

Press release dated 24th March 2016 Joint action committee for social justice (UoH)

27 students including 2 faculty members were shoved into the police vans and detained by the police. The family members of these people and the university community still do not have any clear information about their whereabouts. Since their detention the police officials have not been disclosing any information about them. The family members, professors have been running from pillar to post since the 22nd and still they have not been able to meet or speak with a single person who was taken by the police.

When the family members and some professors reached the Miyapur police station on 22nd night, the police informed them that none of the detained people were there, but it was found after a few minutes that there were 18 people kept in Miyapur police station. The police did not let any communication to happen. It was informed to us that some people are detained in Narsing, but no communication has been achieved with them either. The latest information is that none of the detained person's whereabouts are confirmed. The police keep misleading the family members which is severe a violation of their rights.

None of the people were produced before the magistrate within 24 hours of their detention.

On the 22nd of March the students and faculty faced the brutal lathi charge and attack of the police for democratically demanding immediate removal from campus and arrest of Podile Apparao, the main accused in the death of Rohith Vemula. The police brutally and successfully evicted us from the compound of VC lodge but continued to attack and chase us for another 2 kilometers. They shoved and forcibly detained students and faculty even though we had dispersed.

Prof. K Y Ratnam, a Dalit faculty who had gone to talk with the police about the detention was forcibly shoved into the police van. From outside we witnessed the students and the faculty being beaten up inside the police van. The police was not revealing information about the location of these people for the whole night, and the provision of legal help to the detained people was getting delayed.

The total of 27 people have been falsely booked under 11 charges (147, 452, 324, 506, 427, 342, 353 r/w149 IPC, 3 PDPPA, 324, 353, 332). There are several other FIRs being filed against the students. One of those FIRs that surfaced is filed by the university administration. The FIR contains names of 9 students including the students who were suspended along with Rohith. Along with the 9 names the FIR states 'other students of UOH'. This means that anyone can be picked up by the police and slapped with false charges.

WE strongly condemn and rise against the misuse of state apparatus to crush the voices of the students. The use of police force and unnecessary detention and slapping of false cases against the faculty and students has started to become a pattern. We witnessed the same in FTII, JNU and many other campuses.

On the 23rd of March since the messes were closed down by the university the JAC for social justice and the students decided to cook and eat collectively. Two students were carrying out the preparations for the same when the police suddenly charged upon them, destroyed the arrangements and brutally beat up one student, Uday Bhanu. He is currently hospitalised. After being beaten up by the police the previous day and being deprived of mess food, cooking for ourselves has also become a crime in this campus.

In the evening Rohith's mother and brother came to the university to express their solidarity and meet with the students the police and campus security denied them entry as they did to Kanhaiya JNUSU president an hour ago.

The students carried out a silent march to the main gate to bring Rohith's mother inside. When the students were democratically proceeding with the march the police suddenly started to close the main gate and push people outside. Finally Rohith's mother and brother could not enter the campus and had to return back.

An atmosphere of fear and threat has been created in the university since Podile Apparao has decided to take charge. If Apparao continues the legal process and the evidences of the case will get trampled and manipulated, many more students will be targeted and discriminated against.

Demands

Dropping of all charges against students and faculty

Immediate removal and arrest of Apparao under Prevention Of Atrocities act

Demilitarisation of the campus

Action against police for the unnecessary and targeted violence, false detention, misinformation about the detained people and physical and sexual assault of women students and faculty.

Please circulate in media contacts