

India: Condemn atrocities against Rehna Fathima

Monday 27 July 2020, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 24 July 2020).

Political Resolution Proposed by the Democratic Alliance for the Immediate Attention of the Public and the Government against the Atrocities against Rehna Fathima.

We, who work in artistic, cultural and socio-political arenas strongly protest against the atrocities perpetrated by the patriarchal values of society and the government against Rehna Fathima who has been working for the democratic rights, gender equality of women and other marginalized people over a decade.

We all know that Rahna's strong and clear political stance in the struggle for sexuality and gender justice has prompted the right wing cultural and self imposed moral police men, the Sangh Parivar organizations and the government to turn against her. Rehna, who was legally prosecuted in connection with the Sabarimala visit, was fired from her job following an internal inquiry and alleged that she'd tarnished the image of the central government institution. The government has so far not taken any action against those who called rude words on her, threatened and abused her on social media, attacked her house and threatened to rape her daughter.

The question is whether we have been able to solve the psychological trauma of the attacks on women and their families, the problems of these women, including Rehna face professionally and legally, rather than parting the ways after the boastful declarations that this is a great advancement on gender equality and that the women who have climbed Sabarimala are revolutionary stars. We have a political responsibility to support women who have moved forward in the face of all legal, personal, social and political issues that may arise from intervening in this matter. Those who remain silent during the discussion of such emotionally provocative issues in the society not only put forward the same moral argument, but also support the above mentioned aggressors.

The cultural and political consciousness of Kerala has taken the same narrow stance in the case related to the video shared by Rehna on You-tube regarding the politics of the human body. The [progressive' Kerala and the government have taken a political stand supporting the patriarchal society which sees the female body as a sexual object knocking down the entire struggle waged by women and gender-sexual minorities and the rights gained through such struggles. We have seen that the government authorities released the culprit of Palathayi rape case on bail, neglecting the POCSO and other relevant sections on account of the explicit evidence against the culprit who happens to be a BJP leader. The same government included the POCSO and Juvenile Justice Act in the case against Rehna when she was permitting her son to display his artistic talent on her body at the request of her own children. Explicitly, Rehna's politics is body politics that questions the patriarchal systemic powers over the female body, the moral codes that deny equality and the materialisation of the female body. It ascertains a woman's authority over her own body and](#)

considers the body itself as a political weapon. Anyone is free to agree or disagree with her political views. But illegal cases, threats and mob violence are all signs of a fascist society that has not yet developed a sense of citizenship or a sense of equality. It is the responsibility of the civil society and the democratic government to defend Rehna against the attacks of the Sangh-Parivar or other moral' guardians.

Police have not been able to produce even a single piece of authentic proof for arresting her on a serious charge of inciting religious hatred (295A) with the aim of instilling communal riots in the society. Lucidly, Rehna is being targeted without taking any legal action in similar cases, is because of her Muslim identity and independent lifestyle, challenging the traditional patriarchal norms. So far we've been witnessing the skill of the Sangh Parivar in upholding the moral concepts by suppressing the lives of queer/women that are not confined to the common social concepts. These social injustices will remain intact if we do not move to stronger protests questioning the human rights abuses they are experiencing at present.

Despite numerous reactions in support of Rehna on social media and in the press, she has not received any assistance in pursuing the case in the High Court and the Supreme Court. Therefore, we appeal to all those who believe in freedom of expression and women's right to their own bodies, for an active fellowship and cooperation to support her on this occasion.

We urge the general public and all friends working in the cultural and socio-political and environmental spheres, to provide the necessary social, economic, emotional, legal and political support to Rehna and other women who are struggling with their political stands on such issues and to unite in the wider struggle for gender equality.

We urge the government of Kerala to withdraw all the false cases including the charges on the Sabarimala case against Rehna and to take necessary steps to end the abuse of power by POCSO.

We demand strong legal action be taken against those who illegally made threats on social media, attacking her BSNL quarters and threatening to rape her daughter.

We urge BSNL to rescind the dismissal of Rehna despite several legal explanations and presentation of authentic evidence before the commission of enquiry.

We also urge BSNL to withdraw the action to expel Rehna and her family from BSNL quarters before the final verdict on the petition filed by Rehna against her unfair dismissal.

We appeal to all those who stand for women's rights and sexuality rights to support Rehna Fathima and generate wider support on this issue, within your means and reach.

In Solidarity,

Democratic Alliance, Kerala.

