



Working to end violence against South Asian women since 1985

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**MANAVI CALLS ON *DESIS* TO RISE-UP AND
END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY**

**SOUTH ASIANS FROM ACROSS NJ TO MARCH IN SILENCE
IN HONOR OF WOMEN SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE**

WHAT: Manavi, a New Jersey based women's rights organization, will organize a Silent March in honor of all South Asian women survivors of violence. Women's rights activists and members of the South Asian community from across the state of New Jersey will join Manavi in highlighting urgent concerns over the widespread abuse and exploitation that women from the community continue to face in New Jersey and across the U.S.

Between 1981 and 2002, community newspapers in the U.S. reported a total of 90 domestic violence related deaths and near-deaths in the South Asian community, 73 of the victims in these crimes were women and children. Manavi provides services to around 300 South Asian women facing violence and abuse every year.

Manavi organizes a Silent March highlighting violence against South Asian American women every October that coincides with Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This year it chose to hold the March in Iselin, NJ to raise awareness amongst the growing South Asian community in the area. As Maneesha Kelkar, Director of Manavi emphatically states, "Despite the extent of the problem, there continues to be an alarming silence that shrouds the issue of violence against women in the South Asian community. It is of critical importance that we as a community come together to acknowledge the graveness of this issue and take a pledge to end it. Violence against women is not an issue that affects women alone, it affects the entire community."

WHEN: Between 2:00 and 4:00pm on Saturday, October 3, 2009

WHERE: Oak Tree Road, Iselin (On the South Asian shopping strip)
The march will begin at the corner of **Oaktree Road and Middlesex Ave behind Hyderabad Sweets.**

WHO: Manavi staff members, Board members, volunteers and concerned members from the community

BACKGROUND: Manavi is a New Jersey based women's rights organization committed to ending all forms of violence and exploitation against South Asian women living in the U.S. Established in 1985, Manavi is the first organization of its kind in the U.S. Through a wide variety of programs such as culture specific supportive counseling, legal assistance through clinics and referrals, interpretation, support groups, and transitional housing, Manavi ensures that women of South Asian descent in the U.S can exercise their fundamental right to live a life of dignity that is safe and free from violence.