

Community experiences of Patriarchy & Women's Resistance

By Lerato Tala

Release Date: 22 July 2022

Patriarchy, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and women's resistance are burning issues that have terrorised the livelihoods of women, in particular, working-class women for a long time. The working class cannot win against capitalism while they are still battling with their divisions and women are still discriminated against. Patriarchy is a system that believes men are the ones that hold power and women are largely excluded and seen as subordinates to men. Patriarchy fails to recognise the fact that women are the pillars of society. It is also reinforced by culture and religion, which according to Bongwiwe Mtanda, believes that God created Adam first and women were created from the ribs of the men, also Eva was created as Adam's entertainer since he was bored. Culture also strongly believes that men are the head of households and that even boy children hold more power than their mothers.

Because patriarchy does not recognise women as full beings who are equal to men, it has resulted in men treating women as their property. This has led to a high number of GBV and femicide. Men who believe they own women, also believe they can abuse and kill them at any time, coupled with a poor justice system, the numbers keep rising.

Women globally have been resisting patriarchy, responding to GBV and demanding equal space at the table. Women in the informal settlement of Daveyton came together to fight GBV that they were experiencing. They all contributed money to buy whistles in case a woman is being beaten by their partners then they would blow the whistle and the whole community will know. Women are not starting now to resist, they have been fighting against apartheid, pass laws, rights to vote as women, GBV and equal pay for decades.

This article was submitted as part of the Imbila Yesu publication produced daily for the duration of the Winter School in 2022 (17-22 July 2022). It appeared in Edition No. 1, released on 22 July 2022.

You may republish this article, so long as you credit the author and Karibu! Online (www.Karibu.org.za), and do not change the text. Please include a link back to the original article.