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1.3.16

**HCU to JNU: Save Campuses! Save Democracy! Save India!**

**Resist KSS-BJP Govt's Assault on HCU, JNU, Higher Education!**

Stand with JNU

**2 March**

Wednesday

International Protest Day

**MARCH TO PARLIAMENT** from Mandi House

Assemble at Ganga Dhaba at 12 noon sharp

*Release Comrade Kanhaiya, Umar and Anirban! Remove sedition and other motivated charges from JNU students!*

*Scrap sedition from IPC! Revoke Suspension of 8 JNU Students!*

*Enact Rohith Act to end caste discrimination in universities and higher educational institutions!*

*Smriti Irani Must Resign For Misusing Power, Crackdown and Spreading Misinformation Against HCU and JNU Students!*

### **Rise Up Against the Draconian Gag on Printing of JNU Students' Posters and Pamphlets In and Around JNU!**

In a continuation to the clampdown on democratic and plural spaces in JNU, the entire state and university machinery have crossed all limits and have started prohibiting photocopying of posters and pamphlets of JNU students. The photocopy shop owners in localities near JNU are facing directions not to print posters and pamphlets of JNU students. There are also reports of intimidation and high-handedness on some of the photocopy shop owners by the Delhi Police. The photocopy shop owners inside JNU too are facing orders not to print posters and pamphlets.

**We condemn this blatant misuse of power to gag voices.** The BJP government and the entire state machinery is stooping to new lows in their attempt to ensure that no other view other than their own is heard. This blanket ban smacks of a brutal clampdown on culture of free speech, debate and discussion in our campus. Our pamphlets, and the fact that we seek to oppose and expose the policies and politics of the powers-that-be is our 'crime' – which they are seeking to ban! They tried to scare us by arresting us, interrogating us, slapping 'sedition' charges on us. Nothing worked and we refused to be silenced. Now they seek to ban our words, our posters and pamphlets. We will NOT let them silence us.

भगत सिंह इस बार न लेना काया भारतवासी की  
देशभक्ति के लिए आज भी सजा मिलेगी फांसी की  
यदि जनता की बात करोगे, तुम गद्दार कहाओगे,  
बम्म-सम्ब की छोड़ो . भाषण दोगे, पकड़े जाओगे! - शैलेन्द्र

*Bhagat Singh this time don't be born an Indian  
Patriots are still punished with hanging today  
If you speak for people, you'll be called a traitor,  
Let alone strikes - you'll be jailed even if you give a speech!*  
- Shailendra

The Modi Government has waged war on campuses and on the right to dissent. If one young life – that of Rohith Vemula – was snuffed out in this war, several other young students charged with 'sedition' are facing vilification, arrest, and custodial violence. After certain unfortunate slogans were raised on 9 February in JNU, the JNU Students' Union as well as all progressive and democratic organisations in JNU condemned these divisive slogans calling for "destruction" of India. However it is now evident that the issue of these slogans is merely a pretext for the government to unleash an all-out crackdown on JNU which has steadfastly opposed fund cuts in education and all anti-student, anti-people policies of the government.

**But two historic mobilizations on the streets of Delhi – mainly by students and youth – offered a remarkable resistance to Modi's war on campuses.** On 18 February, defying the TV channels whipping up a frenzy against 'anti-national JNU', thousands of Delhi's students and young people, supported by working class men and women, intellectuals and citizens from all walks of life, marched on the streets of Delhi to show solidarity with JNU. They demanded the release of the JNUSU President and withdrawal of all sedition charges from students, and demanded that JNU revoke the arbitrary suspension of eight student activists. They demanded repeal of the anti-sedition law. Above all, they asserted that true patriotism lay in the determination to dissent, to care for the rights of people, and to speak truth to power.

On 23 February, students from all over the country gathered in Delhi in response to the 'Chalo Delhi' call by the Joint Action Committee for Justice for Rohith Vemula. Thousands who marched in Delhi asserted that they would not allow the Modi Government to shrug off its responsibility for the suicide of the Dalit scholar and activist.

### **Witch-hunt of Rohith Vemula and JNU Students**

Rohith was expelled from his University based on faked 'injuries' by an ABVP leader. He was branded 'anti-national' based on slogans raised by his and his comrades in a protest against the hanging of Yakub Memon. Eight students including JNUSU President Kanhaiya Kumar, JNUSU General Secretary Rama Naga, former JNUSU President Ashutosh Kumar and former Vice President Anant Prakash Narayan, as well as Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, have been suspended from their University and accused of sedition based on fake videos, fake tweets and fake 'intelligence reports'. As in Rohith's case, their slogans condemning the hanging of Afzal Guru have been branded as 'anti-national.' The vilification and expulsion of Rohith and the JNU students was incited by ABVP and led by BJP MPs. Far from learning its lesson from the tragic consequences of the witch-hunt of Rohith Vemula, the Modi Government has repeated the witch-hunt of student activists on an even more vicious scale in JNU.

