



Kerala Catholic Bishops' Council (KCBC)

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KCBC Protests the Unconstitutional Recommendation of the National Women's Commission

The National Women's Commission Chairperson Ms. Rekha Sharma's reported recommendation to the Union Home Ministry to ban the Sacrament of Confession among Christians in India was shocking not only to the Christians but to all who believe in the right to freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitution of India. The Chairperson has ventured into something which is totally out of her prerogative, and without any consultation with the Christian Churches and communities, and without considering the moral, theological or psychological aspects of confession among the Christians. The Chairperson has crossed the boundaries of her statutory powers of jurisdiction. It is an attack on Christian faith and spiritual practice. We strongly feel the recommendation unwarranted and violating the honor and credibility of the Christian community. We suspect communal and political motives behind this interference into the spiritual affairs of the Church.

Confession, according to Christian faith, is a Holy Sacrament. It is a way to spiritual progress and salvation. It is a practice inherited from the early Christian communities. The sanctity of the seal of confession was held so high in the history of the Church that there are instances of priests having sacrificed their lives to protect it. An allegation that a priest of the Orthodox Syrian Church misused the information he got from the confession of a girl to sexually abuse her along with two of his priest friends for several years even after her marriage is now being investigated by the local police. The National Women's Commission based on this incident conducted its own inquiries and has now come up with the strange recommendation to ban the Holy Sacrament of Confession among all Christian denominations and communities of India. We believe that the motive of the Commission is to spread tension and religious unrest among the minorities and to create division and polarization among people for ulterior gains. We strongly protest this unbecoming move from the part of a person in the responsible position of the Government.

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