



Jawaharlal Nehru University Teachers' Association (JNUTA)

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Press Statement, 20.2.2016

Sub: JNUTA GBM Rejects the 'High Powered Enquiry Committee'

The General Body of the JNUTA at its meeting today adopted a unanimous position expressing its complete no-confidence in the enquiry process initiated by the University through the High Powered Enquiry Committee to inquire into the incidents of 9th February 2016. The General Body noted that there is mounting evidence that this is not a genuine enquiry but simply a device for witch hunting and victimizing students under external pressure. It can only be a mockery of justice that the Enquiry Committee, constituted without any clear terms of reference and superseding the Proctorial Committee formed earlier on the same day, is proceeding towards the submission of a final report latest by the 25th of February 2016 despite the situation that eight suspended students are not in a position to appear before the Committee on account of the sedition and criminal conspiracy charges against them and one of them is also in prison. The suspensions themselves were done in undue haste, without any material basis and without giving the students a chance to present their case. Now, clear proof has also emerged of fabrication and morphing of videos that have served as 'evidence' against the students. The University's Security Officer's report on the incidents also suffers from glaring inconsistencies. A member of the High Level Committee has admitted to the media that they do not even have full names of students whom they wish to invite to depose before the Committee.

The GBM took place in a background where the University Administration has consistently ignored JNUTA's repeated demand to replace the current enquiry process with a credible one, which inspires the confidence of all sections of the University community. In the process, the University Administration is subverting the internal institutional mechanisms of the University. Furthermore, the University Administration has repeatedly shown its inability to act in an impartial manner by giving a blanket permission to the Police to enter the campus, facilitated arbitrary investigation of both the students and teachers, and making statements to the Press that has endorsed the vilification of JNU and its students and teachers in the media and in the outside world. The GBM also noted that the University Administration has failed to protect and safeguard the safety of students, teachers, staff and residents in the campus and outside.

In view of all the above, the GBM declared that it is impossible for the teachers to have any faith in the University Administration or the Enquiry initiated by it. The GBM therefore unequivocally rejected the current enquiry and demanded:



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1. That the University Administration immediately and earnestly pursue the dropping of charges of sedition and criminal conspiracy against JNU students as a precondition for any proper and credible internal process of enquiry.
2. That the officiating Registrar be removed from his position with immediate effect;
3. Immediate termination of the current Enquiry and its replacement by a credible process; and
4. That the University immediately withdraws in writing the blanket access to the campus given to the Police including to conduct raids.

The JNUTA cautions the University Administration that any failure to act quickly on these demands to restore confidence will only aggravate the situation on the campus and prevent restoration of normal academic life. To press for these demands, and to send home the message that if these demands are not met immediately the teachers will be left with no option but to intensify their struggle to ensure justice, the JNUTA GBM decided that teachers will assemble in large numbers in front of the University Administrative Block on Monday, 22 February 2016, at 3.00 p.m.

The JNUTA GBM also expressed its deep concern at the intimidation and harassment being experienced by many students and their families and friends and the witch-hunt targeting a few students selectively. This is a direct fall out of the actions of the police, a section of the media and the University Administration. The GBM declared that the teachers fully stand by their students in these trying times.

(Ajay Patnaik)

President

(Bikramaditya Choudhary)

Secretary



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