

कुलदीप इंदौरा

संसद सदस्य

(लोक सभा)

श्री गंगानगर – राजस्थान



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दिनांक: 28/10/2025

डी.ओ.नं.: 545

TO WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

I write to, in the strongest possible terms, recommend Gauri Gupta, an extraordinary young leader whose moral courage, intellectual clarity, and transformative vision mark her as a changemaker of rare caliber. As a Member of Parliament for the Ganganagar constituency (Scheduled Caste), Rajasthan, representing the Indian National Congress in the 18th Lok Sabha, I have over 23 years of extensive experience in public service, governance, and policy-making.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of observing and mentoring some of the most promising young changemakers in the country, but I can say without hesitation that Gauri Gupta is a once-in-a-generation mind; a combination of intellect and strategic foresight, who possesses a great deal of empathy and sense of purpose. I understand that superlatives are often overused in recommendation letters, but I feel compelled to underscore the absolutely exceptional nature of this candidate. In my career working with youth leaders and researchers, I have never encountered another student with Gauri's depth of thought or maturity of conviction.

I first met Gauri when she interviewed me as part of her research on institutional infrastructures and caste inequities in India. From that very first conversation, it was clear that she was eager to build an understanding of visible and invisible caste hierarchies, specific to Rajasthan's environment. She asked questions that were as probing as they were humane, revealing a mind that seeks clarity without judgment and listens with an attentiveness rare even among seasoned researchers.

Gauri's conversations reveal a mind in constant evolution. She is deeply introspective, always reflecting on her place in the world and how best to use her intellect in service of others. Most recently, she conceptualized and designed a first-of-its-kind Digital Museum of Untouchability, an interactive exhibition that showcases objects, histories, and sensory realities of caste oppression that have existed in plain sight yet remained unseen. She is an integral part in challenging India's tendency to museumise its past but never its present. In a nation that celebrates progress while concealing its hierarchies, this project is indispensable as a mirror held to democracy, reminding it of the dignity it still owes its people.

Gauri's intelligence is allied with a remarkable ability to clearly and persuasively articulate difficult ideas so that anyone can understand them. This was evidenced most clearly when she decided to document and record oral stories of Dalit and Tribal communities. While conducting a workshop at a government school in Rajasthan, she met Mohit Kumar, a Dalit student beaten for drinking from a water pot "claimed" by upper-caste classmates. These insights became the foundation of The People's Collectives, a youth-led initiative forging an equitable future to help the most marginalized escape discriminatory systems and poverty. Under her leadership, The People's Collectives has archived over 350 Dalit oral histories, from Devadasis in Karnataka to migrant labourers in Gujarat and first-generation college students in Maharashtra, crafting counter-narratives that restore dignity to

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communities denied both recognition and voice. This is a rare and precious skill in a world where the histories of marginalized communities are too often lost in translation.

Within *The People's Collectives*, I also witnessed one of Gauri's most remarkable qualities: her ability to lift others with her. Gauri's engagement with *Students of Equality* (clubs that focus on awareness about caste based discrimination). She designed and facilitated workshops for youth, using role-play and storytelling exercises to help students critically reflect on power and social responsibility. There were moments where only Gauri could explain why a Dalit student is always last to be called on in class, or how a textbook's language can encode subtleties of othering. Gauri's lucid expressions have ensured that even those unfamiliar with the vocabulary of structural inequality could engage meaningfully with these ideas. Her post-intervention surveys reveal a 60% increase in caste awareness and allyship. We need individuals like Gauri who is reshaping the way today's emerging and impressionable youth engage with ideas of equity and inclusion; leaving a lasting imprint on the communities she has been a part of.

She understands that social mobility must be anchored in economic empowerment. One of her earliest initiatives supported Sharvari, a young Dalit woman with a vision but no access to resources. Gauri helped her develop a business plan for a tailoring shop, secured a micro-grant, and connected her with skill training. Today, Sharvari runs a modest but thriving enterprise, employing other young women in her village. Under Gauri's guidance, *The People's Collectives* has also established community-based microgrant networks for over 90 youth impacting more than 2,600 people across 42 communities.

Finally, she is someone who simply genuinely loves to think. At the same time as absorbing and quickly implementing difficult feedback, she relishes in trying to fit the puzzle pieces together in her mind. Gauri is an exceptional leader and individual because she seeks *understanding* and where others see failure, she sees the opportunity for growth. This fits with a very important part of her character: she is deeply introspective, and uses her intellect and learning to leave communities more equitable than she found them. I have no doubt that she will make the right choices.

Gauri is extraordinary, a wonder in the truest sense of the word, and she will flourish most in an environment that values courage and moral clarity as deeply as she does. We need thinkers like her and I recommend Gauri without reservation and with great pride.

Sincerely

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(Member of Parliament)

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