

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, Leadership, Career, Awards, Legacy

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In a first, two Women Officers Colonel Sofiya Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh spearheaded the press conference briefing media about India's Operation Sindoor launched against Pahalgam Terror Attack. Career of Colonel Sofiya Qureshi showcases her military acumen and depicts the milestones achieved by Women in Indian Armed Forces. Renowned for her pioneering leadership in UN Peacekeeping Missions, Cyber Warfare and strategic communication, today she stands as the face of the nation's defence against terrorism.

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi was born in 1974, in Vadodara, Gujarat and raised in a family with a strong academic and engineering background. Her father Mohammad Qureshi, was a civil engineer, and her mother, Amina Qureshi, served as a mathematics professor. She is postgraduate in Biochemistry from Maharaja Sayajirao University in Vadodara in 1997. Her Grandfather was a religious teacher in the Army and this drew her to make a career in defence forces at an early age.

Also Read: [Operation Sindoor](#)

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Career

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi along with her husband is currently working as an officer in Mechanised Infantry. She was commissioned into the Army Signal Corps in 1999. Her Career Progression reflects values of Nation First and commitment to National Security. Apart from this, she played a vital role in modernising efforts at Signal Intelligence wing at Army Headquarter

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Career		
Position Held	Year	Role and Responsibilities
Platoon Commander	2004-2006	Led over 30 soldiers in field operations
UN Peacekeeping Mission in Congo	2007-2009	Involved in MONUC Mission for conflict resolution, community support and security management
Senior Instructor, IMA	2010-2013	Trained cadets in signals and tactical warfare
Battalion, Second in Command	2014-2017	Incharge of Operational Planning, Troop Coordination and logistics for field units
Commanding Officer	2018-Present	Overseeing strategic missions and disaster relief

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Leadership

Before wide media coverage in reference to Operation Sindoor, Colonel Sofiya Qureshi had various firsts to her name

- 2002- She played a pivotal role in Operation Parakram, which was in response to Parliamentary Attacks in 2001.
- 2007- She played a significant role in the International Peacekeeping Mission with her stint in Congo as part of UN Peacekeeping Operation. She also served as Military observer during presidential elections.
- 2016- She became the first and only woman officer to lead Indian Contingent among 18+ participating countries at ASEAN+ Multinational Military Exercise ‘FORCE-18’
- 2024- Her leadership was also recognised during flood operations in North East India where her expertise in managing critical communication proved to be immensely useful.

Also Read: **S-400 Defence System**

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Recognitions

During her 3 decade long career Colonel Sofiya Qureshi received many accolades and awards from National Government as well as Foreign Bodies

- General Officer Commanding in Chief Commendation card for Operation Parakram
- SOC in C Commendation card for flood relief operation in North East
- Commander appreciation for UN mission in Congo
- Certificate of excellence from Cambodian Army
- Her Command of Indian Contingent during FORCE-18 exercise was commended by Supreme Court to praise her and other women officers in the landmark judgement allowing Permanent Commission to women officers in Army
- Her commanding officer in Southern Command Late Gen, Bipin Rawat while praising her said that she wasn't chosen because she was a woman but because of her abilities and leadership qualities to shoulder responsibility

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Awards

Beyond her operational roles, Colonel Sofiya Qureshi significantly contributed to the modernization of the Indian Army's technological capabilities, leading the shift towards network-centric warfare and enhancing secure battlefield communications. Her exemplary service has also been acknowledged through numerous awards:

- Sena Medal (2025)
- Vishisht Seva Medal (2019)
- UN Peacekeeping Medal (2017)
- COAS Commendation (2010)

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi Legacy

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi symbolizes the evolving role of women in the Indian military and her journey reflects a blend of dedication, courage, and innovation. Her achievements have influenced policy changes, including the permanent commission and NDA entry for women. Balancing her demanding career with family life, she continues to inspire many aspiring women officers. During the concluding ceremony of FORCE-18, upon being asked how she felt, she said "I feel proud of course and would encourage all young women to work hard for country and make everyone proud"

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/upsc-exam/colonel-sofiya-qureshi/>

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