

Press Release Issued As a Part of the Call given by CDRO for an all India protest on 22nd September 2020

Joint statement of democratic rights organisations and intellectuals

**22nd September 2020.
Chennai.**

Modi government shall stop forthwith the spate of the arrest of intellectuals and democratic and civil rights activists carried out in the name of Bhima-Koregaon case or Delhi riot case

Today the number of people, intellectuals, Lawyers, Cultural activists and democrats arrested and incarcerated in the Elgaar Parishad and Bhima-Koregaon case has reached 15. Democratic right activists and leading public intellectuals of the country like Sudha Bharadwaj, Varavara Rao and Anand Teltumbde have all spent several months in prison without any trial. It is well-known that veteran revolutionary poet Varavara Rao is severely ill and had been hospitalised, Sudha Bharadwaj also has ill-health but their bail petitions have been denied. Recently Hanybabu, a professor from Delhi University and cultural activists of Kabir Kala Manch, Jyoti Jagtap, Ramesh Gaichor and Sagar Gorke have been arrested in the Bhima-Koregaon case. Son - in laws of Varavara Rao, Dr. Sathyanarayana, Kurmanath as well as scientist Prof. Partho Sarathi Ray of IISER Kolkata, Prof. Rakesh Ranjan and Prof. Vijayan of Delhi University have also been summoned some time back. The three lawyers who took up the case for the Bhima-Koregaon case have also received summon. Now, Adv. Murugan of Madurai has also been summoned by the NIA.

It's public knowledge about who all were actually involved in Delhi riot (Feb. 2020) and the Bhima Koregaon violence (2018). However, instead of probing their roles, we find that hundreds of Muslims and a group of intellectuals and the democratic rights activists are being arrested in connection with these cases. The spate of arrests continue. How far this BJP govt will go on repression is not beyond our perception. Former JNU scholar, Umar Khalid has been arrested in a false accusation of promoting communal violence. In the supplementary charge sheets filed by the police, renowned economic expert Prof. Jayati Ghosh, Sitaram Yechurry of Communist party of India Marxist, Yogendra Yadav the leader of Swaraj Abhiyan party, and Prof. Apoorvanand of JNU have been named. There was huge public outcry immediately over this. The names of Delhi documentary producer Rahul Roy, JNU students Devangana Kavitha, Natasha Narwhal, Jamia Millia student Gulfisha Fathima were also included in the

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supplementary charge sheet. No one can predict who will be picked next or be summoned by the NIA.

In February Delhi riot, 53 people were killed. Of these, 40 were from the Muslim community. In addition to this lot of damages to the properties and belongings of the Muslims took place. In this situation, the Delhi police authority has instructed its forces to downplay the violence by Hindu rioters in registering the charges as that might cause the anger and anguish amongst the Hindus. Last 8th July, Delhi Deputy Commissioner Pravin Ranjan (ACP/DCPs - S&T CP/Crime (HQ), who is supervising the Delhi violence case, has sent such a circular to the officers handling the Delhi riot case. It is to be noted that Delhi High Court has condemned this. Even ex-Police officers have come out stating that this is against the customary practice of police and principles of natural justice. (The Wire, dated 15th July 2020).

It is well-known that Melinda Ekbote of Hindu Rashtra Agadi and Sambhaji Bhide of Shivraj Prasthan Hindusthan were the culprits behind the Bhima Koregaon violence. Two days prior to the Bhima-Koregaon celebration, these two people demolished the memorial of a Dalit leader Govind Gopal Mahar. During the Bhima-Koregaon event, they had conducted a rally and had provoked violence. No UAPA charge is slapped on them, except an FIR on IPC sections, like the way it is slapped on the Dalit and democratic activists. Even in these sections, the Maharashtra government had granted them bail in a few months and two are moving scot-free since then.

Kapil Mishra gave the open call that " the Anti-CAA protesters shall be taught a lesson" and still he is moving around freely! There are eight witnesses vouching for the presence of him and Mohan Singh Bhagat, the MLA from Karawal Nagar, Ex-M. L. A. of Mustafabad Jagdish Pradhan, Baghpat M. P. Satya Pal Singh and councillor Kanhaiya Lal, who all have led from the front the violence in North Delhi. (NDTV.com). But the police authorities have issued an order not to proceed with any prosecution against the Hindus. Then how could the investigations go impartially! As Bharathi wrote once, today only the elites and the educated (threaded) rule the roost.

Modi government has failed not only in bringing the pandemic coronavirus under control but also in all other fronts. After leaving the responsibility to control the pandemic to the State governments, it was even not ready to return them the GST that was due to them. The private sector has resorted to retrenchment and wage reduction in a big way. Laws are changed such that it is friendly to them. After depriving the workers their due, now the laws are amended on the

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farming sector, snatching away their rights. Modi government has not even commented on the suggestions put forward by the economic experts on the cash transfer in bank accounts to the poor people and thus save them from hunger and deaths. This measure would have revived the failing economy at the same time. On the contrary, the Union government has utilised these circumstances to oppress the minorities and the marginalised sections of the society who are already suffering due to the different steps initiated by the govt. The government is also targeting public intellectuals who critique it and subjecting them to repression and harassment, and even incarceration awaits these spirited democrats. It has utilised the current helplessness of the people under COVID situation to execute its well-planned Hindutva programme. By turning blind eyes, we would lose our democratic rights whatever is left out. Hunger deaths are a regular feature now. If we continue to remain blind to the sufferings of our brothers mercilessly, the situation will worsen further.

Our demands:

- 1) Stop arresting activists on fake charges in Bhima-Koregaon and Delhi riot cases
- 2) Withdraw all fake charges foisted upon the Bhima Koregaon activists and Delhi anti-CAA activists.
- 3) Oppose UAPA and other draconian laws which suppress democratic rights of citizens
- 4) Ensure the rights of political prisoners as per the International protocol
- 5) Release all political prisoners
- 6) Oppose Hindutva forces and fascist tendencies
- 7) Oppose subversion of democracy and systematic attempt to convert India into a police state
- 8) Stop abusing IPC and institutions like NIA
- 9) Slap charges on Hindutva leaders and activists who incited, instigated, participated in Bhima Koregaon violence and Delhi riot
- 10) Take prompt and appropriate action against police personnel who have violated human rights during and after the Delhi riot

Participant organisations and individuals :

S. Gopal (Committee for Protection of Democratic Rights-TN)

Com. Thiyagu (Tamizh Desiya Viduthalai Iyakkam)

Adv. Pughazhendhi (Prisoner's Rights Forum)

Adv. Jimraj Milton (People's Rights Protection Council)

Adv. Bharathi (Democratic Advocates Association)

A. Marx (National Coordination of Human Rights Organisation)

Md. Ghouse (Welfare Party)

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Aranga. Gunasekaran (Federation Against State Repression)

Dr. P. Sivakumar (Educationist)

Adv. Jeeva (Centre for Protection of Civil Liberties)

Senthil Kumar (Tamizh Desiya Makkal Munnani)

Viduthalai Rajendran (Dravida Viduthalai Kazhagam)

Thirumurugan Gandhi (May 17 Movement)