

News

Actor Shwetha Menon's FIR is quashed by the Kerala High Court, which refers to baseless character attacks on women as "social violence."



An FIR against Malayalam actress Shwetha Menon was rejected by the [Kerala High Court](#), which ruled that the accusations against her were unfounded and seemed to be motivated by malice. Justice C. S. Dias also denounced attempts to disparage a woman's character without proof in a sharply worded order dated March 11, referring to it as a **"pernicious form of social violence."**

A complaint stating that Menon had produced or transmitted pornographic content using footage from her previous movies and commercials was the basis for the prosecution. The Information Technology Act's **Section 67** and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act's

provisions were cited in the FIR. Nevertheless, the High Court determined that there was insufficient material or prima facie evidence in the complaint to substantiate the allegations.

Menon's request was granted by the court, which noted that the complaint's timing—just prior to the withdrawal of nominations for the position of President of the **Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes (AMMA)**—strongly suggested a "**mala fide and vexatious**" motivation. After running for office, Menon was chosen to serve as AMMA president.

The judge observed that the alleged offenses were not proven after reviewing the complaint, FIR, and accessible documents. It further held that it seemed the claims were made with the intention of damaging the actor's reputation.

The court emphasized the social ramifications of such accusations in a more general statement. It noted that "to malign the character of a woman without any foundation or substance is a pernicious form of social violence," noting that although these accusations are simple to make, the stigma they produce is frequently long-lasting.

The ruling also made clear how frequently public women are singled out. It may become challenging to beat a woman on the grounds of logic, merit, or reason after she gains notoriety, renown, and reputation in public life. Then, the weapon that is most commonly used is social humiliation, the court stated.

The High Court criticized regressive societal views, stating that while regressive civilizations use moral policing and slander, progressive societies assess people according to their contributions. The court noted that "**a society exposes its own intellectual poverty when it focuses more on a woman's image than her accomplishments.**"

The court also made it clear that women's empowerment does not necessitate that they adhere to impractical ideals of moral excellence. Rather, it focused on acknowledging their uniqueness and accomplishments in a fair and dignified manner. It went on, "**A society that allows a woman to be demonized out of jealousy or hatred is nothing but an embodiment of injustice.**"

The [High Court](#) had already halted the case's proceedings in August of last year, citing Menon's argument that procedural safeguards—like requesting a police report and conducting a preliminary inquiry—had not been followed before directing an investigation.

Menon's appearances in movies like Paleri Manikkyam, Rathinirvedham, and Kalimannu, as well as her presence in a condom advertisement, were included in the complaint, which was brought by a man named Martin Menachery. It claimed that Menon had behaved in an indecent and filthy way. Allegations that connected her to pornographic websites were also included.

In her defense, Menon said that all of the movies and commercials mentioned had been in the public domain for years and had been properly certified and edited. She also mentioned that she had won the Kerala State Award for Best Actress for her role in Paleri Manikkyam. She insisted that the lawsuit was made only to undermine her candidacy in the AMMA elections, calling the accusations "absurd and per se defamatory."

The High Court determined that the accusations were "sweeping and unsubstantiated" and insufficient to attract the offenses invoked, agreeing with her submissions and ending the proceedings against her.