

OPEN LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT OF INDIA

24th February 2016

To,
Shri Pranab Mukherjee
President of India
Rashtrapati Bhawan,
New Delhi 110004

Honourable Mr. President,

We, the undersigned, write this letter to you to express our shock and concern at the alarming increase in reports from several academic institutions in India of high-handed behaviour on the part of the authorities. The latest in the series is the police action at JNU and the arrest of the president of the JNU Students Union on the frivolous and baseless charge of sedition. From the news reports, all we are able to gather is that the immediate provocation was a meeting organised by a fringe student group to protest/ commemorate certain events in the troubled history of Kashmir. We fail to understand why and how organising and debating on any matter should become an act of sedition and provoke police action, more so in a place of learning. We would also like to draw your attention to the rapidly growing tendency of cynically defining 'anti-nationalism' for sectarian ulterior motives in order to further terrorise people through self-appointed vigilante groups. This indeed is a danger which the Indian Republic can ill afford.

To all of us who have had the privilege of higher education, it is essential that the mandate of a good university is not merely to impart 'formal' education but also to build the character of the students as future citizens of the nation and engaged members of the society. Surely, we all agree that any serious academic institution will fail in its endeavour to nurture informed citizenship if it is not a place for dialogue, debate and dissent. The Report of the Education Commission i.e. Kothari Commission (1964-66) stated:

[Universities] are the dwelling places of ideas and idealism . . . Theirs is the pursuit of truth and excellence in all its diversity – a pursuit which needs, above all, courage and fearlessness. Great universities and timid people go ill together. . . universities are pre-eminently the forum for critical assessment of society – sympathetic, objective, unafraid . . .
[Cited from Sections 11.01 and 11.04]

We are persuaded to assert that the kind of terror that is being unleashed at the moment by those whom the people of this country have voted to Constitutional positions of responsibility is likely to make it impossible to nurture such a healthy environment. An atmosphere of fear and distrust will only teach the young to be timid and subservient, not the best qualities to cultivate democracy and create proactively thinking and questioning citizens of the future.

We urge upon you and, through you, all concerned to take this issue up with the elected representatives and other people in positions of authority at all levels and restore the sense of trust, confidence and the democratic spirit of our Constitution.

Yours sincerely

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S.No.	Name	Affiliation
1	A. Aneesh	University of Wisconsin
2	Abhijit A. M.	College of Engineering, Pune
3	Abhijit Majumder	Faculty, IIT Bombay
4	Abhishek Majumdar	Jadavpur university
5	Achla M Raina	IIT Kanpur
6	Alladi Sitaram	Indian Statistical Institute(Retired)
7	Amala Bhave	JNU
8	Ambuj Anand	IIM Calcutta
9	Amit Singh	NorthWestern University
10	Amitabha Bandyopadhyay	Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur
11	Amitabha Bhattacharya	IIT Kharagpur
12	Amiya Kumar Bagchi	Institute of Development Studies Kolkata
13	Amrita Das Dutta	IIM Calcutta
14	Anand Manarkattu	Alumnus, IIT Bombay
15	Ananya	Researcher
16	Anil Pannikker	Consultant Psychologist
17	Anil Pradhan	
18	Anil Sadgopal	All India Forum for Right to Education
19	Anindya Sarkar	IIT Kharagpur
20	Anirban Kar	Delhi University
21	Anjali Maydeo	Karve Institute of Social Service, Savitribai Phule Pune University

22	Anjan Chakrabarti	University of Calcutta
23	Annapurna Shaw	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta
24	Antar Bandyopadhyay	ISI DELHI
25	Anup Sinha	IIM Calcutta
26	Anupam Banerjee	Research Scholar, IIT Kharagpur
27	Anush Shetty	
28	Anwasha Mukherjee	University of East Anglia
29	Apoorv Khare	IIM Calcutta
30	Aravind Muthusamy	Student @ IIT Kanpur
31	Ariharan S	IIT Kanpur
32	Arijit Chakrabarty	ISI DELHI
33	Arindam Roy	IIT Kharagpur
34	Arnab Mukherjee	MNNIT Alumnus
35	Arnab Poddar	IIT KGP
36	Arpita Basu	
37	Arun Karthik B	Student, IIT Kanpur
38	Arundhati Dhuru	NAPM
39	Ashutosh Namdeo	IIT Bombay
40	Aswathy Raveendran	Research Scholar, HBCSE, TIFR
41	B. Girija Devi	Development Professional
42	B.N. Patnaik	None
43	B. Roy	Retired PSU executive
44	Babasaheb Kazi	Tata Institute of Social Sciences
45	Badri Raina	Columnist

