



HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS' ALERT - INDIA

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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April 02, 2018

To

Mr. Srinivasa Kammath

National Focal Point - Human Rights Defenders & Deputy Registrar
National Human Rights Commission
Manav Adhikar Bhawan,
Block-C, GPO Complex, INA,
New Delhi – 110 023
Email: hrd-nhrc@nic.in

Dear Sir,

Sub: HRD Alert - India - Urgent Appeal for Action – New Delhi – Brutal attack on students, teachers, journalists by Delhi Police during a rally organised by Jawaharlal Nehru University's students and teachers unions - Regarding

Greetings from Human Rights Defenders Alert - India!

HRD Alert - India is a forum of Human Rights Defenders for Human Rights Defenders. It endeavours to initiate actions on behalf of Human Rights Defenders under threat or with security concerns.

We are writing to express our grave concern over the deliberate violent actions of Delhi Police for using brutal force on students, teachers, academics, journalists during a peaceful rally organised in support of students and teachers of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in New Delhi on March 23, 2017.

Source of Information on the Incident:

Communication from students and teachers of JNU
Media Reports

Perpetrators:

Delhi Police

Details of the Incident

The JNU Teachers' Association and the JNU Students' Union had called for a march on March 23, 2017 from the JNU campus to the Parliament Street in New Delhi to protest against various issues affecting them, including privatisation of education and demanding suspension of Professor Atul Johri who has been accused of sexual harassment of eight students.

The march was participated by thousands of students and teachers from JNU, other universities and colleges in Delhi and several others. As the march proceeded from

JNU campus to the Parliament, the police had set up barricades near INA Market bus stop to prevent them from continuing their march. The march from JNU to INA Market was peaceful and the marchers were walking on one side of the road.

There were a huge posse of Delhi Police personnel including Rapid Action Force along with water canon vehicles. The police suddenly started to use force on the protesters and used water cannon on them. The protestors were beaten up by the police personnel indiscriminately using *lathis* (thick sticks). As evident from the videos available on media and social media, the police personnel used brutal force and selectively targeted protesters, surrounding and beating them. Women were manhandled and in some instances their dresses were torn by the police personnel who were trying to disperse them from the place forcefully.

Journalists who were capturing the violence and atrocities of police were also targeted and their cameras were taken away and even broken. Some of the women journalists complained of groping by police personnel.

Many students were detained by the police and later were released. But the Delhi Police have filed a 'zero FIR' and there are strong apprehensions that the police will implicate the student leaders in the FIR.

HRDA strongly condemns the act of Delhi Police for instigating violence on peaceful protestors including students, teachers who were exercising their fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution.

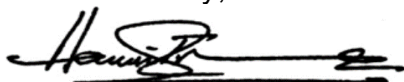
Appeal:

We, therefore urge you to immediately take necessary steps and:

- Order an immediate, independent, thorough, transparent, effective and impartial investigation by the Investigation Division of NHRC into the above-mentioned incident of attack on peaceful protestors by Delhi Police;
- As part of the independent investigation, set up a process to ensure that those who were attacked and sexually assaulted by the police personnel are able to submit their statements and evidences;
- Based on the independent investigation, ensure that strict legal actions, including prosecution is ordered against police personnel responsible for this brutal act, and;
- Ensure that there is no false implication of student and teachers in the FIR registered by the police in this case and that the FIR is immediately quashed.

Looking forward to your immediate action in this regard,

Yours sincerely,



Henri Tiphagne
National Working Secretary

Copies to:

Mr. Amulya Patnaik,

Commissioner of Police,
New Delhi.

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Mr. Michel Forst

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