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2. Dr. Reshma Bharadwaj (HOD, MSW Dept, Kalady Sanskrit University)
3. Maithreyan (Social Activist)
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5. Adv. C R Neelakandan (Social Activist)
6. Dr. J Devika (Writer, Centre for Development Studies)
7. K P Sasi (Film Maker, Media Activist)
8. Anwar Ali (Poet)

9. Dileep Raj(Writer)
10. Prof. Kusumam Joseph (Social Activist, NAPM Keralam)
11. I Gopinath (Chief Editor, The Critic)
12. Priyanandan(Film Maker)
13. Deepa Vasudevan (Queer Activist, Sahayatrika)
14. Gopal Menon (Film Maker)
15. O P Raveendran (Social Activist)
16. Sreeja Neyyattinkara (Social Activist)
17. Musthafa Desamangalam(Film Maker)
18. Raghu Eraviperoor(Dalit Rights Activist)
19. P Baburaj (Activist Filmmaker)
20. Maithri Prasad Eliyamma(Researcher, Social Activist)
21. Sheethal Shyam(Queer Activist)
22. Kani Kusruthi (Actress)
23. Faisal Faisu(Queer Activist)
24. Jayan Cheriyan (Film Maker)
25. Asha Achy Joseph (Professor, SH College, Thevara)
26. Adv. Kukku Devaky (Social Activist)
27. Mriduladevi (Dalit Activist)
28. Adv. Anoop V R(Social Activist)
29. Ravishankar N (Poet)
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31. P K Kittan (Gramika, Kuzhikkattussery)
32. Suma Philip(Social Activist)
33. K Santhoshkumar (Social Activist)
34. Chinju Aswathy(Queer Activist)
35. P C Mohanan (Irinjalakuda Koottaayma)
36. Radha Gomathy (Theatre Artist)
37. N D Venu(State President, RYFI)
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43. Ahana Mekhal (Queer Activist, Sahayatrika)
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45. Prof. Gayathri (Professor)
46. Sreejith Kannankattil(Journalist)
47. Ramseena Umaiba (Social Activist)
48. Narayanan(Theatre Artist)
49. Abdul Rauf Mulakkal (Education Consultant)
50. Adv. Sameera Erukulangara (Entrepreneur)
51. Aparna Sivakami (Teacher)
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54. Maya S Paramasivam (Social Activist)
55. Shilpa Krishnan (Dynamic Action)
56. Janaki Ravan (Journalist)
57. Adv. Jahangeer (Lawyer, High Court)
58. Janet Theres(Media Activist)
59. Jithendran (Student)

60. Sanoj Mamo (Theatre Artist)
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62. Aswathy Krishna(Social Activist)
63. Prasanth Prabha Sarangadharan (Social Activist)
64. Shafeek Subaida Hakkeem (Writer, Media Activist)
65. C A Ajithan (Social Activist)
66. Anil Jose(Human Wellness Study Centre)
67. Prasannan Dharmapalan (Gooseberry Publications)
68. Akhi Nandiyodu (Photographer)
69. Arumukhan Pathichira(Social Activist)
70. P Jimshar(Writer, Film Maker)
71. Rupesh Kumar(Social Activist)
72. Suja Bharathi(Social Activist)
73. Samitha Sujay (Social Activist)
74. Adv. Babila(Advocate, Delhi)
75. Priyanka Sivadas (Photographer)
76. Irfana Izzath (Poet)
77. Smitha Sailesh(Writer)
78. Shahana Sumi (Asst. Professor)
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80. Anjitha T A (Law Student)
81. Sulfath A (Student)
82. Manoj K Sreedhar (Social Activist)
83. Hari Payikkadan(Cinematographer)
84. Hari Vismayam (Film Maker)
85. Jomol Joseph (Social Activist)
86. Kavitha K (Entrepreneur)
87. Varughese Thomas (Entrepreneur)
88. Rahul Mahesh(Film Maker)
89. Sisilu K K (Journalist)
90. Soya Sathyan(Artist)
91. Sharmila (Architect)
92. Jijin Gulmohar (Social Activist)
93. Radhika Viswanathan (Social Activist)
94. Anju Elizabeth(Poet)
95. Shamjith (Social Activist)
96. Manu Manushyajathi
97. Vino Bastian(Entrepreneur)
98. Smintoj Alappad(Engineer)
99. Gireesh C M (Publisher)
100. Prasannakumar T N (Media Activist)
101. Sarath Cheloor (Social Activist, NAPM Keralam)

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P.S.

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