



“My real strength is not in the stick, it is in numbers.”

Sampat Pal Devi, Leader of the Gulabi Gang in northern India, an all-women vigilante force

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Dressed in pink saris and wielding bamboo sticks, the Gulabi gang are an all-women vigilante force, and their warrior leader is Devi. The daughter of a shepherd, she taught herself to read and write. When she was 12, she was married to an ice-cream seller and by 20, she had five children. One day in her village in Uttar Pradesh, one of the poorest states in India, she saw a man beating his wife; Devi begged him to stop but he refused. The following day, she returned with a small group of women, all carrying sticks, and beat him like he had beaten his wife. The gulabi, or "pink", gang was formed.

Devi, a controversial if effective character, refuses help from officials or NGOs, saying "they are always looking for kickbacks", preferring to let her members, most of whom are from the lowest caste in Indian society, take matters into their own hands. The sisterhood has stormed police stations when officers have refused to register complaints of abuse against women, attacked men who have abused their wives, stopped child marriages and encourages girls to go to school. Devi, who has a list of criminal charges against her, now has around 20,000 members; an outlaw on a rusty bicycle, she travels from village to village across northern India holding meetings and gathering new recruits. "Village society in India is loaded against women," she says. "It refuses to educate them, marries them off too early, barbers them for money. Village women need to study and become independent to sort it out themselves."

Get to know more about the Gulabi gang here: A film by Nishtha Jain

-The documentary official theatrical trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av39YJTnMM8>

-An excerpt from the film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AgnzWyiFmVQ>

-A report by Journeyman Pictures: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EXwH-kjSUSs>