### **Why Is Modi Govt Scared of Rohith and JNU?**

Rohith and JNU students, from humble backgrounds of rural India, manage to reach Universities, study, make Universities more accessible to the poor and deprived of the country, and raise the voices of the marginalised. They led struggles

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against corporate takeover of higher education, against slashing of fellowships, against handover of India's higher education to WTO. BJP and RSS have cited the subsidy JNU gets, to ask, why JNU students speak against the Government that gives them subsidy. We would like to tell them. the Universities are funded by the toil of workers and peasants - and that is why JNU students speak for them.

### **Who Wants India's Destruction and Division?**

When Ministers of the Central Govt seek to divide Indians into *Ramzade* and *Haramzade*, those who eat beef and those who don't, when they oppose inter-caste and inter-faith marriages, when they call Dalit massacre victims 'dogs', are they not breaking India into bits? When the RSS supporters kill people for what they think - from Gandhi to Dabholkar to Kalburgi, are they not destroying India? By resisting these forces it is the students who are defending the unity of India's people.

One of the most prominent pro-BJP figures, actor Anupam Kher, has called the crackdown on campuses from HCU to JNU as 'pest control,' while leaders of BJP and ABVP have called for campuses to be 'purged' and 'sanitised' of Leftists and progressive activists. Was Rohith Vemula one of the 'pests' that the BJP purged from HCU to sanitise the campus? Such dehumanizing language is reminiscent of Hitler's Germany, and also of more recent remarks by BJP leaders comparing Dalit and Muslim victims to dogs, puppies and so on.

When the Government grab land and resources from peasants and adivasis and hand them over to MNCs, when they unleash repression on workers, when they sell out higher education to WTO, are they not destroying India? It is the students of JNU and the country's students and youth, as well as its people's movements, that are truly patriotic, truly defending India's people from destruction.

**The courageous student and youth movement in support of Rohith Vemula and JNU has effectively ripped off the cloak of 'nationalism' and exposed the Government's authoritarian agenda of cracking down on constitutional liberties, crushing voices of dissent against the Hindutva and pro-corporate agenda, using assaults and murderous attacks by Sanghi thugs as well as the might of the police machinery.**

### **Attack on Ambedkar's Ideas and the Constitution**

**This student movement has also thoroughly exposed the role of certain media channels in inciting hatred and violence against JNU students, using fabricated videos and other fabricated materials. This shameful conduct is in contrast to the courage shown by some journalists, including one young journalist who resigned from one such channel and exposed its role in manipulating videos to incite anti-JNU and anti-Left frenzy.**

The Sanghi hate-campaign against JNU raises the issue of slogan of '*Jo Afzal ki baat karega, woh Afzal ki maut marega*' (Anyone who speaks of Afzal Guru will meet Afzal Guru's fate), even as the BJP is poised to form Government in Jammu and Kashmir once again with the PDP, which calls Afzal's hanging a 'travesty of justice' and seeks to bring Afzal's remains back to Kashmir.

But it is no longer hidden that the hatred against 'Afzal ki baat' is only a pretext: **even 'Ambedkar ki baat' (ideas of Dr Ambedkar) are met with hatred and violence.** The Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha, youth wing of the BJP, fired at Prof Vivek Kumar of JNU in Gwalior recently, when he was about to speak at a public meeting on 'India of Ambedkar's Dreams'. The BJYM vandalised copies of the Indian Constitution, as well as other writings of Dr Ambedkar.

The BJP, RSS and ABVP are unable to hide their hatred and disgust for Ambedkar and the Indian Constitution. By allowing 'lawyers' and a BJP MLA to beat up students, teachers and journalists unchecked inside Court premises, the Modi Government is sending a message of contempt for the Constitution.

In the meeting of Vice Chancellors convened by the HRD Minister Smriti Irani, there was conspicuous silence on the burning issues of Dalit suicides on campuses, on the recommendations of the Thorat Committee report including the demand for enactment of a 'Rohith Act' to curb caste discrimination on campuses. There was also silence on the move to slash scholarships and impose WTO rules on India's higher education. Instead, the Minister shamefully sought to hide these burning issues under the diktat to fly the tricolour on all campuses - ignoring the fact that the tricolour already flies in most campuses.

**The Sangh Parivar and Modi Government, admirers of Savarkar (traitor who betrayed the freedom struggle) and Godse (the terrorist who killed Gandhi), have always feared and hated the legacies of Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh. Now, they are engaged in a desperate attempt to brand the followers of Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh as 'anti-national.' They will certainly fail in this bid - and the brave young followers of Ambedkar and Bhagat Singh will give them a fitting rebuff, and save democracy from the Sanghi onslaught.**

Sukrita, Jt. Secy, AISA, JNU

Vijay Kumar, Gen.Secy, AISA, JNU