46	Basab Chakraborty	IIT Kharagpur
47	Bhim Reddy	Institute for Human Development, New Delhi
48	Bibhas Saha	Durham University Business School
49	Bijay Bhai	Bharat Jan Andolon
50	Bimal Kumar Das	Member, Forum Of Scientists and Technologists (FOSET)
51	Bindu	
52	Binoy	Independent Researcher
53	CB Choudhary	
54	Chaithra Puttaswamy	IIT KANPUR
55	Chandra Has	IIT Bombay
56	D M Diwakar	A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna
57	Debarati Basu	IIM Calcutta
58	Debarshi Das	
59	Debashish Bhattacharjee	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta
60	Debashish Goswami	ISI Kolkata
61	Debjani Dasgupta	University of Sheffield
62	Deepankar Basu	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
63	Devi Vijay	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta
64	Dheeraj Singh	
65	Dibyendu Das	
66	Dileesh P V	Student _IIT Bombay
67	Dilnaz Boga	Independent journalist and PhD scholar
68	Dipankar Sarkar	IIT Kharagpur
69	Dipanwita Roy Chowdhury	IIT Kharagpur

70	Dipjyoti Das	Yale University
71	Dr Mohammad Imtiyaj Khan	Department of Biotechnology, Gauhati University
72	Dr Sadhana Natu	Modern College, Ganeshkhind, Savitribai Phule Pune University
73	Dr Subhendu R Raj	Univ. of Delhi
74	Dr Subir Sinha	SOAS, University of London
75	Dr Suman Ghosh	Bath Spa University, UK
76	Dr. A. S. Shimreiwung	Tezpur University
77	Dr. N.P. Chaubey	Isvar Saran Campus, Allahabad, U.P.
78	Dr. V.N. Sharma	Federation of Retired SAIL Employees
79	Durga Prasad Duvvuri	
80	Dwiparna Chatterjee	IIT Bombay
81	Faraz Ahmad	Freelance journalist
82	Flavia Agnes	Majlis Legal Centre
83	Gagandeep Kaur	Student, IIT Kanpur
84	Ganesh Kailas	Student IIT Kanpur
85	Gaurav Dar	BITS Pilani Goa Campus
86	Gautam Bandyopadhyay	
87	Gautam Ganapathy	IIT Bombay
88	George Oommen	
89	Girish Mishra	Retired Teacher of Delhi University
90	Goutam kr Das	Associate Professor, ECE Dept, MIT, Bishnupur, WB
91	Gurinder Singh	TIFR, Mumbai
92	Gursharn Kaur	
93	Guruprasad Kar	ISI Kolkata

94	Habibullah Qaiser	Gauhati University
95	Hardip Grewal	
96	Harish Karnick	IIT Kanpur
97	Himani Rawat	
98	Himanshu Srivastava	Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education
99	Himmat Singh Ratnoo	
100	Hiren Gohain	Independent radical scholar
101	Indraneel Dasgupta	ISI Kolkata
102	Ishita Mukhopadhyay	Dept. of Economics, Calcutta University
103	JAGANNATHAN	NONE
104	Jagmohan Singh	Shaheed. Bhagat singh centenary foundation
105	Janbee Shaik Mopidevi	Anglia Ruskin University
106	Jishnu Dasgupta	
107	Josantony Joseph	Advisor (Maharashtra) to the Commissioner appointed by the Supreme Court on FOOD
108	K Kranthi Kumar	Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai
109	Kajri Misra	Xavier University Bhubaneswar
110	Kamal Lodaya	The Institute of Mathematical Sciences
111	Kamal Nayan Kabra	Institute of Social Sciences, New Delhi
112	Kanak Raina	
113	Karabi Biswas	IIT Kharagpur
114	Kaushik Bhattacharya	IIT Kanpur
115	Kaushika Draavid	Research scholar, IIT Kanpur
116	Kaveri Gill	Independent Researcher
117	Kh Burhanuddin	

