

# **CV OF ABHA SINGH**

## **Advocate, Social Activist and Former Civil Servant**

Abha Singh is a former civil servant and presently an advocate practicing at the High Court of Judicature at Bombay. She is a renowned social activist who has done considerable work in the realm of woman's rights, gender equality and justice. She did her schooling from Loreto Convent and her graduation from Isabella Thoburn College Lucknow, where she topped her batch. She has done an M.Phil on Child Rights from JNU, New Delhi and her LL.B. from Mumbai University. In 1994 she cleared the UPSC examination and joined the Indian Postal Service. Her father was a gallantry award-winning police officer. Her mother had the unique distinction of being the first woman from her village to attain Post-Graduation in 1961 from Allahabad University.

She worked as a customs appraiser in Bombay custom house from 1991-94 and then joined the Indian Postal Service in 1995. During her stint as Director Postal Services in Uttar Pradesh she pioneered the usage of solar panels to power post offices – thereby making advanced postal services accessible to the remotest of villages. One little post office in Gauriganj village came on the national stage when Shri Rahul Gandhi himself came to inaugurate it. It gave an impetus to harness solar energy in places where electricity is scarce.

Abha Singh was the third runner-up and the lead woman finalist in the Times of India Lead India Competition in 2008. Her constant advocacy on women and governance affairs received strong public support which led to this achievement. She was further awarded the Chevening Scholarship to attend the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2008. Her study on the economic and social progress of Indian women in the United Kingdom titled "The Integration of Asian

Women in the United Kingdom” was presented and received widespread acknowledgement by the academic community in London and the UK. Consequently, she was once again invited to speak on ‘Honour Killings in India and the Legal Complications of Section 498A” at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London in 2010.

Sensing the call of duty beyond service, she gave up a successful career in the Government to serve a larger cause by donning the robes of the legal profession. Abha Singh obtained a law degree from Bombay University while working as a Government.

Her deep devotion to taking up issues where justice has been compromised has been reflected in her work. Due to this endeavor of hers, she has vociferously spoken out on various critical issues through the media. One of the major issues was when Justice Katju, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Press Council of India wrote to the governor of Maharashtra asking him to pardon Sanjay Dutt for his involvement in the 1993 bomb blasts. She was the first to bring to the notice of the public that he was exerting undue influence and wrote to the governor rebutting his flawed assertions. She also highlighted Zaibunissa Kazi’s case so as to ensure that the law was not being misused for the powerful.

Abha Singh firmly believes that true freedom requires the rule of law and justice, and a judicial system in which the rights of some are not secured by the denial of rights to others. The arrest of the two girls in Palghar for their innocent comments on Facebook was an affront to the spirit of the Constitution. Abha Singh took up the cause of the two Palghar case in right earnest when she learnt about their unlawful arrest by the Police. Being a champion of women’s rights she approach the Maharashtra State Commission for Women seeking justice for the

victims. Due to her perseverance the guilty cops were suspended and the girls were exonerated honourably.

Through her NGO *RannSamar*, she offers free legal assistance advocacy to helpless women and slum dwellers who have been unfairly persecuted by local authorities and builders for land that is rightfully theirs. She recognizes the importance of women's rights for the well-being and development of the nation and helps the weaker sections fight the injustice meted out to them.

When the BMC gave notice to demolish the "Puncham Pyao" water fountain opposite Bombay Gymkhana she successfully fought for them and got a stay from the Court. As a result Mumbaikars getting down at CST and Churchgate can quench their thirst at no cost.

To check the spreading obscenity she got an FIR registered against the organisers of AIB Roast. She has been successfully pursuing the Salman Khan Hit-and-Run case to ensure that the rule of law is upheld and the youth are educated against the hazards of drunken driving.

Abha Singh is married to YP Singh and is the mother of two children who are pursuing a career in law.

### **AWARDS AND CITATIONS**

1. Acclaimed as a woman achiever and a role model for others, Tata Consultancy Services and Taj Group conferred the **Women Achievers Award in April'2008**.
2. **Shatabdi Varsh Samman** by Bank of Baroda for outstanding contribution to society through dissemination of knowledge in July'2008.
3. Awarded Government Citizen **Karmaveer Puraskaar** by Confederation of NGOs, New Delhi. Karmaveer Noble Laureates, 2010.

4. Mumbai **Mayors award** on International Womens Day on 8th March '2011.