

14th May 2025

Public Statement

The Haryana State Commission for Women (Women's Commission) issued summons to me on 12th May 2025 in relation to certain posts made by me on social media. My lawyers have submitted my detailed reply to these summons and have represented me in front of the Commission today, 14th May 2025.

The screenshots attached to the notice make it clear that my remarks have been completely misunderstood and that the Commission has no jurisdiction whatsoever in the matter. The Women's Commission is a body that serves an important function; however, the summons issued to me fail to highlight how my post is contrary to the rights of or laws for women.

Contrary to the allegations, my post appreciated the fact that the armed forces chose Colonel Sofia Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh for the press conference to highlight the fact that the dream of the founders of our Republic, of an India which is united in its diversity, is still very much alive. I even applauded members of the right wing who supported Colonel Qureshi and invited them to have the same attitude for common Indian Muslims who face demonisation and persecution on a daily basis. If anything, my entire comments were about safeguarding the lives of both citizens and soldiers. Furthermore there is nothing remotely misogynistic about my comments that could be construed as anti-women.

I have used my academic training and public voice to advocate for peace due to the high cost of war. At the same time I have analysed and commented on the manner in which *"care has been taken by the Indian armed forces to not target military or civilian installations or infrastructure so that there is no unnecessary escalation."* This reflects a clear appreciation of the Indian military's measured and proportional approach and indeed I have condemned the use of terrorists by the Pakistani military to destabilise the region. In fact in my analysis I have shown that this puts *"the onus on the Pakistani military to make sure it cannot hide any longer behind terrorists and non-state actors."* I further added that the Pak military has used these tactics *"to destabilise the region for far too long."* Animated by a profound moral commitment to minimising the human cost of armed conflict, my statements solely express concern over the rhetorical excesses and reckless warmongering exhibited by certain sections of the civilian public.

My academic record as well as my public writings and policy work which, at times have involved collaboration with senior bureaucrats, military officers, politicians and others from the Government of India, both active and retired, attest to the fact that I have also made it a priority to uphold the principles of our Constitution, safeguard the morality enshrined therein and protect the unity and integrity of India. All my public writings have always tried to uphold the principles of justice, liberty, fraternity and equality and have always sought to promote peace and communal harmony.

Simply put, I have exercised my fundamental right to freedom of thought and speech in order to promote peace and harmony and to applaud the Indian armed forces for their resolute action, while criticising those who preach hatred and seek to destabilise India. I am surprised that the Women's Commission, while overreaching its jurisdiction, has misread and misunderstood my posts to such an extent that they have inverted their meaning. This is a new form of censorship and harassment, which invents issues where there are none. I have faith in the process of law and know that my fundamental, constitutional, and statutory rights will be protected. I reserve my right to take legal action against all those who are using this Notice of summons to make defamatory claims about me.

Jai Hind.