

We, the SC/ST Teachers' Forum and Concerned Teachers, strongly condemn the move of the administration to bring down the tent erected in North Shopcom area in the darkness of the night. This is an undemocratic act of cowardice and vindictiveness against students. It showcases the dictatorial tendency of the present administration as well as its intolerance to dissent. If actions of the university administration are opposed by the fraternity of the university that is blind and deaf to their concerns, what other mechanism is available other than a democratic protest? By attempting to take away this right, the university administration shows its contempt for the basic tenets of democracy.

The removal of the tent is a clear act of provocation against students since it is well known that students are emotionally attached to the Velivada, especially Dalit students, for whom it represents the venue of challenge against caste discrimination. Further, bringing down posters of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's quotes that surrounded the tent is not only an insult to the Father of the constitution of this country but an Atrocity in itself. A university administration that states that it will celebrate Dr. Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary for a year has no qualms about removing his posters from the university nor preventing his grandson, Prakash Ambedkar, from entering the university. This shows the discriminatory mindset of the university against Dalits and their concerns/leaders.

Such acts of provocation against the students instead of displaying maturity, patience and engaging in dialogue with students shows the intransigent attitude of the administration towards students. It, once again, demonstrates the hostility of the administration to the concerns of students. It is extremely unbecoming for the authorities of a university to act in this manner against their own students. There is no harm that comes from the presence of a tent in the shopcom area. In fact, many people find it extremely useful in this intense heat to shelter under it - whether it be students having their food there or other workers who need to be around the shopcom area. We see absolutely no reason for the university authorities to remove it and find it even more disturbing that the university does this in the anonymity of the night during vacation. It obviously shows they fear that, had it been done in the day time when all students are present, there would be serious opposition to such a move. Is it necessary to instigate confrontations in a campus that is already struggling to come to terms with the death of Rohith Vemula, the brutal lathicharge and imposition of false cases against students and faculty and the continuous harassment of students that takes many different forms? Or, is it in the interest of the university for the administration to be more accommodative of students' interests and concerns? Are these the acts that an administration that proclaims to the world that it wants "normalcy" to return to the campus takes or is it a deliberate attempt to disrupt peace on the campus? It is highly illuminating that this is the only administration which has resorted to such tactics in the entire history of the university. Prof. Appa Rao who is under investigation for his role in the death of Rohith Vemula is displaying incredible insensitivity and working with impunity to the detriment of the university. We condemn his moves to disturb the campus further.