section 23 of PWDVA, 2005 -Power to grant interim and ex parte orders

Case Study 12

Geeta, a 25-year-old resident of Lakhimpur, had a deep aspiration to become a spiritual guru. Her journey towards spiritual enlightenment led her to join the Brahma Kumaris organization located in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, approximately two years ago. However, her pursuit of spirituality was met with staunch opposition from her parents, resulting in physical abuse and mental distress. This case study delves into Geeta's struggle for her spiritual calling, the challenges she faced, and the support she sought to overcome her difficult circumstances.

Geeta grew up in a traditional family in Lakhimpur, Uttar Pradesh. From a young age, she displayed a strong inclination towards spirituality and had a desire to become a spiritual guru. Her quest for spiritual knowledge led her to the Brahma Kumaris organization in Noida, which she joined in the year 2018.

Geeta's decision to join the spiritual organization was met with severe resistance from her parents. They vehemently opposed her choice and resorted to physical abuse to dissuade her from pursuing her spiritual path. Her parents were worried about her future and believed that her involvement with the organization would lead her astray.

In their attempt to change Geeta's mind, they subjected her to various forms of physical and psychological pressure, including forcing her to undergo unnecessary medical treatments, such as injections, as a means of control, they were forcing her to marry a man who was middle aged. Despite these challenges, Geeta remained determined to follow her calling.

Geeta's unwavering commitment to her spiritual journey drove her to leave her family home and move to Noida, where the Brahma Kumaris organization was based. Leaving her home was not an easy decision, as she was well aware of the emotional turmoil it would cause her family. However, she believed that her pursuit of spirituality was essential for her own growth and happiness.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, Geeta's parents, desperate to bring her back home, resorted to deception. They falsely informed her that her father was seriously ill and needed her immediate presence. Geeta, concerned for her father's health, returned home. However, upon her arrival, she was subjected to physical abuse and forcibly confined to a room within the house.

Fearing for her safety, Geeta managed to contact the police by dialing 100. She pleaded for help, but after speaking to her family members, the police instructed Geeta to obey her parents' wishes, believing their false claims of her father's illness.

After the first lockdown ended, Geeta knew that she could not continue living in such dire circumstances. She decided to seek support from professionals who could assist her in asserting her rights and ensuring her safety. Through the internet she reached out to AALI for legal support. She was advised to contact One Stop Center, Lakhimpur. Following the advice given to her, she contacted the One Stop Crisis Centers in Lakhimpur and Noida. The crisis center offered counseling services and connected her with the local police station and the station house officer (SHO).

With the assistance of the crisis center and the police, Geeta is now safe and no longer confined to her family home. She remains determined to continue her spiritual journey and is exploring ways to do so independently in Noida, where she feels more secure.

Geeta's story is a testament to the power of one's determination to follow their dreams, even in the face of extreme adversity. Her pursuit of spirituality led her to overcome significant obstacles, including family opposition and abuse. With the support of counseling services and law enforcement, Geeta has found the strength to chart her path towards spiritual fulfillment and independence in Noida. Her story serves as a reminder that individuals should have the freedom to pursue their passions and beliefs without fear of harm or coercion.

