

WITNESS: SEEMA MISRA

STATEMENT NO: WITN0065_01

EXHIBIT: WITN0065_01/3

POST OFFICE HORIZON IT INQUIRY

EXHIBIT 3

The following documentation comprises the exhibit referenced as exhibit 3
in the witness statement of Mrs Seema Misra referenced WITN0065_01.

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Postmaster, 45, cries as the High Court quashes her criminal conviction for theft and false accounting which saw her jailed when she was pregnant

- Seema Misra served four months of a 15-month sentence in 2011 while pregnant
- She was suspended from her post office she ran in West Byfleet, Surrey in 2008
- She was convicted of theft and false accounting which has finally been quashed
- Ms Misra will speak to lawyers about filing a claim for malicious prosecution

By [ANTONIA HOYLE FOR THE DAILY MAIL](#)

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Sitting in the High Court as her name was read out yesterday, it took Seema Misra a few moments to compute that her criminal conviction had finally been quashed.

Only after her eyes met with other sub-postmasters and her social media feed revealed the news did she allow it to sink in. Then, tears fell.

'It was very important that I came to court and heard it from the judges myself, after waiting so long, but it didn't feel real at first. I wanted to double check,' says Mrs Misra, 45, who served four months of a 15-month sentence in 2011, while pregnant, after being wrongly convicted of theft and false accounting.

'I felt a mixture of emotions. Happy and grateful, but also angry and betrayed that this happened and that it has taken so many years for my name to be cleared.'

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Sitting in the High Court as her name was read out yesterday, it took Seema Misra a few moments to compute that her criminal conviction had finally been quashed

She feels vindicated not only by the verdict but the finding the Post Office withheld information that would have given her and the 38 other sub-postmasters whose convictions were quashed a fair trial.

'They did this deliberately,' says Mrs Misra, who ran a post office in West Byfleet, Surrey.

'They played with people's lives. Those at the Post Office who knew what was going on should go to prison.'

Before yesterday's ruling sleep didn't come easily for Mrs Misra, who lives in nearby **GRO** with taxi driver husband **GRO** and sons **GRO**

'Every half hour I'd have a nightmare that I didn't hear my alarm, or missed my train,' she says. 'I knew we'd get justice. But it shouldn't have taken this long.'

Next week she will speak to lawyers about filing a claim for malicious prosecution. Yet no compensation will make up for her family's financial ruin, let alone the emotional hell they endured.



+3
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Before yesterday's ruling sleep didn't come easily for Mrs Misra, who lives in nearby Knaphill with taxi driver husband **GRO and sons **GRO** Mrs Misra and**



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'No amount of money can make up for the struggle I went through,' says Mrs Misra, who was suspended from her post office in 2008 after auditors found a £74,609 shortfall she couldn't explain.

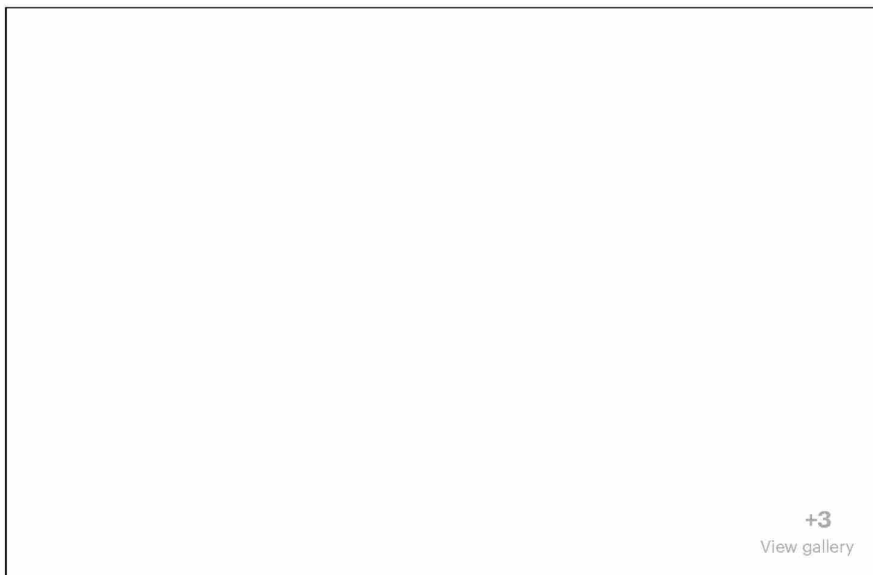
Her conviction has cast a shadow over every aspect of her life since her week-long trial at Guildford Crown Court in October 2010 saw her imprisoned while eight weeks pregnant with **GRO**

A respectable woman so ashamed of her conviction she begged a prison officer to hide her handcuffs with their coat as she was led away to jail, she would have considered suicide, were it not for the new life growing inside her.

She gave birth two months after her release, on tag, after which the shame of her conviction made life unbearable.

'People stopped talking to us,' she says, while Mr Misra adds: 'I was beaten up and called a 'f***ing P*ki, coming to this country and stealing old people's money.'

They moved house but Mrs Misra, who developed depression, still felt unable to show her face at the school gates. 'I assumed everyone knew, and they weren't talking to me because I was a criminal.'



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View gallery

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She didn't throw a birthday party for her youngest son for eight years. 'I didn't want everyone to know that **GRO** mum was the one who went to prison,' she explains.

Mrs Misra, who sold the post office for less than half the price she paid, started helping her husband run his taxi firm. But while she was in prison, Mr Misra had to single-parent and the business floundered. The couple's second property in London had already been seized to pay off the missing money.

Even on her release, Mrs Misra was unable to get work because of her conviction. Once a financial controller in the City, she says: 'I thought I'd be able to become an Uber driver, but couldn't. When I applied for funds to do courses to re-enter the financial industry I wasn't allowed.'

Even the most mundane activities caused pain. 'Whenever I filled out a form for something like car insurance I'd have to state my conviction. It brought the bad memories back.'

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During her trial she refused to plead guilty. She assumed justice would prevail, but thinks racism was partly to blame for her conviction at the hands of an all-white jury.

'The court documents read 'The Queen vs Seema Misra.' It played with people's emotions. Why would people believe the Asian lady over the Queen?' she says.

So contentious has the case been that Mrs Misra wants to thank her barrister, Paul Marshall, 'who has found himself unjustifiably pursued by the Post Office for releasing documents that they themselves made public in 2013'.

Last night, there was champagne. But Mrs Misra will cherish the everyday changes most.

'All those forms I had to fill in stating my conviction,' she says quietly. 'I won't have to do that any more.'

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