

Dr. Ishita Mukhopadhyay
President

Ms. Mini Sukumar
General Secretary

**STATEMENT OF IAWS
on Prof. Zarina Bhatta (1933-2023)**

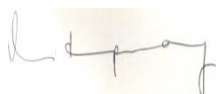
“May we all, especially women have the strength to move ahead despite the obstacles. I have done it, and so can you.” This is the inspiration that IAWS drew from among its founding member, Prof Zarina Bhatta, through the long years of her leadership as IAWS President (1999-2002) and to the women's studies movement through the years. She provided intellectual leadership for the 10th National Conference of IAWS where the overarching theme was “Sustaining Democracy: Challenges in the New Millennium”.

For the newer generation of IAWS members, Prof Zarina's writings and studies are not only poignant and moving but are always inspiring. That IAWS and women's studies movement's, the direction it took, particularly its focus on marginalized communities and castes, its link with patriarchies of varied kinds, was highlighted by Prof Zarina's life itself and the pathbreaking writings, the memoirs in particular. Always so warm and affectionate to all who interacted with her, the confidence that Prof Zarina gave to one and all, cannot ever be forgotten. This stalwart authored an inspiring autobiography (2016) titled, *Purdah To Piccadilly—A Muslim Woman's Struggle For Identity*, Sage Publication and edited volume (2022), *A Portrait of Ageing: Essays and Reflections*, Destiny Media. Our generation of feminists endearingly called her Zarina Apa. She was much ahead of her time in terms of her life choices, academic pursuit and feminist commitments.

Zarina Apa did her bachelor degree in sociology and political science and master's degree in sociology from The London School of Economics and Political Sciences, UK. After completing her Ph.D., she joined Jesus and Mary College, Delhi as a Sociology Professor and taught for 10 years. She touched lives of hundreds of students, teachers, research scholars and social activist. She was actively involved with YWCA and very enthusiastically took part in women's studies gatherings during 1980s and 1990s. Her focus areas of research were women in the unorganised sector and challenges faced by Indian Muslim Women's issues. Her pioneering study for ILO on women in the bidi industry, received considerable global recognition for its analytical insights.

Zarina Apa was the recipient of the Devi Awards 2015. Ever-so-youthful, she kept in touch with 3 generations of friends and fellow travellers in women's rights movement through social media. Due to her compassionate and empathetic attitude, her courage of conviction in social justice and confidence to take bold decision, Zarina Apa received tremendous respect and reverence from all those whose lives she touched.

IAWS pays glowing tribute to Zarina Apa and expresses solidarity with her family members.



Ishita Mukhopadhyay



Mini Sukumar