118	Kranthi Nanduri	IIM Calcutta
119	Kuntal Ghosh	ISI Kolkata
120	Lionel Fernandes	Rtd. Reader & Head, Dept. of Civics & Politics, University of Mumbai
121	Lokesh Malti Prakash	All India Forum for Right to Education
122	M. B. Balsamant	University of Delhi
123	Madhura Swaminathan	Economic Analysis Unit, ISI Bangalore
124	Malabika Biswas	IIT BOMBAY
125	Malabika Das Gupta	Calcutta University
126	Manali Chakrabarti	Independent Researcher
127	Mathilde Maitrot	University of Bath, UK
128	Md. Zamilur Rahman	
129	Meher Engineer	All India Forum for Right to Education
130	Mehernosh Madan	
131	Mihir Arjunwadkar	Centre for Modeling and Simulation, Savitribai Phule Pune University
132	Mihir K. Chakraborty	Jadavpur University
133	Mimasha Pandit	Assistant Professor, St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College
134	Mithilesh Kr. Dangi	Azadi Bachao Andolan
135	Mohini Mullick	Retired faculty of IIT Kanpur
136	Mohua Banerjee	IIT Kanpur
137	Moyna Bammi Bedi	
138	Mritiunjoy Mohanty	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta
139	Mrityunjoy Chakraborty	IIT, Kharagpur
140	Nandini Gupta	IIT Kanpur

141	Nilanjana	JNU
142	Niloy Ganguly	IIT Kharagpur
143	Nirmali Goswami	Tezpur University, Assam
144	Nisha Biswas	
145	Nisha D'souza	
146	Nishant Singh	Student, IIT Kanpur
147	Nishchay M	College of Engineering Pune
148	P. Premalatha	Associate Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai
149	Parasar Mohanty	Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur
150	Paul Mathew	IIT Kanpur
151	Pavni Kaushiva	
152	Poonam A	IIT Bombay
153	Prabal Bhargava	Alumnus IIT Kanpur
154	Pradeep Kumar S	Student, IIT Kanpur
155	Pranab Kanti Basu	Professor, Visva-Bharati
156	Pratik Tarafdar	IIM Calcutta
157	Prem Prakash Verma	Convenor, Jharkhand Nagrik Prayas and Jharkhand Alternative Development Forum
158	Priya Sebastian	Alumnus, IIT Bombay
159	Priyanka Srivastava	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
160	Priyanshu Gupta	IIM Calcutta
161	Probal Dasgupta	Linguistic Research Unit, Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata
162	Prof Anand Teltumbde	IIT, Kharagpur

163	Prof Nikhil Ranjan Banerjea	Former Vice Chancellor, Bengal Engineering and Science University, Shibpur
164	Puja Sen	Himal Southasian
165	R Babu	Student, IIT Kanpur
166	Rabi Mukhopadhyay	Member, Forum OF Scientists, Engineers & technologists
167	Rabindranath Mukhopadhyay	University of Calcutta
168	Radha M N	IIT BOMBAY
169	Raghavendra Chattopadhyay	Retired
170	Raghavendra Prasad	
171	Rahul Maganti	Student
172	Rahul Pandey	Visting Faculty, IIM Lucknow
173	Rahul R	Student, IIT Kanpur
174	Rahul Varman	IIT Kanpur
175	Rajendra Sahai	Alumni - IIT, Kanpur
176	Rajesh Bhattacharya	IIM Calcutta
177	Rajesh Kumar	
178	Rajinder Chaudhary	former Professor, Department of Economics, MDU Rohtak (Haryana)
179	Rakesh Kumar	IIT Bombay
180	Rakesh Ranjan	University of Delhi
181	Ram Agar Singh	Bokaro steel retired employees association
182	Ram Puniyani	All India Secular Forum
183	Ramesh bairy	iIIT Bombay
184	RANJANA KANHERE	
185	Reva Yunus	University of Warwick

186	Rhea Mitra	
187	Ridhi Agarwala	IIM Calcutta
188	Rita Mazumdar	
189	RK Verma	
190	Rohan Mukherjee	IIT-Kharagpur
191	Rohit Dwivedi	IIM Shillong
192	Rohit Varman	IIM Calcutta
193	Rosemary Varkey M	HBCSE-TIFR
194	Ruchira Mandal	
195	Runa Sarkar	IIM Calcutta
196	RUPAK KUMAR	IIT Bombay
197	Saba Hussain	UCL
198	Sabyasachi SenGUpta	Professor, IIT Kharagpur
199	Saikat Dutta	
200	Samar Kumar Bagchi	National Alliance of Peoples Movement
201	Sambit	
202	Sameet	Yale University
203	Samid Shiek	
204	Sandeep Gupta	
205	Sandeep Kumar Shukla	IIT Kanpur
206	Sandeep Pandey	Socialist Party (India)
207	Sanjay Kureel	IIT Bombay
208	Sanjukta Majumdar	
209	Sankara Narayanan	

