



women's action forum خواتین محاذ عمل

WAF Statement on the false vilification of Aurat March

Women's Action Forum is shocked and deeply concerned by the deliberate misrepresentation and politicization of a Lahore Aurat March banner by certain elements in society and its use to target political workers in another city. The mischievous and mala fide intent of this act is apparent in the way one woman's experience of sexual abuse suffered as a nine year old child at the hands of her middle aged qari, was selected and taken out of context from a banner comprising many such testimonies, and appended to the flag of another women's organisation allegedly as the French national flag. Not only does this act make a mockery of one woman's pain, it trivializes and condones a heinous crime against the most vulnerable members of our society.

In their determination to vilify Aurat March and present its challenge to patriarchal violence as part of an anti-Islamic 'foreign' agenda, the perpetrators of this act have not only shown that there is no level so low that they cannot sink to it, by placing a woman's personal testimony of violence suffered as a child in 21st century Pakistan in a religious context, they have showed their willingness to manipulate facts to serve their own interests and have themselves insulted the religion they claim to profess and venerate and committed the very offence they want to attribute to Aurat March. The mala fide intent of the perpetrators is further substantiated by their social media campaign based on doctored video clips of the Aurat March and its slogans accompanied by open incitement to extreme violence.

Perjury with malice aforethought and incitement to violence are serious offences against the secular and sharia laws of Pakistan and cannot be taken lightly. The government of Pakistan is responsible for the safety and security of all citizens and the maintenance of law and order. WAF urges the relevant state authorities to take serious note of this blatant and proven violation of the laws of the land and take due action against perpetrators.

WAF Working Committee, Lahore

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