

PRESS RELEASE

CJP Demands FIR, CCTV Preservation and Independent Probe into Alleged Police Assault on Journalists Shaheen and Nafisa Khan

Public petition backed by journalists, activists, lawyers, academics and public figures calls for accountability over alleged unlawful detention and assault inside Saket Police Station

More than 500 people from across the fields of law, journalism, academia, human rights, civil liberties, politics, feminism and civil society have endorsed a public petition by Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP) demanding an FIR and an independent investigation into allegations that journalists Shaheen Khan and Nafisa Khan were unlawfully detained and assaulted inside Delhi's Saket Police Station.

The petition, addressed to Delhi High Court Chief Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya and Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar, IPS, sent on September 16, 2026 demands for four immediate measures: registration of an FIR, preservation of all relevant CCTV footage, a fair and independent investigation, and criminal and departmental action against police personnel found responsible.

The two women journalists, also Muslim, have alleged that they were detained while reporting in Saket on September 3, 2026, around the inauguration of a new wing of Max Smart Super Speciality Hospital, an event attended by high functionaries of the ruling government.

Shaheen Khan has named Saket SHO Dinesh Kumar and women police personnel Sonam Solanki and Renuka Chaudhary, among others, in her account of the incident. The journalists have alleged that their phones were seized, that they were threatened with an FIR and lock-up, and that they were slapped, punched and kicked, had their hair and clothes pulled and were dragged through the police station. They have also alleged the use of a baton.

The sisters have further alleged that the incident took a communal turn after police personnel saw the name "Mohammad Khan" on an incoming call and made a remark concerning Shaheen's Muslim identity.

These allegations require a criminal investigation, not an institutional denial.

CJP's petition points to the existence of potentially crucial evidence, including CCTV footage from the police station, medical and medico-legal records, station diary entries, duty rosters, PCR records and witness accounts. The journalists have identified the reception area, corridors and staircase as locations where the alleged events took place.

CJP is therefore demanding that all relevant CCTV footage be immediately preserved and secured against deletion, alteration, tampering or selective destruction. The petition invokes the Supreme Court's directions in *Paramvir Singh Saini v. Baljit Singh*, which recognised CCTV surveillance in police establishments as an important safeguard for accountability and protection of fundamental rights.

Thirteen days without an FIR

The petition raises particular concern over the reported absence of an FIR against the police personnel named by the journalists for 13 days following the incident. Shaheen and Nafisa have submitted a complaint, identified potential evidence and undergone medical examinations. Yet, according to the petition, there was still no reported FIR against the police personnel named by them six days after the alleged incident.

A complaint alleging police violence cannot be investigated by simply asking the police establishment accused of the violence to investigate itself.

CJP is calling for an investigation that is independent and impartial and that is not controlled by officers named in the complaint or personnel directly subordinate to them. The investigation must examine the circumstances of the journalists' detention, the seizure of their phones, the alleged assault, the alleged communal remarks and the conduct of every police personnel present.

The petition also raises a larger concern about police accountability and the safety of journalists carrying out their work. Lawful restrictions around a VIP event may be enforced. But such restrictions cannot provide a licence for unlawful detention, physical assault, threats or humiliation. Nor can a police station become a place where allegations of police violence are shielded from scrutiny because the alleged perpetrators belong to the police force.

CJP's petition states:

“No uniform can place a person above the law.”

The petition calls for:

- Immediate registration of an FIR on the complaint of Shaheen and Nafisa Khan against the police personnel named by them;
- Immediate preservation of all relevant CCTV footage from Saket Police Station and surrounding areas;
- A fair, independent and impartial investigation into the alleged detention, assault, phone seizure and communal remarks; and
- Criminal and departmental action against any police personnel found responsible.

Among those who have endorsed it are Brinda Karat, senior CPI(M) leader and former Rajya Sabha MP; Aruna Roy, social activist and member of the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan; former Supreme Court judge Justice Markandey Katju; former judge Anjana Prakash; Rajya Sabha MP Sagarika Ghose; danseuse and feminist Mallika Sarabhai; writer and feminist activist Pamela Philipose; feminist, writer and former MP Syeda Hamid, Hasina Khan, feminist, Ghazala Wahab, writer and journalist; Tanika Sarkar, academic; Muniza Khan, social scientist and activist, Teesta Setalvad, journalist, writer and human rights activist, secretary, CJP; Shabnam Hashmi, feminist activist; Geeta Seshu, journalist and co-editor of the Free Speech Collective; Sujata Madhok of the Delhi Union of Journalists; Chayanika Shah, queer feminist activist; Sandhya Gokhale, working with feminist and civil liberty collectives, Anjali Bharadwaj, social activist; Bhasha Singh, journalist and writer; Vertika Mani, Organising Secretary of PUCL; Javed Anand, CJP and Indian Muslims for Secular Democracy, Raghunandan Maluste, President, CJP, Dolphy D'Souza, CJP and spokesperson of the Bombay Catholic Sabha; Sameer Wagle of Mumbai for Peace; Eric Pinto of the National Alliance of People's Movements, Goa; and Pallavi Nayak of the All Indian Professional Congress (AIPC), among hundreds of others. CJP calls upon the Delhi Police and the authorities concerned to act without further delay.

The breadth of the endorsements reflects a shared concern over the alleged use of police power against journalists and the need for credible mechanisms to hold police personnel accountable when allegations of abuse arise. The question is simple: will the allegations be investigated, or will the police be allowed to investigate themselves?

Justice for Shaheen and Nafisa Khan. End police impunity.