

‘The Movement Against Paper Leaks, State Repression, and the Way Forward’

Windsor Place, New Delhi, August 1 2026: Disha Students' Organization organized a press conference titled, 'The movement against paper leaks, state repression, and the way forward' at India Women's Press Corps (IWPC, Delhi). Professors and pro-people intellectuals, Supreme Court advocates, activists, students, and citizens joined the press conference.

The recent historic movement against rampant paper leaks forced the former Union Minister of Education, Dharmendra Pradhan, to resign as the students and youth stayed undeterred even after the brutal repression by the police and Rapid Action Forces (RAF) in Delhi on the 20th of July.

In what is being popularly called the Gen Z uprising, the new generation broke through the fascist propaganda machinery and rightfully ridiculed those in power. The youth showed commendable resolve and stood their ground peacefully facing teargas, laathi-charge, and pellet guns at Delhi's Jantar Mantar, and the alleged use of AK-47 rifles by the Bihar police.

While the movement achieved what has never happened in the tenure of BJP, and set an example before the world that a determined resistance can force fascists to bow down, the decision to call off the protest on mere verbal assurance that the FIRs on protesters across the country will be withdrawn and no action will be taken on them proved a naive and immature one.

What followed was targetted state repression. Instead of taking action against the police personnel and civil-dressed goons involved in attacking, harassing, and

abusing peaceful protesters, the police all around the country including in NDA-ruled states started witch-hunting protesters, activists, and minorities from Delhi to Maharashtra, Bihar, Bengal, and Assam.

From banning social media accounts and filing FIRs on individuals "abusing" the prime minister, to digging out older cases of student activists, the police in NDA-ruled states is keeping no stone unturned in ensuring that no such uprising happens in the future and that their supreme leader can continue to breathe freely and enjoy foreign trips.

Senior Supreme Court Advocate Colin Gonsalves representing the Human Rights' Law Network (HRLN) spoke on the question of pellet gun usage, in light of the recent SC observations that refrained from prohibiting their use and remarking that they may be used for crowd control in exceptional circumstances. Adv. Colin said, "We must be fully aware of the reality of pellet gun usage. The weapon is such that it cannot be aimed, it is indiscriminate and cannot differentiate between perpetrators of violence and innocent bystanders. Any weapon that cannot discriminate is illegal under international law, and this principle is precisely why there must be a blanket ban on its usage."

Circulating a petition filed by him and others regarding pellet gun usage in Kashmir, Colin underlined how pellet guns cause not only debilitating injuries, but when fired at close range, can be life-taking. He noted that a pellet gun is a 12-gauge shotgun, and if shot at the chest or head at close range, it can kill the victim. "In some other countries, pellets of rubber are used, but in india they are metallic."

Moreover, he noted that even the existing regulations were openly flouted: "Pellet guns cannot be used around children, but that was done in Delhi on 20 July." He

further cited his petition which included media reports and Amnesty International reports that detail the extensive dangers of pellet guns and reiterated that the public “must call for a total ban on its usage,” which is nothing but a devious weapon in the armoury of the fascist state.

Addressing the press, John Dayal—a senior journalist and human rights activist said that this is, “not the first time that this fascist government has sought to brutally repress a movement.”

Similar repression was seen recently during the anti-CAA-NRC movement, particularly in Jamia, and during the farmer's movement, Dayal said. He also observed that in its later days, the anti-paper leak movement didn't remain a mere student movement but has become a mass movement where not only students but people from all walks of life participated. Dayal emphasised that this is a critical time for the movement and if the CJP doesn't act proactively and stand with the students facing the brunt of state repression and fascist intimidation, it will be a serious mistake. He also cautioned that the mere resignation of Amit Shah is not sufficient and the root cause of the problem is the fascist regime in general.

Naureen, representing the Disha Students' Organization, stated that the government has completely reneged on its promise. “It is resorting to various tactics to harass the students participating in the protests. Disregarding verbal assurances, the government is claiming that only FIRs filed before 6 p.m. on July 26th will be withdrawn. It is well known how the police manipulate the date of filing FIRs. Recently, we witnessed the UP Police's masterful script in the charge-sheet filed in the Noida labor movement, where police has [distorted the dates](#) of arrests.”

“Secondly, the government says that FIRs filed by the police will be withdrawn, but FIRs filed by private individuals will not be withdrawn. Now, let's find out the truth about these private individuals. Who are these private individuals? These private individuals are members of the RSS and BJP.”

“Third, they said, action will continue against students who already have cases registered against them. This is a direct way to harass political and social activists who have been questioning this fascist government.”

“If filing criminal cases against individuals with pre-existing criminal records is the standard, then there will be a big problem for those in power! According to a [2024 report](#) by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), 46 percent of MPs in the current Parliament have criminal cases against them. Most of these are from the BJP.”

“On one hand, the Modi government is reneging on its promises and filing false cases. They are going to students' homes and threatening them. On the other hand, students are being harassed in the name of linguistic hygiene. The 56-inch-chested government is frightened by the abuses of a 15-year-old girl. Modi is making a reel and appealing to culture. This government should introspect and see that the thousands of abuses that have offended the Prime Minister are hurled at people daily by its leaders, ministers, chief ministers, and even members of the IT cell. And we know that Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself has guided the goons of his IT cell.”