210	Santanu Kumar Bhowmik	IIT Kharagpur
211	Santanu Sengupta	
212	Santosh Pandey	Independent
213	Sarbani Bandyopadhyay	Doctoral Fellow, IIT Bombay; and Assistant Professor, St. Xavier's College, Kolkata
214	Sarmila Banerjee	University of Calcutta
215	Sarwat Ali	Jamia Millia Islamia
216	Saumyen Guha	IIT Kanpur
217	Saurabh Gupta	IIM-Udaipur
218	Saurabh Singh	Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore.
219	Sayan Chattopadhyay	IIT Kanpur
220	Sayan Gupta	IIT Madras
221	Shamim Akhter	Alumni, IIT Kanpur, AMU Aligarh
222	Shanta Laishram	Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi
223	Shaoni Shabnam	Research Associate, Dept of Humanities and Social Sciences IIT Bombay
224	Sharmila	IIT Bombay
225	Sharmistha Dey	Concerned and worried Indian citizen
226	Shashant Shekhar	IIM Calcutta
227	Shiraz Ahmed	Father of a college going son
228	Shiraz Bulsara Prabhu	
229	Shirin N	
230	Shitij Gulati	
231	Shiv Prakash Patel	
232	Shobha Madan	IIT Kanpur

233	Shounak De	Jadavpur University alumnus
234	Shraddha Ghumre	Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, TIFR, Mumbai
235	Shruti Tambe	S.P.P. University, Pune, Maharashtra
236	Shuchismita Sarkar	University of Alabama
237	Shyamala	
238	Sibnath Mazumdar	Retired PSU employee
239	Sinchan Mitra	Assistant Professor, University of Nottingham, Ningbo
240	Smruti	
241	Somjita Laha	Indian National
242	Soonrita Sahasrabuddhe	
243	Soraisam Devakishor Singh	
244	Soumik Mukhopadhyay	Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
245	Soumyadip Bandyopadhyay	Faculty Member BITS Pilani Goa campus
246	SRIJAN SARKAR	ISI Bangalore
247	Srinath Jagannathan	Indian Institute of Management, Indore
248	Stan Swamy	Jharkhand Bachao Andolan
249	Subarna Mondal	W B E S
250	Subeer	
251	Subhash Chand	
252	Subhasish Dey	University of Manchester
253	Subhasish M. Chowdhury	Faculty, University of East Anglia, UK
254	Suchitra Mathur	IIT Kanpur
255	Sudhir Gulati	Alumni, IIT Kanpur
256	Sudip Chaudhuri	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta

257	Sudipto Banerjee	
258	Sujata Ghosh	ISI Chennai
259	Sukanta Bhattacharya	University of Calcutta
260	Sukanya	
261	Sumana Majumdar	JNU alumnus
262	Sumit Basu	IIT Kanpur
263	Sunil Patil	COEP, Pune
264	Suramya T.K.	IIT Madras
265	Sushil Handa	IIT Kanpur Alumni
266	Suvrat Raju	International Centre for Theoretical Sciences
267	Swapnesh	
268	Swatija	Forum against oppression of women
269	Taj	
270	Tamali	
271	Tanika Chakraborty	IIT Kanpur
272	Teesta Setalvad	Journalist Academic Activist
273	Ubaid Mushtaq	Alumnus IIT Bombay
274	Ushak Rahaman	IIT Bombay
275	V Upadhyay	IIT Delhi
276	V. Vasanthi Devi	Former Vice-Chancellor, M.S.University, Tamil Nadu
277	Vaibhav Vaish	ISI Bangalore
278	Vaishali Deshpande	
279	Vandana	IIM Calcutta
280	Vasudevan N	Alumnus, IIT Bombay

281	Venkatesh K S	IIT Kanpur
282	Vidhu Shekhar	IIM Calcutta
283	Vidyanand Jha	IIM Calcutta
284	Vijaya.V	
285	Vikas Dubey	IIT Kanpur
286	Vikram Kanhere	
287	Vinita Balekundri	
288	Vivek Mehta	Independent
289	Waheed	
290	Xavier Manjooran	Shakti, Legal Aid and Human Rights Centre, Songadh
291	Zoheb Nadeem	IT Professional (Fujitsu India)