OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE : DELHI.

No. /PRO/PHQ, dated, Delhi the /2011

To

Shri Sanjoy Narain
Editor-in-Chief,
Hindustan Times,
New Delhi.

Subject:- Regarding News report "**A capital unsafe for women"** .

Sir,

This refers to the above mentioned byline report which appeared in your esteemed newspaper on 09.02.2011. Unfortunately the crime figures cited in the report and the picture presented about the safety of women in the city are grossly misleading, despite the fact that the concerned reporter was briefed by the undersigned at length in this regard. Many of the points emphasized by me, have been conveniently ignored in the report.

Firstly, it is clarified that only 17 rape cases have been registered in Delhi during January, 2011 (as against 25 cited in your report) out of which 95% cases have been worked out. The accused persons in all these cases were found to be known to the victim and were first timers. Similarly, 29 cases have been registered under the head of molestation of women during January 2011 (as against 42 cited) out of which 83% cases have been worked out. Again the accused persons were found to be known to the victims in most of these cases and first timers as well.

An analysis of the figures of last five years shows that while the projected population of Delhi has increased from 158 lakhs in 2005 to 182

lakhs in 2010 (an increase of 15%), the incidents of rape and molestation of women have actually come down in the city. While the figures were 658 cases of rape and 762 cases of molestation in the year 2005, the same stood at 507 and 601 respectively in 2010. The per lakh incidence of rape has come down from 4.16 in 2005 to 2.78 in 2010. Similarly the per lakh incidence under the head Molestation of Women has come down from 4.81 in 2005 to 3.30 in 2010.

The undersigned had emphasized while interacting with your reporter that in most of the cases, only persons known and having access to the family were found to be involved. In such crimes, there is little scope of prevention by the police. I had clearly highlighted to your reporter that as compared to Mumbai and Kolkata where citizens sharply react to any incidents of molestation and eve-teasing, such reactions are totally lacking or missing on the part of citizens of Delhi who have a vital role to play in preventing harassment to the women travelling in the city.

It has to be appreciated here that police in not the only stake holder in preventing such crimes, against women where the perpetrators are mostly known persons only. It is, in fact, a socio cultural problem in which there is a large role of the people themselves and the social fabric of a city. It leads to the point which I had highlighted that in ensuring safety of women, the active cooperation of members of public is of paramount importance since police presence may not be available at each place of incident of eve-teasing or molestation.

In Dhaula Kuan rape case, for instance, the police had reacted very promptly and the case was solved within a short time through professional investigation and highly painstaking efforts, but it was the gross negligence on the part of the concerned BPO vehicle in dropping the girls late in the night at a distance from their residence that led to such an incident.

In a recent case of R.K. Puram, a school girl went on her own with her boy friend who sexually assaulted her alongwith his two accomplices. The culprits were arrested promptly but needless to say that such cases are very difficult to prevent.

In another incident of molestation of a woman by a drunk man in Dhaula Kuan area, the mention made in your report that no one from the police picket came to her rescue is not factually correct and gives a wrong impression to the reader about police response. The fact is that it was the nearby police picket which had responded immediately in this case and caught the accused man red-handed.

In a growing metropolis like Delhi, there are major contributory factors like unplanned urbanization, over population, lack of privacy, bordering rural and settlement areas, disparities in income, unemployment, growing consumerism/ materialism, loosening of social control/family discipline and psychological reasons behind the cases of crime against women. Added to this is the impact of mass media and the umpteen advertisements which sell a life style that many want but cannot afford leading to crimes of various forms.

I had also elaborated the large number of measures we have recently taken for ensuring safety of women in the city, which too have not been clearly highlighted by the reporter. I would like to again list these measures below:-

- Setting up of Women Help-Desks in all Police Stations
- PCR Vans to help stranded women during night
- Deployment of women staff in beats and PCR Vans
- Posting of women as SDPO's and SHO's

- Issuing of order under section 144 Cr.PC directing BPOs, corporate and media houses for taking certain steps for the safety and security of women employees.
- Special measures for North-Eastern students.
- Surprise checks in buses, markets and cinemas
- 24x7 Women's Helpline (1091) and the Anti-Obscene Calls and Anti-Stalking Helpline (1096).

Delhi Police has also organized gender sensitization and legal awareness programs for police personnel in association with reputed NGOs to create a 'Gender-friendly Environment' in the Police Stations. As a result the Delhi Police is always available and promptly responds to any call from a woman in distress and women in large numbers avail services of our helplines or approach PCR Vans/Police Station for a solution to their problems.

In view of the above stated facts and circumstances, I would like to emphasize that it is unfair on the part of the media to refer to the city of Delhi as "unsafe for women". Such projection would only cause unnecessary insecurity among womenfolk in the capital. On the other hand, a story based on objective analysis and correct facts as enumerated above, would go a long way in educating the public and instilling further confidence in their minds. It is, therefore, requested that your reporters may be briefed that such sensitive issues need to be written carefully keeping ground realities in view so as to give a balanced view to the readers.

(B.K. Gupta)
Commissioner of Police,
Delhi.