Further Naureen said, "Calling Sonia Gandhi a Jersey cow, calling Shashi Tharoor's partner a 50 crore-dollar girlfriend—such eloquent words have come from the Prime Minister himself. Will the Prime Minister apologize for this? Isn't this vulgar language? Is it not vulgar to stand on the floor of the Parliament and use vulgar

language against Muslims? Then why hasn't any action been taken against Ramesh Bidhuri? Or against the BJP's entire troll army, which daily threatens to rape women, posts their photos on apps and auctions them. Doesn't this fall under the category of indecency and obscenity? Then why doesn't the Prime Minister speak out? Does the Prime Minister have a problem with abuse? It doesn't seem so!"

"It seems the Prime Minister's problem is that the same abuses that were popularized at the cost of thousands of crores of rupees to silence his opponents are now being used against him. The image of a great man and a Führer cult, cultivated at the cost of billions of rupees, has been shattered by this movement. Filing FIRs against 15 and 16-year-old students, removing their posts, and trolling them online reflects the BJP and RSS's desperation."

Professor N Sachin of the Delhi University extended his solidarity to, "the youth who displayed incredible courage in Jantar-Mantar and across the country, whose resolve shook the fascist state and its repressive state apparatus." He exposed the blatant destruction of the education system under fascist rule, noting state-sponsored privatisation and destruction of educational infrastructure. He observed the hypocrisy of the fascist BJP now trying to moral-police the protestors on the question of language, calling it "a desperate attempt to silence the youth of the country."

"The entire RSS-BJP ecosystem, including deceitful looters like Baba Ramdev and the online IT cell employees, who use abuses like punctuation, are trying to blame young protestors for their language."

Taking an example from an old Malayali classic, he illustrated how cuss words have always been used as part of satire even in literary texts. He noted that sarcasm with

conviction gives birth to creativity, and that “creativity propel the movements for justice.”

Advocate Manik Gupta spoke at the conference about the blatant abuse of power by the state forces. He detailed how, on 23 July, he arrived at Nizamuddin PS to inquire about students who were arbitrarily detained by the Delhi Police, allegedly under “suspicion that they were going to attend the protests.” When he asked the grounds for their detention, the Delhi Police physically attacked Adv. Manik and detained him as well.

After the ordeal, Manik registered an MLC (Medical Legal Case) and is now moving the Supreme Court on the matter. He observed that this is the impunity with which the Delhi Police is working, and there remains an undeclared Emergency in the national capital in those days.

“Students who were injured were not permitted to get their MLCs done, politicians were threatening doctors at the hospitals that no such MLCs must be done. If anyone had it done, they were being targeted and FIRs were filed against those particular students. The state has been using surveillance to target protestors, and that is why the fight is still not over. It was our unity which led us to our victories, but the fight is ongoing, because the state will continue to target protestors.” Manik urged that we must continue to remain united and carry on the struggle.

Soumya from All India Democratic Students’ Organisation (AIDSO) condemned the brutal violence executed by the Delhi police on peaceful protesters. “The fact that so many students joined any kind of protest for the first time is something which we should look forward and reach out to these young students to resist the current crackdown by the police.”

While applauding the determination with which students claimed Jantar Mantar for weeks, Soumya stressed on the need to continue the struggle with the same zeal and enthusiasm.

Sarthak—a member of the central council of Disha Students' Organization talked about the achievements and limitations of the movement and the way forward. Sarthak underlined that fact that the 36 days' of continuous protest at Jantar Mantar ended with a “partial, symbolic victory.”

“The collective revolutionary fight of the students and youth of the country not only forced Dharmendra Pradhan to resign but also dealt a blow to the fabricated invincibility and Führer Cult of Narendra Modi and his government. Reclaiming Jantar Mantar as a site of indefinite protests, the movement slowly turned from being a student movement demanding the resignation of a minister to a general movement with the entire fascist regime on its target. Yet, it was only a symbolic and partial victory because no systemic long-term solutions for the problems of paper leaks and corruption in educational system were achieved.”

“The new Education Minister—Prahlad Joshi—is infamous as a bigger rabid fascist who shamelessly welcomed the rapists of Bilkis Bano. One cannot hope for any serious solutions from the so-called High-Powered Committee which is devoid of any genuine education expert or pedagogue and instead contains a neo-con technocrat, an ex-IB director and an ex-IIT director who proudly claims to consume gobar and cow urine everyday.”

“Even the recently enacted Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Act, 2026 hardly provides any provisions to prevent the series of paper leaks. Disha Student' Organization has been actively opposing every attempt to limit the entire movement merely to the resignations of one minister and has sought to establish 'Scrap NTA' and 'Revoke NEP' as important demands of the movement.”

Sarthak further asserted that it is, “high time that our friends in CJP should stop giving ultimatums and give a call to restart the protest at Jantar Mantar and other parts of the country with the central demand for the resignation of Amit Shah.”

“We believe that CJP won't commit the same mistakes again as it committed on 25th July by unilaterally and undemocratically calling off the protest,” Sarthak said. He, on behalf of the Central Council of Disha Students' Organization also appealed to all progressive organizations to form a co-ordination committee and be ready to give a call to restart the protests if CJP fails to do so anytime soon.